

Water Supply Serial Number: 00600

This report covers the drinking water quality for Benton Harbor for the 2021 calendar year. This information is a snapshot of the quality of the water that we provided to you in 2021. Included are details about where your water comes from, what it contains, and how it compares to United States Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) and state standards.

Your water comes from Lake Michigan. The State performed an assessment of our source water in 2003 to determine the susceptibility of potential contamination. The susceptibility rating is on a six-tiered scale from “very low” to “high” based on geologic sensitivity, water chemistry and contaminant sources. The susceptibility of Benton Harbor’s water is moderately high. This is due the potential urban and agricultural runoff in the St. Joseph River watershed to the St Joseph River.

If you would like to know more about this report, please contact: Ellis Mitchell, City Manager, 200 East Wall Street, Benton Harbor, Michigan 49022. emitchell@bhcity.us, 269.927.8457

Contaminants and their presence in water: Drinking water, including bottled water, may reasonably be expected to contain at least small amounts of some contaminants. The presence of contaminants does not necessarily indicate that water poses a health risk. More information about contaminants and potential health effects can be obtained by calling the U.S. EPA’s Safe Drinking Water Hotline (800-426-4791).

Vulnerability of sub-populations: Some people may be more vulnerable to contaminants in drinking water than the general population. Immuno-compromised persons such as persons with cancer undergoing chemotherapy, persons who have undergone organ transplants, people with HIV/AIDS

or other immune systems disorders, some elderly, and infants can be particularly at risk from infections. These people should seek advice about drinking water from their health care providers. U.S. EPA/Center for Disease Control guidelines on appropriate means to lessen the risk of infection by

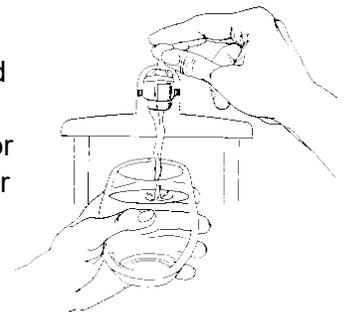
Cryptosporidium and other microbial contaminants are available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline (800-426-4791).

Sources of drinking water: The sources of drinking water (both tap water and bottled water) include rivers, lakes, streams, ponds, reservoirs, springs, and wells. As water travels over the surface of the land or through the ground, it dissolves naturally-occurring minerals and, in some cases, radioactive material, and can pick up substances resulting from the presence of animals or from human activity.

Contaminants that may be present in source water include:

- **Microbial contaminants**, such as viruses and bacteria, which may come from sewage treatment plants, septic systems, agricultural livestock operations and wildlife.
- **Inorganic contaminants**, such as salts and metals, which can be naturally-occurring or result from urban stormwater runoff, industrial or domestic wastewater discharges, oil and gas production, mining or farming.
- **Pesticides and herbicides**, which may come from a variety of sources such as agriculture and residential uses.
- **Radioactive contaminants**, which can be naturally occurring or be the result of oil and gas production and mining activities.
- **Organic chemical contaminants**, including synthetic and volatile organic chemicals, which are by-products of industrial processes and petroleum production, and can also come from gas stations, urban stormwater runoff, and septic systems.

In order to ensure that tap water is safe to drink, the U.S. EPA prescribes regulations that limit the levels of certain contaminants in water provided by public water systems. Federal Food and Drug Administration regulations establish limits for contaminants in bottled water which provide the same protection for public health.



WATER QUALITY DATA

The table below lists all the drinking water contaminants that we detected during the 2021 calendar year. The presence of these contaminants in the water does not necessarily indicate that the water poses a health risk. Unless otherwise noted, the data presented in this table is from testing done January 1, 2021, through December 31, 2021.

The State allows us to monitor for certain contaminants less than once per year because the concentrations of these contaminants are not expected to vary significantly from year to year. All the data is representative of the water quality, but some are more than one year old.

TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS USED BELOW:

- Maximum Contaminant Level Goal (MCLG): The level of a contaminant in drinking water below which there is no known or expected risk to health. MCLGs allow for a margin of safety.
- Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL): The highest level of a contaminant that is allowed in drinking water. MCLs are set as close to the MCLGs as feasible using the best available treatment technology.
- Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level (MRDL): The highest level of a disinfectant allowed in drinking water. There is convincing evidence that addition of a disinfectant is necessary for control of microbial contaminants.
- Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level Goal (MRDLG): The level of a drinking water disinfectant below which there is no known or expected risk to health. MRDLGs do not reflect the benefits of the use of disinfectants to control microbial contaminants.
- Treatment Technique (TT): A required process intended to reduce the level of a contaminant in drinking water.
- N/A: Not applicable
- ND: not detectable at testing limit
- ppm: parts per million or milligrams per liter
- ppb: parts per billion or micrograms per liter
- ppt: parts per trillion or nanograms per liter
- pCi/l: picocuries per liter (a measure of radioactivity)
- Action Level (AL): The concentration of a contaminant which, if exceeded, triggers treatment or other requirements that a water system must follow.
- Information about lead:**

If present, elevated levels of lead can cause serious health problems, especially for pregnant women and young children. Lead in drinking water is primarily from materials and components associated with service lines and home plumbing. Benton Harbor is responsible for providing high quality drinking water, but cannot control the variety of materials used in plumbing components. When your water has been sitting for several hours, you can minimize the potential for lead exposure by flushing your tap for 30 seconds to 2 minutes before using water for drinking or cooking.

If you have a lead service line it is recommended that you run your water for at least 5 minutes to flush water from both your home plumbing and the lead service line.

If you are concerned about lead in your water, you may wish to have your water tested. Information on lead in drinking water, testing methods, and steps you can take to minimize exposure is available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline or at <http://www.epa.gov/safewater/lead>.

Infants and children who drink water containing lead could experience delays in their physical or mental development. Children could show slight deficits in attention span and learning abilities. Adults who drink this water over many years could develop kidney problems or high blood pressure.

1Monitoring Data for Regulated Contaminants

Regulated Contaminant	MCL, TT, or MRDL	MCLG or MRDLG	Level Detected	Range	Year Sampled	Violation Yes/No	Typical Source of Contaminant
Fluoride (ppm)	4	4	.44	N/A	2021	No	Erosion of natural deposits; Water additive which promotes strong teeth; Discharge from
Barium (ppm)	2	2	.02	N/A	2021	No	Discharge of drilling wastes; Discharge of metal refineries;
Sodium ¹ (ppm)	N/A	N/A	14	N/A	2021	No	Erosion of natural deposits
TTHM Total Trihalomethanes (ppb)	80	N/A	45.2	19.2-63.4	2021	No	Byproduct of drinking water disinfection
HAA5 Haloacetic Acids (ppb)	60	N/A	29	13-32	2021	No	Byproduct of drinking water disinfection
Chlorine ² (ppm)	4	4	1.2	0.17-1.54	2021	No	Water additive used to control microbes
Alpha emitters (pCi/L)	15	0	1.2	N/A	2020	No	Erosion of natural deposits
Combined radium (pCi/L)	5	0	0.85	N/A	2020	No	Erosion of natural deposits
Turbidity ³	TT = 1 NTU	0	0.22 NTU	N/A	2021	No	Soil runoff
	TT= % of samples <0.3 NTU		99%	N/A			

¹ Sodium is not a regulated contaminant.

² The chlorine “Level Detected” was calculated using a running annual average.

³ Turbidity is a measure of the cloudiness of the water. We monitor it because it is a good indicator of water quality. High turbidity can hinder the effectiveness of disinfectants.

Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS)							
Regulated Contaminant	MCL, TT, or MRD	MCLG or MRDLG	Level Detected	Range	Year Sampled	Violation Yes/No	Typical Source of Contaminant
Perfluorooctane sulfonic acid (PFOS) (ppt)	16	N/A	2	N/A	2021	No	Firefighting foam; Discharge from electroplating facilities; Discharge and waste from industrial facilities
Perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) (ppt)	8	N/A	2	N/A	2021	No	Discharge and waste from industrial facilities; Stain-resistant treatments
Inorganic Contaminant Subject to Action Levels (AL)	Action Level	MCLG	Your Water ⁴	Range of Results	Year Sampled	Number of Samples Above AL	Typical Source of Contaminant
Lead (ppb)	15	0	24	0-889	Jan-Jun 2021	11	Lead service lines, corrosion of household plumbing including fittings and fixtures; Erosion of natural deposits
Copper (ppm)	1.3	1.3	0.1	0-7.6	Jan-Jun 2021	2	Corrosion of household plumbing systems; Erosion of natural deposits
Lead (ppb)	15	0	15	0-48	Jul-Dec 2021	6	Lead service lines, corrosion of household plumbing including fittings and fixtures; Erosion of natural deposits
Copper (ppm)	1.3	1.3	0	0-0.1	Jul-Dec 2021	0	Corrosion of household plumbing systems; Erosion of natural deposits

⁴ Ninety (90) percent of the samples collected were at or below the level reported for our water.

