



**The White House
Office of the Press Secretary**

Fact Sheet: Federal Support for the Flint Water Crisis Response and Recovery

On January 16, 2016, President Barack Obama issued an emergency declaration for the State of Michigan and ordered Federal aid to supplement state and local response efforts due to the emergency conditions in Flint, Michigan, affected by contaminated water. The President's action authorized the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to provide water, water filters, water filter cartridges, water test kits, and other necessary related items; assistance with those commodities has been extended through August 14, 2016.

Additionally, the President offered assistance in identifying other Federal agency capabilities that could support the recovery effort but do not require an emergency declaration. On January 19, the President designated the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as the lead Federal agency responsible for coordinating Federal support for response and recovery efforts in Flint. Dr. Nicole Lurie, the HHS Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response and currently the Federal Government's senior response official in Flint, is coordinating the efforts of all the Federal agencies, including: HHS agencies, FEMA, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Small Business Administration (SBA), the Department of Agriculture (USDA), the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the Department of Labor (DOL), the Department of Commerce (DOC), and the Department of Education (ED). Federal agencies are providing water and filters to the State of Michigan, testing water in Flint residences, and supporting health and community outreach.

Federal agencies will continue to offer expertise and technical assistance to state and local agencies for as long as needed to support the community's recovery and resilience.

Ensuring Access to Safe Water

Federal officials have worked with state and local partners to improve access to bottled water and water filters.

- FEMA has provided over 9.3 million liters of water to the state for distribution, over 50,000 water and pitcher filters, and over 243,000 filter replacement cartridges.

- HUD has worked with the Flint Housing Commission to ensure 100% installation, the future upkeep of water filters in every unit of public housing, and HUD's Federally-assisted and HUD-insured properties.
- In addition, HUD is working with local partners to ensure that seniors and disabled residents in public housing receive and have continuing access to clean water.

Protecting Health

Blood lead testing

The Federal Government is working to make blood lead testing available for Flint residents, especially children under the age of six.

- HHS continues to work with healthcare providers and local officials to offer blood lead testing to as many children and residents as possible.
- To assist with the testing initiative, USDA temporarily authorized blood lead screening at clinics for participants in the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC).
- HUD is working with a local provider to offer onsite blood lead testing for children in public housing.

The U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps cleared a backlog of approximately 800 blood lead level screening results and prepared test result notifications for parents and the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS).

Rash Investigation

EPA and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) experts continue to support the state's investigation of rashes and other skin concerns affecting Flint residents to help identify potential causes. Lead is not known to be a skin irritant.

Services for Children

The HHS Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) expanded Medicaid coverage for children and young people up to age 21 and pregnant women in Flint impacted by lead exposure. The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services expects to begin enrollment in May.

- Approximately 15,000 additional children, young people, and pregnant women will now be eligible for Medicaid coverage, and 30,000 current Medicaid beneficiaries in the area are eligible for expanded services.
- This comprehensive health and developmental coverage includes blood lead level monitoring, behavioral health services, and targeted case management. Targeted case management services

will include assistance to help impacted residents gain access to needed medical, social, educational, and other services.

HHS provided \$250,000 in emergency supplemental funding to both the Hamilton Community Health Network and Genesee Health System to hire new staff and provide additional services. In the first 30 days after receiving the funds, the health centers reportedly provided outreach services to more than 2,600 patients to help prevent continued lead exposure, tested more than 1,600 patients for lead, referred 28 patients with elevated lead levels for follow-up appointments, including 27 patients younger than six years old, and provided behavioral health services for almost 450 patients.

Since February, Federal nurses have assisted Genesee County Health Department with enrolling children with elevated blood lead levels into Michigan's Department of Health and Human Services Lead Poisoning Prevention Program for case management. Federal nurses from the CDC, the U.S. Public Health Service, and the HHS Health Resources and Services Administration have made 377 home visits and phone calls to Genesee County families to help enroll children in the program and provide lead prevention education.

The HHS Administration for Children and Families provided guidance to the state on the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program, with the goal of helping families in the program access bottled water, gas cards, and bus passes to reach water distribution sites or healthcare facilities.

One-time HHS emergency funding of \$3.6 million helped Head Start grantees expand early childhood education, behavioral health services, health services, and nutrition services. Grantees have:

- Opened three additional classrooms beginning March 2016 through June 2017 for children in the most affected areas. These classes were filled by March 28.
- Lengthened the current school year by three weeks and lengthened the school day from seven hours to seven-and-a-half hours.
- Provided Head Start comprehensive services to preschoolers already enrolled in the school's special education program.
- Enrolled two dozen additional children in the home-based model.

An assistant surgeon general with the U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps worked with the mayor's office as a health advisor to help develop health goals for a community recovery plan and to help identify a permanent health advisor for the city.

Nutrition

Foods rich in calcium, iron and vitamin C helps mitigate lead absorption in children. USDA increased access to these foods by:

- Providing summertime nutrition assistance through a Summer Electronic Benefits Transfer pilot program for the more than 15,000 Flint children who live or attend schools in the area affected by lead-contaminated water. These students are eligible to receive a \$30 benefit package each summer month for nutritious foods that may help mitigate lead absorption. Nationwide, the pilot program will provide \$26.9 million for summertime nutrition assistance this year.
- Encouraging all eligible Flint Community Schools and other Flint-area schools to participate in the Community Eligibility Provision, a program that ensures universal access to healthy, school meals.
- Providing an additional \$62,700 to help schools purchase fresh fruit and vegetable snacks. Four additional schools serving more than 1,200 students are now participating in this program.

Allowing eligible mothers of non-breastfed infants to use WIC benefits for ready-to-feed infant formula, which does not need to be mixed with water.

