



STATE OF MICHIGAN  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES  
LANSING

RICK SNYDER  
GOVERNOR

NICK LYON  
DIRECTOR

April 24, 2016

The Honorable Jeff Irwin  
Joint Select Committee on the Flint  
Water Public Health Emergency  
S-987 House Office Building  
Lansing, MI 48933

- 1. What is the connection between Flint River water and this recent breakout of legionella? What is the difficulty in connecting the deaths from legionnaire's disease with the Flint River Water? Are there other viable theories as to how legionella spiked in Genesee County?**

At this point, no connection between the switch of the Flint water source and the Genesee County Legionella outbreak has been established, but working with the GCHD and CDC, an association has not been ruled out. Legionella is common in the environment regardless of the water source. In this case, the lack of clinical Legionella isolates precluded our ability to affirmatively link cases to an environmental source. There was an association with one healthcare facility, which is not uncommon in Legionella outbreaks.

- 2. With respect to the response to the Flint Water Crisis, have you received any proposals from state employees or outside vendors to provide water, filters and other emergency management services? Will you share those proposals with the committee?**

We are aware of many offers of assistance from various sources, including anonymous donations, some of which were directed to the State Emergency Operations Center. The Department is not aware of any specific proposals directed to MDHHS. If such proposals are discovered, we will share those with the Committee.

- 3. Who at HHS told CDC that assistance was not needed to mitigate the spread of legionnaires? Has HHS reached out to CDC to receive guidance and assistance on how to mitigate the spread of legionnaire's disease?**

This question assumes facts which MDHHS does not believe are true. We consider CDC an on-going partner in all of our work and consult and collaborate with them on a routine basis. Six CDC personnel, who are embedded in MDHHS staff, were already involved throughout the investigation, and in all of our efforts. And we have been in constant

communication with CDC. Most recently, we worked with CDC and GCHD to develop a legionella toolkit that was distributed to all health departments across the state.

**4. With the failings of your own department and that of the DEQ, have you, or any other department directors, examined the culture of your own department to ensure that the culture and internal processes are directed towards protecting the public health?**

While we acknowledge and always strive to improve our performance and to get the best results, we do not agree with this characterization. Working through and with local health departments, MDHHS supports and promotes a culture of customer responsiveness, inclusiveness, and transparency. MDHHS strives to address health equity and improve service delivery through programs that promote innovation, integration of services, and person centric focus.