Our water supply has 296 lead service lines, 950 non-lead service lines, and 3,150 service lines of unknown material out of a total of 4,396 service lines.

Copper is an essential nutrient, but some people who drink water containing copper in excess of the action level over a relatively short amount of time could experience gastrointestinal distress. Some people who drink water containing copper in excess of the action level over many years could suffer liver or kidney damage. People with Wilson's Disease should consult their personal doctor.

Monitoring and Reporting to the Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) Requirements: The State of Michigan and the U.S. EPA require us to test our water on a regular basis to ensure its safety.

2021 Violations:

- Tier 2 TT violation for period of May 17, 2021, to May 18, 2021
In May 2021, we received a Treatment Technique violation because of a short interruption in our coagulant chemical feed lasting about 45 minutes. Upon discovery of the mistake, we immediately took action to communicate with EGLE and the public regarding the increased risk of disease-causing organisms in the water due to the brief lapse in coagulant feed. Our follow-up testing did not indicate any such organisms, and the water advisory was lifted.
- **We** did not meet the EGLE deadline of June 30, 2021 for sending a public notice to inform each customer of the May 2021 violation. The required notice is attached to this report.
- **We** received two Water Quality Parameter (WQP) Monitoring and Reporting violations for the periods of January 1, 2021, to June 30, 2021, and July 1, 2021, to December 31, 2021. WQP is a group of analytes that are indicators of corrosivity. They include pH, alkalinity, calcium, conductivity, temperature, sulfate, chloride, and orthophosphate. We started WQP sampling at appropriate locations and frequencies starting in January 2022 to return to compliance.
- PE violation beginning March 12, 2021, to April 1, 2021
We completed a public education mailing to all water customers for elevated lead results in the second half of 2020 but did not submit the certificate of distribution to EGLE within the required time. The certificate was provided to EGLE on April 1, 2021.
- **TOC** Monitoring and Reporting violation for February 2021
For the monitoring period of February 2021, we failed to collect a monthly Total Organic Carbon (TOC) sample as required. Total organic carbon (TOC) has no health effects. However, total organic carbon provides a medium for the formation of disinfection byproducts. These byproducts include trihalomethanes (THM) and haloacetic acids (HAA). Drinking water containing these byproducts in excess of the MCL may lead to adverse health effects, liver or kidney problems, or nervous system effects, and may lead to an increased risk of getting cancer. We took a follow-up TOC sample in March 2021, which brought us back into compliance.

We invite public participation in decisions that affect drinking water quality. Benton Harbor meets every 1st and 3rd Monday at 7pm in the City Hall Commission Chamber; 200 E Wall St, Benton Harbor, MI 49022. For more information, please contact Ellis Mitchell, City Manager, 200 East Wall Street, Benton Harbor, Michigan 49022. emitchell@bhcity.us, 269.927.8457. For more information about safe drinking water, visit the USEPA at <http://www.epa.gov/safewater>.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR DRINKING WATER

Benton Harbor Did Not Meet Treatment Requirements

Our water system violated a drinking water treatment requirement on May 18, 2021. A brief lapse in chemical addition resulted in a precautionary water advisory, which was lifted on May 21, 2021 after flushing and sampling ruled out microbial contamination of the water system. We were required by the State of Michigan to send this notice to each customer no later than June 30, 2021 but this was not done due to an oversight. *This is no longer an emergency, but the public has the right to know about events impacting the drinking water system. This notification is required to be sent by USEPA and the State of Michigan.*

We routinely feed a coagulant chemical when operating the water plant, which helps remove disease-causing pathogens if they are present in the raw water. There was a lapse in coagulant addition on May 18, 2021 for about 1 hour. The problem was discovered and responded to the same day; however, a precautionary water advisory was issued to ensure public health was protected while we conducted flushing and sampling in response. After bacterial contamination was ruled out, the water advisory was lifted by public communications.