Behavioral Health

HHS behavioral health teams provided basic psychological first-aid skills training to 183 people. They conducted stress management training with 247 healthcare providers and responders and taught a “Train the Trainers” for 32 local providers to enable them to teach basic psychological first-aid training. HHS also sponsored Spanish and English versions of the training materials tailored to the Flint water crisis to be shared with the community.

HHS also facilitated development of a long-term mental health recovery and resilience plan in coordination with Genesee Health System and other community partners to help improve the behavioral health system as the community recovers. This plan will be implemented by the community with technical assistance from the HHS Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

Restoring Flint’s Water System

EPA is conducting water testing to monitor restoration of the city’s water system. Results show the system is recovering.

- **Diagnostic Lead Sampling:** EPA is conducting lead sampling upon request and in homes that are identified as being at risk for high lead levels to help determine if lead is coming from the house or the service line. Most sampling teams are accompanied by community engagement staff to ensure that residents can ask questions and receive plain-language answers about sampling. EPA has evaluated over 4,500 samples in more than 650 homes and other properties. These results are available via an interactive map at www.epa.gov/flint
- **Lead and Copper Rule Sampling:** In accordance with the administrative order that EPA issued to the State of Michigan, EPA reviews Michigan’s Lead and Copper Rule compliance

sampling plans before they are implemented. EPA may also collect samples at some of these locations to gather more information about the impact of lead in the water.

- **Testing Lead Filters in Homes:** EPA has taken nearly 400 samples of drinking water in approximately 200 homes at residents' request and in households with known lead levels of 100 parts per billion or higher to test the effectiveness of filters at removing lead at high concentrations. Filters distributed in response to this water crisis are rated at 150 parts per billion. EPA's sampling results confirm that the filters are effective in removing lead from drinking water at levels higher than 150 parts per billion. As a precaution, bottled water is still considered the safest option for vulnerable populations, including pregnant and breast-feeding women, infants, and children under six years old whose water tests higher than 150 parts per billion. Everyone else should use filtered water for drinking and cooking. Pets should also drink filtered water.

- **Overall Water Quality Testing:** EPA is collecting water samples from locations throughout Flint to evaluate the levels of fluoride, other compounds, and pH. As part of this assessment, EPA is analyzing the overall stability of water quality throughout Flint's distribution system. EPA is also testing to be sure enough chlorine is in the water. Chlorine is used to disinfect drinking water and prevent the growth of bacteria and other pathogens. At locations where chlorine is low, EPA follows up with additional testing for bacteria.

- **Flush for Flint Initiative:** EPA, the City of Flint, and the State of Michigan launched the Flush for Flint campaign to encourage residents to run water from their kitchen sinks and bathroom tubs for 5 minutes each day for 14 straight days during the month of May. More water flowing will help flush out additional lead particles in the water system. The State of Michigan is paying for the program and credit will be added to residents' water bills.

Economic Recovery

The Federal Government is providing economic development assistance to help Flint recover from the crisis and continue to grow its economy.

- The U.S. Department of Labor is providing a National Dislocated Worker Grant for up to \$15 million to assist with humanitarian and recovery efforts resulting from the water crisis in Flint. The \$7.5 million released initially is providing temporary employment for eligible individuals to assist with recovery work, as well as offer career and training services to help them find permanent work.

- SBA provided approximately \$400,000 in additional funding through a number of programs, including \$100,000 in Microloan capital, an additional \$100,000 available for training and technical assistance to Flint entrepreneurs, a \$100,000 increase in existing technical assistance for small businesses in the area, and \$100,000 in supplemental funding to the Kettering University Small Business Development Center. SBA also approved a state request for low-interest disaster loans for small businesses within the greater Flint area.

- The Federal Housing Administration (FHA) determined properties may still qualify for FHA-insured mortgage if the individual water purification system meets all Federal, state, and local standards. This helps homebuyers in Flint secure FHA-insured loans.
- HUD allowed \$325,000 of an existing lead-paint hazard grant for public housing in Flint to be applied to this crisis.
- Technical and capacity-building assistance to Flint through the White House Strong Cities, Strong Communities (SC2) initiative has been extended through 2016. Co-chaired by HUD and the Domestic Policy Council with the involvement of 19 federal agencies, this program focuses on economic development in economically distressed communities. Flint has a federal team lead embedded in city hall coordinating Federal resources to support the city in three core areas: public safety, blight elimination, and economic development.

Connecting the Community to Public Health Resources and Services

- EPA has partnered with local non-profit organizations on a door-to-door canvassing effort to educate residents on safeguards they should employ to protect themselves from high lead exposure. To date, EPA has collaborated with these organizations to reach more than 10,000 homes. In addition, EPA staff have made more than 500 visits to approximately 450 locations around Flint to inform and engage residents regarding the federal government's response efforts and related resources.
- HUD, the Flint Housing Commission, and more than a dozen local partners collaborated on a Lead Testing and Informational pilot outreach event. More than 250 public housing residents participated to learn more about the water situation in Flint, lead testing, available health services, and general public health information.

Building Capacity through National Service

- The Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), which administers AmeriCorps, recently announced \$1.3 million in new AmeriCorps commitments www.nationalservice.gov/newsroom/press-releases/2016/national-service-agency-announces-13-million-new-ameri-corps-commitments to support state and local efforts addressing the water emergency, blight, and public safety in Flint. On May 2, nearly 20 AmeriCorps NCCC members arrived in Flint to support water distribution, resource coordination, and blight elimination efforts. CNCS is expanding Operation AmeriCorps to support a total of 55 AmeriCorps members in the Flint Community School Corps to provide before, during, and after-school and summer learning activities for K-7 grade students, including tutoring, health education, conflict resolution, service-learning, and access to social services. In total, more than 120 AmeriCorps members and Senior Corps volunteers have been deployed to Flint in response to the water crisis.