



# Legislative Brief

MAY 11, 2016

## LEAD POISONING THROUGH COMMUNITY WATER PIPES SHOULD NEVER HAPPEN!

Lead poisoning occurs when you absorb too much lead by breathing or swallowing a substance with lead in it such as paint, dust, water or food. Lead can damage almost every organ system. In children, too much lead in the body can cause lasting problems with growth and development. These can affect behavior, hearing, and learning and can slow a child's growth. In adults, lead poisoning can damage the brain and nervous system, the stomach and the kidneys. The most common source of lead exposure for children is lead-based paints. This is particularly true in houses or buildings built before 1978. The risk is even higher in those built before 1950 when lead-based paints were more commonly used.

A recent major lead contamination occurred in Flint, Michigan, when it was discovered that lead was flowing through pipes in many homes, particularly those that were soldered with lead many years ago. Lead is rarely found in source water, but enters tap water through corrosion of plumbing materials.

The reality is today that millions of children who live in public housing are subject to lead regulations that set a blood level of three to four times what is currently recommended by the Center of Disease Control and Prevention. There is absolutely no excuse for their out-of-date regulation that disproportionately affect minority and low-income children. Under the present law, they are not required to reduce lead levels in a child until it reaches 20 micrograms—four times higher than what the federal government's own scientific studies recommends.

Michael Moore in his research of the Flint, Michigan lead problem identified a number of unnecessary causes that could have avoided the crisis.

*"But the souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, and no torment will ever touch them. In the eyes of the foolish they seem to have died and their departure was thought to be a disaster, and their going from us to be their destruction; but they are at peace."*

(Solomon 3: 1-3 NRSV)

Send an email to:  
[HealthyOhio@medicaid.ohio.gov](mailto:HealthyOhio@medicaid.ohio.gov)

Ask the Feds to not approve the "Healthy Ohio" Medicaid Waiver request that would cause major difficulty for the poor families that Medicaid is suppose to be helping.

### IDENTIFICATION STATEMENT

Date, May 11, 2016

Frequency :-Monthly

Published By:

*Ohio Council of Churches (OCC)*

*6161 Busch Blvd. Suite 100*

*Columbus, OH 43229-*

*Phone: 614/885-9590*

*Fax: 614/885-6097*

*E-mail: mail@ohcouncilchs.org*

*Issue:#5- 2016*

**You are welcome to copy or quote  
from the Legislative Brief.  
Tom Smith, Editor**

Mr. Moore attributes much of the difficulties to Gov. Rick Snyder. First, he nullified the fair elections in Flint, and deposed the elected Mayor and City Council and replaced them with a person that he himself appointed to run the city. In order to save money, they decided to disconnect the homes in Flint from the freshwater source coming from Lake Huron. This water was primarily coming from underground springs. For those living in Flint, they were shifted to water from the Flint River. The people in Flint quickly began to complain about the smell and taste of the new water. When the Governor and his staff discovered the toxic water they decided to keep quiet and cover-up the extent of the level of lead. To make matters worse, the children of Flint were allowed to drink the contaminated water while General Motors were given a special hook-up to the spring water that all of Flint had before. GM complained that the Flint River water was corroding their metal parts on the vehicles. GM was the only address in Flint to get the good water from Lake Huron. The Governor spent \$410,000 to provide the water for GM.

The ironic part of this injustice was that the crisis could have been avoided for just \$100 a day for 3 months or a total of \$9,000 by adding an anti-corrosion element to the water coming out of the Flint River and the problem would have been solved.

The media kept saying that Flint was using "Detroit's water." The fact is that it was only filtered and treated at the Detroit water plant. The water itself was coming from the same place that Flint got its water prior to the Governor's taking it away. It was from Lake Huron, the third largest body of fresh water in the world. It is a glacial lake formed over 10,000 years ago during the last Ice Age. Flint is geographically the last place on Earth where one should be drinking poisoned water.

Ohioans have followed the Flint discussion and are urging quick action by Gov. Kasich and environmental regulators to provide early notice of lead problems that prompt schools and communities to respond quickly with testing and financial help to fix the lead concerns.

A discovery in Sebring, Ohio has helped to provide other communities with quick solutions to lead problems.

Heather Taylor Miesle, executive director of Ohio's Environmental Council applauded the efforts in Ohio to modernize policies regarding lead.

The Ohio law that changes the definition of "lead free" pipes and plumbing fixtures is reduced from 8% to 0.25% matching federal law.

Pres. Obama told Flint residents, "I've got your back! I will not rest until every drop of water that flows to your home is safe to drink, to cook with, and to bathe in."

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