August 13, 2021

MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF
ENVIRONMENT, GREAT LAKES, AND ENERGY

Topline Messages – Flint Water Improvements

Flint is connecting a secondary water pipeline from Lake Huron as a backup to the existing pipe from the lake – a second straw in the same big drink. This is part of a suite of modernizations that will make Flint's water system one of the safest and most reliable in the nation.

- The secondary line provides the people of Flint with an added level of protection – a backup water supply. Most large municipalities in Michigan already have a backup water supply in case of an emergency. Flint's back up water connection will use the same source water from Lake Huron as the current pipeline.
- To start the process of creating a backup water supply for the people of Flint, a secondary connection to the Genesee County Drain Commission (GCDC) water system will begin with a 5% flow of water in combination with the current water that flows from the Great Lakes Water (GLWA) Authority.
- As part of a transition that ultimately will provide Flint with an important and necessary backup water supply, the 5% of the water that will flow from the Genesee County Drain Commission will be increased in increments of 25% over the next five weeks with testing and monitoring along the way to ensure water quality. This step-by-step transition facilitates system upgrades, quality assurance and monitoring necessary to create a safe, permanent connection to the backup water system.
- With this upgrade, the city of Flint will never need to consider using Flint River water again.
- The project will automate and modernize the primary water line system equipment, including aging valves. The valve replacement will require the use of the backup pipeline to provide 100% of Flint's water for a period of 6-8 weeks this fall. Water from Genesee County Drain Commission will undergo the same treatment process as the current line's water and be subject to regular testing and increased monitoring to ensure it meets all quality standards.
- When the valve replacement work is complete, Flint's water will once again primarily come from Great Lakes Water Authority.
- To keep the water in the backup pipeline fresh and ready to use in an emergency, a small amount of Genesee County water (about 5 percent of the overall volume) will flow on an ongoing basis into the Flint water system.

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- The system is sampled regularly for key water quality parameters to quickly identify any water chemistry issues.
- Throughout the project enhanced sampling within the Flint Distribution system will be completed to ensure high water quality is maintained. This sampling has already begun to establish a baseline at each of the sampling sites. Protocols include safeguards that would allow a return to Great Lakes Water Authority water within 24 hours if a problem is detected. We do not anticipate any problems given the very similar water chemistry, but we are prepared to respond if we see anything.
- The System water sampling approach and data is posted on the Michigan Flint Water [HYPERLINK "https://www.michigan.gov/flintwater/0,6092,7-345-106996_107353---,00.html"], (Genesee County Data).
- These fully funded improvements are part of a larger water system upgrade that includes lead service line replacement, a new chemical feed building, water meter replacements, and renovations to the Dort Reservoir.
- United States Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA), Michigan EGLE and the City of Flint have been working together for the last several years on several major upgrades to Flint's drinking water system including the connection to a redundant source of water. This project is part of the remaining work necessary to complete U.S. EPA's emergency order.

Talking points for backup water line

- Our priority is maintaining safe water for City of Flint residents by providing a backup option in the event of a disruption in the city's current water delivery system, which is provided by Great Lakes Water Authority.
- Reiterate: The water for both the back up and current water systems originates from Lake Huron, although it is drawn from different points in the water that are several miles apart.
- During the transition, safeguards will be in place to initiate a full return to water from the current Great Lakes Water Authority line within 24 hours in the event of an unanticipated water quality issue.
- The U.S. EPA, EGLE and the Flint Department of Public Works agree that the water chemistry of the Great Lakes Water Authority and Genesee County Drain Commission are very similar and can be used interchangeably.
- Both systems deliver the same Lake Huron water Flint currently receives, although it flows through a different treatment plant and is delivered through a different pipe.
- The backup water will receive exactly the same treatment protocol as the current treated water the city receives from Great Lakes Water Authority which has now met all standards for five consecutive years.
- Flint residents will receive water that is treated with the same process as the water they are currently using, which flows from the Great Lakes Water Authority.

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- To ensure water quality, rigorous and increased testing will take place during and after the transition to ensure it continues to meet all health criteria. Test results will be publicly posted.
- When the project is completed, Flint will join Michigan's other large cities by having access to a reliable, state-of-the-art back up water supply.
- Flint will continue to use Lake Huron water provided by the Great Lakes Water Authority, as its primary water supplier.
- The backup connects to the Genesee County Drain Commission system and will ensure safe water in the event of service disruption from Great Lakes Water Authority.
- To keep the water in the backup pipeline fresh and ready to use in an emergency, a small amount of Genesee County water (about 5 percent of the overall volume) will flow on an ongoing basis into the Flint water system.

Resident Resources:

- **Water Filter Pickup Locations**

Flint residents can obtain sampling kits, water filters and water filter replacement cartridges at the Flint City Hall (1101 Saginaw St., Flint MI 48502.) The Kiosk at City Hall is open from 8:00 am - 4:00 pm weekdays. Residents can also call 810-410-2020 to request a sample kit be dropped off or picked up by a Health Navigator.

For more information regarding water filters or water test kit availability, contact the City of Flint at 810-766-7106.

- **Water concerns**

Information and resources for those with water concerns, including answers to frequently asked questions and a concern form that can be completed, can be found online by visiting Michigan.gov/CleanWater, then selecting "Drinking Water Concern System" from the menu.

- **Michigan Department of Health and Human Services Contact**

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