



RICK SNYDER
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY
LANSING



C. HEIDI GREETHER
DIRECTOR

September 30, 2016

VIA E-MAIL

The Reverend Gregory Buchner
Conference Secretary
The United Methodist Church – Michigan Area
c/o New Hope Church
7296 9 Mile Road
Mecosta, Michigan 49332

Dear Reverend Buchner:

Thank you for your September 5, 2016, letter regarding the covenant passed at the recent Michigan Area United Methodist Annual Conference. Your letter included a copy of the covenant, which called on the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) and other state and federal partners to take action and provide the resources necessary to address the needs of the people of Flint that resulted from the Flint Water Crisis. Please allow me to summarize the actions the MDEQ has taken to date to address the issues identified in your covenant.

On January 5, 2016, Governor Rick Snyder declared a state of emergency in Genesee County as the result of elevated lead levels in the drinking water in Flint, Michigan. This declaration allowed the State of Michigan the ability to coordinate resources to provide a host of services to the city of Flint (City). In response to the Governor's declaration, the Michigan State Police (MSP) activated the State Emergency Operations Center and began a citywide, door-to-door campaign to distribute commodities, such as bottled water, water filters, filter cartridges, and water testing kits. In addition, residents were provided informational literature that detailed services and informed residents on protective measures that they could take for themselves and their families.

In response to the Flint Water Crisis, the MDEQ and other state and local partners have combined efforts and financial resources to provide technical and human services to the City. The Michigan Legislature has appropriated \$234 million to support water quality monitoring, infrastructure improvements, in-home investigations, blood lead level testing of children, removal of old fixtures in schools, increased flushing, distribution of filters and water bottles, access to medical and nutritional services, water bill credits, and various other services.

In October 2015 the MDEQ, working with the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS), the City, and the Michigan Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs (DLARA), began implementing the following sampling and testing plan to assure safe water was provided to residents and evaluate the efficacy of the corrosion control treatment:

- **Residential testing** - Water testing is completed weekly in the City's distribution system. In addition, testing is conducted for any resident in the City. An in-home visit by MDEQ and MDHHS staff occurs for water test results greater than 100 parts per billion (ppb). The MDEQ evaluates fixtures, installs filters, and discusses the need to clean aerators.

The MDHHS evaluates health issues and offers advice on other lead exposures in the home. Since February 4, 2016, home visits occur within seven days when test results are greater than 100 ppb and are conducted within 48 hours when results are greater than 150 ppb.

- **School testing** - All schools, daycares, healthcare facilities, and foster care facilities were sampled by the MDEQ. The DLARA replaced 1,431 fixtures during a two-phase fixture replacement program. At each facility, MDEQ staff coordinated flushing and conducted before and after fixture replacement sampling. As of August 30, 2016, the MDEQ has conducted post-fixture replacement sampling at 96.3 percent of the facilities in the City.
- **Elevated blood lead level testing** - When the MDHHS identifies residents with elevated blood lead levels, the residents are offered a free evaluation of their home to identify potential exposure pathways. Water testing is also conducted in the home.
- **Food service establishments** - The Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (MDARD) sent staff to collect samples from food service establishments to see if the water used in soft drink dispensers, ice machines, coffee machines, and other similar equipment contains high lead levels. The MDEQ analyzed the samples and sent reports to the MDARD for any needed follow up.
- **Sentinel sampling** - Between February and April 2016, over 650 residents participated in a biweekly water sampling program to determine the trends in lead concentrations in the drinking water and to assess corrosion control effectiveness. MDEQ staff coordinated the drop-off and pickup of the samples, conducted analyses, and reported results. Monthly extended sentinel sampling involving approximately 160 residents began in May 2016. The 90th percentile of the extended sentinel sampling results is under the federal action level, showing significant improvement in water quality and corrosion control effectiveness since implementing the sentinel program in February.

Since October 1, 2015, the MDEQ has **analyzed 38,149 water samples**, posted results at www.michigan.gov/flintwater, sent results to residents, and followed up as necessary.

In October 2015 the MDEQ, working with the Michigan Department of Treasury (Treasury) and the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA), began providing technical, financial, and infrastructure support to the City:

- **Water accessibility** - The MDEQ provided \$6 million in October 2015 to the Detroit Water and Sewerage Department and \$3.9 million to the Great Lakes Water Authority (GLWA) to continue providing drinking water to the City. Another \$3.9 million will be provided to the GLWA in October 2016 for costs through December 2016.
- **Infrastructure** - A total of \$4.2 million of funding has been committed for the Karegnondi Water Authority (KWA) pipeline.
- **Service line replacements** - An initial service line replacement pilot project, including 33 lines, was completed in April 2016. The City has agreements with three contractors to remove approximately 250 lead and galvanized lines this fall, and the request for proposal process is underway to secure additional contractors to complete additional line replacements. The MDEQ has committed \$25 million to the service line replacement efforts.

