



Tom Barrett  
Mayor

Bevan K. Baker, FACHE  
Commissioner of Health

Health Department Office of the Commissioner

[www.milwaukee.gov/health](http://www.milwaukee.gov/health)

Frank P. Zeidler Municipal Building, 841 North Broadway, 3rd Floor, Milwaukee, WI 53202-3653 phone (414) 286-3521 fax (414) 286-5990

June 22, 2016

Eloise Anderson  
Secretary  
Wisconsin Department of Children and Families

Tom Engels  
Interim Secretary  
Wisconsin Department of Health Services

Dear Secretary Anderson and Interim Secretary Engels:

We appreciate the February 4, 2016 letter from the late Secretary Rhoades expressing her shared concern for lead exposure, especially to vulnerable populations such as young children, and pregnant and breastfeeding women. Please see attached letter for your reference.

As you are aware, the Department of Natural Resources will be releasing federal funds for Disadvantaged Communities to pay for private lead service line replacement, as allowed under the Safe Drinking Water Revolving Loan Fund. We intend to apply for funds sufficient to replace all lead service lines that serve licensed daycares in the City of Milwaukee. We estimate that there are 385 properties in this category.

Further, while the City of Milwaukee intends to implement an aggressive construction schedule for these replacements, it will be important for us to be able to prioritize the order of the projects. A best practice model would be one that assesses the risk of lead concentration in drinking water.

In April of 2016, we sent a letter to all licensed daycares in the city recommending that they test their water supply for evidence of lead. To date, the City of Milwaukee Health Department has received no responses to our appeal.

We need your help. We suggest that, as a way to protect the health of our children, lead investigation become a requirement of all licensed daycares with confirmed lead water service lines. Further, we request that Department of Children and Families communicate with all of its licensed daycares that a water investigation for the presence of lead will be a requirement of their license in the future and that testing shall be completed by a date we can jointly determine.

Finally, I would like to schedule a meeting with you and any staff you deem appropriate to address this critical issue. If you should have questions or require additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me at (414) 286-3521. Thank you for your consideration.

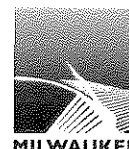
Sincerely,

Bevan K. Baker, FACHE  
Commissioner of Health

Attachments

CC: Cathy Stepp, Secretary Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources  
Karen McKeown, State Health Officer, DHS – Division of Public Health  
Jeff Stone, Administrator, Division of Water, Telecommunications & Consumer Affairs

*Think Health. Act Now!*





State of Wisconsin  
Department of Health Services

Scott Walker, Governor  
Kitty Rhoades, Secretary

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February 4, 2016

Bevan K. Baker, FACHE  
Commissioner of Health  
City of Milwaukee Health Department  
841 N Broadway  
Milwaukee, WI 53202-3653

Paul A. Biedrzycki, MPH, MBA  
Director, Disease Control and Environmental Health  
City of Milwaukee Health Department  
841 N Broadway  
Milwaukee, WI 53202-3653

Dear Commissioner Baker and Director Biedrzycki:

Thank you for your letter of January 25, 2016 regarding the City of Milwaukee's proposed replacement of lead water service lines. The Department appreciates the Milwaukee Health Department's efforts to prevent lead exposure and protect the health and safety of the community.

As your letter indicates, studies by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) have indicated that the disturbance of lead water service lines can result in unsafe levels of lead in drinking water. Unsafe lead exposure can result in significant public health risk, especially to vulnerable populations such as young children, and pregnant and breast-feeding women. It is our shared hope that service line replacement be done in a way that prevents such a health concern.

DHS environmental health staff will continue to work with the City of Milwaukee as you address this critical infrastructure issue while protecting public health.

If you have questions or would like to discuss other types of assistance, please contact Jeff Phillips of my staff at (608) 264-9880.

Sincerely,

  
Kitty Rhoades  
Secretary