

Questions for the Common Council Related to Lead Contamination in
Milwaukee's Drinking Water Supply.

Get The Lead Out Coalition

Fresh Water Life Action Coalition

February 2019

***CITY OWNED PROPERTIES**

-The vast majority of the 3,000 City owned properties do not have a year listed in the Master Property Database. City owned properties are listed as "Null" instead of an actual year they were built.

-Why are the Years Built for city owned properties not provided in the Master Property Database (MPROP)?

-Many of these city owned properties were built before 1951 and probably have a lead service line on the private side. When mapping properties built before 1951 to identify private lead service lines the vast majority of city owned properties that probably have lead service lines do not show on the map.

-Please update the Master Property Database so we can identify City Owned Residential Properties that were built before 1951. This update to the database is needed so the community can identify the private lead service lines at city owned properties throughout the city.

***CITY OWNED TAX FORECLOSED PROPERTIES AND HOUSEHOLDS ENTERING INTO LEASES WITH THE CITY OF MILWAUKEE**

"DCD real estate staff and DNS inspection staff jointly visit each occupied property. During the visit, the property is inspected to determine whether it is safe for continued occupancy, and the occupant is interviewed to determine whether the City will enter into a lease with the occupant. During this interview, occupants are asked whether the household includes pregnant women and young children".

"The risk of lead exposure is greatest for households that have entered into a lease with the City of Milwaukee and include children under the age of six and/or pregnant women. The tenancy of these households is most likely to be significantly longer than those who are required to vacate. We recommend that evaluation of lead hazards and a program to stabilize lead hazards identified through evaluation be focused on that segment of occupied properties"

(Lead Evaluation Plan for Occupied City-Owned Residential Properties Prepared for the Milwaukee Common Council
July 1, 2018

<https://milwaukee.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=F&ID=6384413&GUID=A940FCA4-1A97-4D27-AC4C-8B2C5CF8C74F>)

-We believe lead poisoning in our city is related to the The Re-Invest in City Homes program (RICH), and that this homeownership program must be reviewed to make sure the citizens participating in this program are moving into a home without a private or public lead service line.

(<https://fox6now.com/2014/10/14/everyone-benefits-common-council-approves-program-that-will-sell-foreclosed-homes-for-1/>)

***PARTIAL LEAD SERVICE LINE REPLACEMENTS AT CITY OWNED PROPERTIES**

-How many city owned residential properties have had partial lead service line replacements from 2009-2018.

-City owned properties with leases of longer tenancy are the households with the greatest risk of lead poisoning.

-The majority of these houses do not have an actual year listed for when the property was built. These properties are also missing their public, city owned lead service line as well.

-We believe that partial lead service line replacements are occurring at city owned properties and that this is why these households are at the greatest risk of lead exposure.

***RECONNECTING TO OLD LEAD SERVICE LINES**

-Which single family homes have been reconnected to lead service lines either private or public since 1951?

-In the document *City of Milwaukee Department of Public Works Milwaukee Water Works Water Service Piping Specifications Revised 2002* it states under the section "Excavation for Connection" it states that "the customer shall provide all excavations required for the connection, reconnection or shutting off of service piping". It also states "Connections to lead piping shall be made with "lead to copper" wiped solder joints or approved "Compression Coupling Connectors".

-Also, in the document *City of Milwaukee Department of Public Works Milwaukee Water Works Rules and Regulations Governing Water Service Revised 2002*, it states "'Unused service piping which served a demolished building or a moved building shall be capped at the lot line by the customer's plumber". It also states "Water can be supplied through existing water service piping".

-We believe that private lead service lines have in fact being reconnected to.

-Water works states in their *Lead Service Line Program Semi-Annual Update Public Works Committee January 24, 2018* that "The last lead service line installed on the public side was in 1951, but approximately 2,000 properties were built later and connected to them".

-The city also states on their Home Building Site (<https://city.milwaukee.gov/HomeBuildingSites#.W4SuiX4nbfY>) that when a single family home is built on a former city owned vacant lot the new home owner is expected to factor in the following costs: \$5,000 to \$10,000 for additional excavation and soil disposal trucking fees since most City lots contain old foundations and \$8,000 to \$12,000 for sewer and water lateral connections to city utilities in the street.

-Which properties have been reconnected to the public and the private laterals since 1951?

***CHANGING MAPS TO MAKE LEAD POISONING APPEAR LESS SEVERE**

-In the document presented to the Milwaukee Common Council City of Milwaukee Health Department Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program Assessment of Operations and Recommendations for Corrective Actions January 29, 2018, on page 10 Figure 1.6: Map of Lead Poisoning Density by Aldermanic District, 2016 represents lead poisoning from Low to High.

-On March 5th, 2018 this map was changed from Low to High lead poisoning to the number of children per square mile with lead poisoning. The first category of 1-9 children per square mile was deleted from the new map in order to make childhood lead poisoning in Milwaukee appear less severe than it really is.

-This new map was presented in the document City of Milwaukee Health Department City of Milwaukee – Lead Dashboard at the Milwaukee Nutrition & Lead Task Force Monday, May 7th at Hunger Task Force. as well as in the document City of Milwaukee Health Department Targeting Resources to Reduce Childhood Lead Exposure in Milwaukee at Data Day on May 30, 2018 hosted by Data You Can Use.

-HIPPA does not require the maps to withhold data at the lowest category. The CDC verifies this.

-Changing the maps is highly unethical. Responsible parties must be held accountable for the switch in maps that was done to give a false impression that the lead crises in Milwaukee is not as severe as it truly is.

***PARTIAL LEAD SERVICE LINE REPLACEMENTS AT CHILDCARE FACILITIES**

-Which childcare facilities have had partial lead service line replacements 2010-2016?

***92 WATER MAIN BREAK EVENT MAY 2014**

-Where are the 92 water mains that broke between May 17th and May 27th of 2014? Please provide a GIS shapefile of the 92 water main breaks in May 2014

***INFANT DEATHS CITY WIDE AND THE SPIKE ON NORTH AVENUE 2012-2016**

-Why did the city not investigate the spike in infant deaths along W. North Avenue from 2012-2016?

-GIS mapping research conducted by the Get The Lead Out Coalition has concluded that these infants died due to lead contaminated drinking water.

-Unless a better hypothesis is put forward by the City, this high spike in infant deaths along W. North Avenue from 2012-2016 will be attributed to lead exposure through drinking water.

-We also contend that infant deaths city wide is due to lead contamination in the drinking water supply.

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