- **Flushing credits** - The MDEQ coordinated with Treasury on water bill credits for residents and businesses from April 2014 through December 2016, including a 100 percent credit for increased flushing in May 2016. To date, \$29 million of the \$42.7 million included in Flint's budget has been credited to customers.
- **In-home inspections** - MDEQ staff conducted in-home inspections at 3,734 homes in the City in search of lead service lines for compliance monitoring and ultimately for removal.
- **Lead and Copper Rule compliance** - MDEQ staff assisted with the City's Lead and Copper Rule compliance efforts, including developing the public education and notification information and coordinating the mailing of 30,858 documents to City residents.
- **Contract oversight** - Staff have partnered with the City to provide grant and contract oversight for the following initiatives, which are in various stages of completion:
 - Advertising agency that promoted flushing
 - Engineering firm that conducted the service line removal pilot project
 - Firm that evaluated and reported on the condition of the Flint Water Treatment Plant
 - Universities to provide technical support
 - City's efforts to remove service lines
 - Contractor to complete home water filter studies
 - Contractor to conduct hydraulic modeling
 - Contractor to evaluate ways to optimize the management of the municipal water distribution system
 - Staff support and training
- **Source water decision** - The MDEQ and Treasury have provided input to the City regarding the primary and backup water source decision. The KWA pipeline is complete, and \$293 million of bonds have been issued.
- **Drinking Water Revolving Fund (DWRF)** - MDEQ staff have coordinated with the City on their DWRF project plan submission. The plan is included on the State's fiscal year 2017 Project Priority List, with conditions. The MDEQ is working with the City to assure the conditions are met. The DWRF project plan includes a request of \$176.7 million of funding over several years:
 - Priority I work includes service line replacement (1,000 leads) and water main replacement in Area A – \$43,339,050
 - Priority II work includes service line replacement (1,000 leads) and water main replacement in Area B – \$26,963,550
 - Priority III work includes service line replacement (1,000 leads) and transmission main replacement (Dupont Street) – \$26,250,000
 - Priority IV work includes service line replacement (3,000 leads), transmission main improvements, dead end looping, and water main replacement in Areas C-F – \$139,924,800

The potential DWRF funding available to the City in 2017 is a \$19.5 million loan with \$2 million in principal forgiveness.

- **Technical support** - The MDEQ has been providing technical support to the Flint Water Treatment Plant staff, including expediting permits and providing advice.
- **USEPA Order** - MDEQ staff participate in weekly conference calls or in-person meetings with the USEPA and the City regarding updates on the USEPA Order. MDEQ staff provide updates on the USEPA Order weekly and post related documents online.
- **Community member coordination** - MDEQ's Flint Field Office staff are providing oversight of community members who are conducting a filter education effort. As of August 30, 2016, community members had reached 618 homes.

Community outreach:

- **Publications** - Numerous brochures, flyers, and door hangers were developed by the MDEQ in coordination with the MDHHS, the USEPA, and other stakeholders. Many of these documents were translated into Spanish and various other languages.
- **Community events** - Since January 2016, the MDHHS has coordinated events at various City locations based on requests from City members. Between January 2016 and August 30, 2016, the MDEQ has participated in many of the 250 community events. The MDEQ has provided education and answered questions.

Thank you again for your letter. If you have questions, please contact Mr. Bryce Feighner, P.E., Chief, Office of Drinking Water and Municipal Assistance, 517-284-6524; feighnerb@michigan.gov; or MDEQ, P.O. Box 30241, Lansing, Michigan 48909-7741; or you may contact me.

Sincerely,



C. Heidi Grether
Director
517-284-6700

cc: Governor Rick Snyder
Mayor Karen Weaver, City of Flint
Ms. Jamie Clover Adams, Director, MDARD
Mr. Keith Creagh, Director, Michigan Department of Natural Resources
Ms. Shelly Edgerton, Director, DLARA
Mr. Nick Khouri, Director, Treasury
Mr. Nick Lyon, Director, MDHHS
Mr. Richard Baird, Governor's Office
Captain Chris Kelenske, MSP
Mr. Robert Wagner, Program Deputy Director, MDEQ
Ms. Amy Epkey, Deputy Director, MDEQ
Mr. Bryce Feighner, MDEQ
Mr. George Krisztian, MDEQ