UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

The Honorable Karen Williams Weaver
Mayor of Flint
1101 South Saginaw Street
Flint, Michigan 48502

JUL 19 2016

OFFICE OF
ENFORCEMENT AND
COMPLIANCE ASSURANCE

Mr. Keith Creagh
Director
Michigan Department of Environmental Quality
Constitution Hall
525 West Allegan Street
P.O. Box 30473
Lansing, Michigan 48909-7973

Dear Mayor Weaver and Director Creagh:

There are few things more important to running a drinking water system than maintaining adequate disinfection, especially in the summer months. Therefore, we were very concerned to learn that on Friday, July 16 the City ran out of chlorine tablets for the pellet chlorinators, resulting in no additional chlorination being available at either of Flint's reservoirs. After EPA contacted MDEQ regarding this issue, the City did take steps to increase chlorine addition at the plant, and to obtain chlorine pellets on an emergency basis. We understand that an emergency order of chlorine tablets is being delivered today or tomorrow. In the interim, it was necessary for the City to contact neighboring communities to borrow chlorine tablets until its own order arrives. We understand that Flint was only able to obtain chlorine with immediate assistance from MDEQ in both locating stocks and procurement.

While the City is moving toward an appropriate change in chlorination systems at the reservoirs, the City cannot lose capacity to add chlorine at the reservoirs before the new chlorine feed systems become operational. The lapse in ability to add chlorine at the reservoirs, and the fact that no actions to secure pellets appear to have been taken until EPA elevated the issue and MDEQ intervened, demonstrate a continuing need for the City to take stronger action to effectively manage the drinking water system. Planning ahead to avoid running out of such essential supplies is a fundamental part of running a safe drinking water system and complying with the requirement of the Section 1431 Order that the City maintain chlorine residual.

Sincerely,

for Mark Pollins
Director
Water Enforcement Division