What should I do?

We took immediate steps to rule out contamination due to the event in May 2021, and the precautionary water advisory was lifted. While there was no evidence of contaminated water, you should continue to follow recommendations by the State and County Health Departments. Although the issue was resolved in May 2021, the following language is required to be provided by the US EPA: People with severely compromised immune systems, infants, and some elderly may be at increased risk during water system emergencies. These people should seek advice about drinking water from their health care providers. General guidelines on ways to lessen the risk of infection by microbes are available from EPA's Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 1 (800) 426-4791.

Residents are advised to either use a water filter certified to reduce lead, or bottled water. Free water filters and replacement cartridges can be obtained from the Berrien County Health Department and bottled water continues to be available.

What does this mean?

A lapse in coagulant feed results in an increased risk to disease causing organisms entering the water supply, and warrants public communication and follow-up to confirm water system contamination did not occur. These organisms may include bacteria, viruses, and parasites that can cause symptoms such as nausea, cramps, diarrhea, and associated headaches. Organisms in drinking water are not the only cause of these symptoms. If you experience any of these symptoms and they persist, you may want to seek medical advice.

What happened? What was done?

The lapse in coagulant feed was due to a failure in treatment at the water plant. We notified residents immediately of the increased risk through public communications and conducted bacteria testing in the system. Improvements are being made to improve the technology at the plant to allow for better operation of the coagulant feed system.

For more information, please contact [XX] at [XX] or [XX].

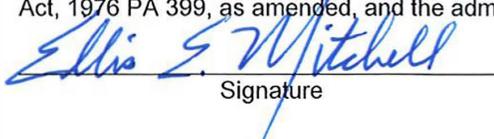
Please share this information with all the other people who drink this water, especially those who may not have received this notice directly (for example, people in apartments, nursing homes, schools, and businesses). You can do this by posting this notice in a public place or distributing copies by hand or mail.

This notice is being sent to you by the City of Benton Harbor.

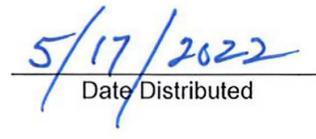
CERTIFICATION:

WSSN: 0600

I certify that this water supply has fully complied with the public notification requirements in the Michigan Safe Drinking Water Act, 1976 PA 399, as amended, and the administrative rules.


Signature


Title


Date Distributed

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR DRINKING WATER

The City of Benton Harbor Failed to Distribute Lead and Copper Public Education Documents to All Required Recipients and in a Required Manner on Bills

Our water system violated public education requirements regarding your drinking water. As our customers, you have a right to know what happened and what we are doing to correct this situation.

In September 2021, EPA identified that we had not provided the required statement on water bills regarding the health effects of lead no less often than quarterly for as long as the water system exceeded the action level for lead. The statement that should have been included in water bills is: "Lead can cause serious health problems. For more information, please call Ellis Mitchell, City Manager, at 269-927-8457. In addition, between the 12-month period of August 2020 and August 2021, we did not contact the local health department, did not contact public and private hospitals, pediatricians, family planning clinics, and community centers, and did not make a good faith effort to locate and contact obstetricians-gynecologists to deliver lead and copper public education materials.

What happened? What is being done?

We experienced a lead action level exceedance during the 12-month period of August 2020 to August 2021; we did not contact the local health department, did not contact public and private hospitals, pediatricians, family planning clinics, and community centers, and did not make a good faith effort to locate and contact obstetricians-gynecologists to deliver lead and copper public education materials. **The most recent lead and copper monitoring for the period of July 2021 to December 2021 did not result in a lead action level exceedance.** However, to resolve the historical violations, we are working under EPA's November 2, 2021, Unilateral Administrative Order, which requires us to complete the required public education. For more information, please contact Ellis Mitchell, City Manager, at 269-927-8457. This notice is being sent to you by the City of Benton Harbor.

What does this mean?

