EGLE | MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT, GREAT LAKES, AND ENERGY

BENTON HARBOR, MICHIGAN – STATE EFFORTS

In 2018, high lead levels were discovered in tap water in the City of Benton Harbor. The City performed routine monitoring for lead and copper by sampling at homes connected to the Benton Harbor Water Supply and found that more than 10% of these samples exceeded the Action Level for lead. The samples collected in previous rounds did not have the same elevated results. The State of Michigan has taken the following actions to support the Benton Harbor community, including securing $17 million for the City, and remains committed to assuring all residents have safe drinking water.

- Made filters available to all residents through the Berrien County Health Department or by calling 1-800-815-5485.
- Partnered with the City and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to install corrosion control treatment needed to provide safe drinking water to residents.
- Developed and updated communication materials, including the statewide Mi Lead Safe web site.
- Supported the City with the collection of 2.5 times the number of water system samples as compared to 2018 resulting in a more comprehensive set of results to inform decision making.
- Worked with the City to secure a contractor to serve as the operator in charge of plant operations.
- Created a Benton Harbor Water Outreach Task Force in March 2021 in coordination with local advocates to develop additional educational materials for residents.
- Launched the Water Leak Pilot to install new plumbing fixtures in 100 homes free of charge.
- Worked with the City on 14 public conferences, advisories, and meetings on the lead action level exceedances providing updates and answering questions from community members.
- Verified improved treatment chemical injection at the water treatment plant.
- Conducted on-site visits and system reviews.
- Negotiated a revised Consent Order specifying technical requirements necessary to reduce risk.
- Worked with a local pediatrician to monitor blood level trends to keep kids safe.
- Partnered with the City on efforts to revitalize Ox Creek focused on visioning and planning to address nonpoint source and contamination issues.
- Led and continues to lead weekly operations meetings directly with City personnel and contractors to verify basic water system functions and set priorities.

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- Partnered with the City to secure funding for the following active projects ranging from lead service line replacements to sewer improvements:

Project	Amount	Notes
EPA Grant	**$5.6 million**	EGLE assisted the City with securing federal funds for the replacement of lead service lines and a corrosion control study.
Drinking Water State Revolving Fund	**$6 million** 40-year loan at 2% interest (includes $540,000 loan forgiveness)	Issued in August 2020 for water main replacements, lead service line replacements, and storage improvements.
Clean Water State Revolving Fund	**$4,675,000** 30-year loan at 2.25% interest (includes $935,000 loan forgiveness)	Issued in August 2020 for sanitary sewer improvements.
Drinking Water Asset Management Grant	**$543,024**	Field verification of 339 service lines and asset management plan updates.
Affordability and Planning	**$168,500**	Technical, managerial, and financial study along with rate study.
Restart Grant	**$100,000** ($75,000 state and $25,000 city match)	Reconnect homes to water supply.
Water Leak Pilot Program	**$20,000**	Evaluate 100 homes for water leaks and identify efficiency upgrades.
Twin Cities Sustainable Harbor Initiative	**$170,000**	Develop shared vision and plan to revitalize harbor and adjacent waterfront.
Total Active Projects	**$17 million**	

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