

City of Benton Harbor

Lead Action Level Exceedance Public Health Response

Lead in the City of Benton Harbor Drinking Water

Michigan is committed to reducing lead in the drinking water in our communities across the state and ensuring residents have safe water in the interim.

The City of Benton Harbor's drinking water exceeded the federal Action Level for lead in 2018, due to contamination from lead service lines and indoor plumbing fixtures. Since then, the State of Michigan and Berrien County Health Department (BCHD) have been providing water filters to city residents to protect against lead in the drinking water.

However, on Oct. 6, 2021, Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) recommended the use of bottled water for cooking, drinking, brushing teeth, rinsing foods and mixing powdered infant formula while a study is done to confirm that water filters are working in the city of Benton Harbor. An Environmental Protection Agency study is underway and aimed to verify that filters are effective in reducing lead in the city's drinking water. Bottled water will continue to be distributed to City of Benton Harbor residents through a local-state partnership.

Public Health Response to the City of Benton Harbor Lead ALE

Since 2019, MDHHS and BCHD have collaboratively worked together to provide lead services to the City of Benton Harbor residents. To learn more call MDHHS at 866-691-5323.



Lead Safe Home Program



Lead Education



Community Engagement and Outreach



Lead Safe In-Home Daycare Program



Water Testing Program



Alternative Water

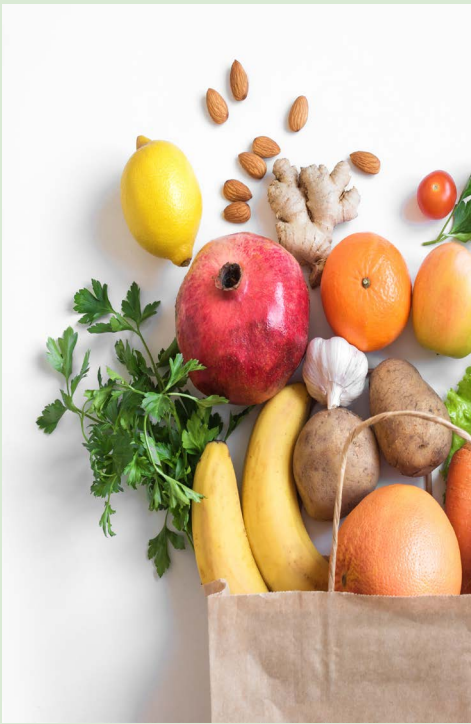


Blood Lead Testing



City of Benton Harbor residents are being asked to use bottled water while work is completed to provide assurance that efforts like filtering are proving effective in reducing lead exposure.

For more information, or to learn of bottled water distribution location, please call 2-1-1 (844-875-9211) or visit Michigan.gov/MiLeadSafe. Scan the QR code to find locations and times to pick up free bottled water. BCHD water hotline can also be reached at 800-815-5485, Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.



City of Benton Harbor residents have access to Assistance programs that can help.

Benton Harbor families in need of support may be eligible to receive food assistance and other state assistance program benefits like health care coverage, childcare, utility relief and cash assistance. To learn more, call 2-1-1 (844-875-9211) or apply for benefits and explore local resources at Michigan.gov/MIBridges.

To protect Benton Harbor's youngest residents and reduce lead exposure, the Michigan WIC program recommends breastfeeding or offering breast milk as long as possible. Talk to your medical provider if you have questions about your lead exposure.

Contact your local WIC clinic at 269-927-5646 to take advantage of additional breastfeeding support and nutrition education services. For parents choosing to formula feed, the WIC program offers ready-to-feed formula that does not require mixing with water to Benton Harbor's eligible WIC clients. Ready-to-feed formula benefits may be obtained by using the WIC EBT card at authorized WIC vendors.

Moving Forward

The State of Michigan is engaging in a long-term effort to eliminate lead action level exceedances, educate communities on the effects of lead in drinking water, and remove lead service lines.

- Under an executive directive issued by the Governor, a goal of replacing all lead service lines within city of Benton Harbor within 18 months has been set.
- The state has pledged \$20 million to accelerate the replacement lead service lines throughout the city.
- The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is conducting a study to ensure the water filters are an effective tool in Benton Harbor. In the meantime, free bottled water is being distributed. There have been 26,000 cases already delivered to residents with a steady supply on the way.

There is an across-the-board effort to reduce the risk of exposure to lead in drinking water while the city replaces all lead service lines. This collaborative effort includes the City of Benton Harbor, BCHD, local community organizations, MDHHS and the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE).

For more information visit, Michigan.gov/MiLeadSafe or scan the QR code.



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ATENCIÓN: si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Llame al 800-648-6942 (TTY: 711).

ملحوظة: إذا كنت تتحدث اذكر اللغة، فإن خدمات المساعدة اللغوية تتوافر لك بالمجان. اتصل برقم 800-648-6942 (رقم هاتف الصم والبكم: 711-TTY).