- This past violation of public education requirements is not currently an emergency. If it had been, you would have been notified within 24 hours.
- Exposure to lead in drinking water can cause serious health effects in all age groups. Infants and children can have decreases in IQ and attention span. Lead exposure can lead to new learning and behavior problems or exacerbate existing learning and behavior problems. The children of women who are exposed to lead before or during pregnancy can have increased risk of these adverse health effects. Adults can have increased risks of heart disease, high blood pressure, or kidney or nervous system problems.¹
- If you experienced any of these effects and they persist, you may want to seek medical advice.

What should I do?

- You do not need to take action due to this public education issue but due to past lead action level exceedances in the community, residents are currently being provided with alternate water sources. Free bottled water continues to be provided by the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) to City of Benton Harbor residents for cooking, drinking, brushing teeth, rinsing foods, and mixing powdered infant formula. You do not need to boil your water or take other corrective actions to shower, bathe, wash hands, dishes, or clothes, or for cleaning. However, if you have specific health concerns, consult your doctor.
- If you have a severely compromised immune system, have an infant, are pregnant, or are elderly, you may be at increased risk and should seek advice from your health care providers about drinking this water. General guidelines are available from EPA's Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 1-800-426-4791.

Please share this information with all the other people who drink this water, especially those who may not have received this notice directly (for example, people in apartments, nursing homes, schools, and businesses). You can do this by posting this notice in a public place or distributing copies by hand or mail.

I certify that this water supply has fully complied with the public notification regulations in the Safe Drinking Water Act, Subpart Q.

CERTIFICATION:

PWS ID#: MI0000600

Signature

Ellis E. Mitchell

Title

City Manager

Date Distributed

5/17/2022

¹The following health effect language in Mich. Admin. Code R. 325.10405 is still applicable: Infants and children who drink water containing lead could experience delays in their physical or mental development. Children could show slight deficits in attention span and learning abilities. Adults who drink this water over many years could develop kidney problems or high blood pressure.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR DRINKING WATER

Monitoring Requirements Not Met for the City of Benton Harbor

We are required to monitor your drinking water for specific contaminants on a regular basis. Results of regular monitoring are an indicator of whether our drinking water meets health standards. During September 2021, we did not monitor or test and we did not complete all monitoring or testing for residual chlorine and therefore cannot be sure of the quality of your drinking water during that time. We routinely monitor your water for chlorine disinfectant residuals and turbidity at many locations. This tells us whether we are effectively disinfecting the water supply.

In September 2021, EPA observed at the water plant a failure to calibrate the chlorine analyzer and turbidimeter monitoring equipment, which continuously monitor the chlorine and turbidity levels entering the system. Low chlorine levels may indicate a lack of disinfection. Turbidity has no direct health effects; however, turbidity can interfere with disinfection and provide a medium for microbial growth. Turbidity may indicate the presence of disease-causing organisms.

What happened? What is being done?

The calibration issues with our chlorine analyzers and turbidimeters were found in September 2021. To resolve this violation, we are working under EPA's November 2, 2021, Unilateral Administrative Order. The devices were calibrated on September 23, 2021, and we are currently developing standard operating procedures for routine calibration and maintenance practices. Water sampling data collected by Benton Harbor has demonstrated that measured chlorine residuals in the distribution system are consistent with Safe Drinking Water Act regulatory requirements. For more information, please contact Ellis Mitchell, City Manager, at 269-927-8457. This notice is being sent to you by the City of Benton Harbor.

What does this mean?

- This past equipment calibration issue is **not** an emergency. If it had been, you would have been notified within 24 hours.
- Inadequately treated water may contain disease-causing organisms. These organisms include bacteria, viruses, and parasites which can cause symptoms such as nausea, cramps, diarrhea, and associated headaches.
- These symptoms, however, are **not** caused only by organisms in drinking water, but also by other factors. If you experienced any of these symptoms and they persist, you may want to seek medical advice.

What should I do?

- You do not need to take action due to this equipment calibration issue but due to past lead action level exceedances in the community, residents are currently being provided with alternate water sources. Free bottled water continues to be provided by the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) to City of Benton Harbor residents for cooking, drinking, brushing teeth, rinsing foods and mixing powdered infant formula. You do not need to boil your water or take other corrective actions to shower, bathe, wash hands, dishes, or clothes, or for cleaning. However, if you have specific health concerns, consult your doctor.
- If you have a severely compromised immune system, have an infant, are pregnant, or are elderly, you may be at increased risk and should seek advice from your health care providers about drinking this water. General guidelines on ways to lessen the risk of infection by microbes are available from EPA's Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 1-800-426-4791.
- We continue to monitor for microbial contamination per the state and federal regulations. Our current monitoring data shows we are in compliance with regulations.

Please share this information with all the other people who drink this water, especially those who may not have received this notice directly (for example, people in apartments, nursing homes, schools, and businesses). You can do this by posting this notice in a public place or distributing copies by hand or mail.

CERTIFICATION:

PWSID#: MI0000600

I certify that this water supply has fully complied with the public notification regulations in the Safe Drinking Water Act, Subpart Q.

Signature: 

Title: 

Date Distributed: 

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR DRINKING WATER

Prior to 2017, there is no record that the City of Benton Harbor Completed a Disinfection Profiling and Benchmarking Process Change

We, the Benton Harbor water system, have no record of contacting the State in 2017 prior to modifying our disinfection practices. Although this incident was not an emergency, as our customers, you have a right to know what happened and what we did to correct this situation.

Between 2010 and 2017, changes were made to our disinfection practices. Those changes required collaboration and approval with the State to conduct Study of Disinfection Profiling and Benchmarking Process as the first step prior to making any changes. Disinfection is a critical element in controlling the transmission of disease from drinking water by inactivating disease-causing pathogens, such as bacteria, protozoa, and viruses that can affect human health. We were required to submit to the State a description of the proposed change to our disinfection practices, specific disinfection records, and an analysis of how the proposed change would affect the levels of disinfection in our system.

What happened? What is being done?

We made changes to disinfection application between 2010 and 2017 without consulting the State. To resolve this violation, we are working under EPA's November 2, 2021, Unilateral Administrative Order, which requires us to develop a new disinfection profile and benchmark based on the current application points to ensure any additional modifications to our disinfection process are in compliance with state and federal regulations. We are consulting with the State and EPA regarding the disinfection process. Water sampling data collected by Benton Harbor has demonstrated that measured chlorine residuals in the distribution system are consistent with the Safe Drinking Water Act regulatory requirements. For more information, please contact Ellis Mitchell, City Manager, at 269-927-8457. This notice is being sent to you by the City of Benton Harbor.

What does this mean?

- This past disinfection process change is not an emergency. If it had been an emergency, you would have been notified within 24 hours.
- Inadequately treated water may contain disease-causing organisms. These organisms include bacteria, viruses, and parasites which can cause symptoms such as nausea, cramps, diarrhea, and associated headaches.
- These symptoms, however, are not caused only by organisms in drinking water, but also by other factors. If you experienced any of these symptoms and they persist, you may want to seek medical advice.

What should I do?

- You do not need to take action due to this disinfection process change but due to past lead action level exceedances in the community, residents are currently being provided with alternate water sources. Free bottled water continues to be provided by the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) to City of Benton Harbor residents for cooking, drinking, brushing teeth, rinsing foods, and mixing powdered infant formula. You do not need to boil your water or take other corrective actions to shower, bathe, wash hands, dishes, or clothes, or for cleaning. However, if you have specific health concerns, consult your doctor.
- If you have a severely compromised immune system, have an infant, are pregnant, or are elderly, you may be at increased risk and should seek advice from your health care providers about drinking this water. General guidelines on ways to lessen the risk of infection by microbes are available from EPA's Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 1-800-426-4791.
- We continue to monitor for microbial contamination per the state and federal regulations. Our current monitoring data shows that we are in compliance with regulations.

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CERTIFICATION: PWS ID#: MI0000600

I certify that this water supply has fully complied with the public notification regulations in the Safe Drinking Water Act, Subpart Q.

Signature: Ellis E. Mitchell Title: City Manager

Date Distributed: 



Benton Harbor Water Plant
200 E. Wall Street
Benton Harbor, MI 49022

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BENTON HARBOR, MI
PERMIT NO# 199

Benton Harbor Water Plant

**Please Open and Read!*
Consider sharing it with your Friends and Neighbors.
Benton Harbor Water Department

**IMPORTANT INFORMATION
ABOUT LEAD IN YOUR DRINKING WATER!***