



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

REGION 5
77 WEST JACKSON BOULEVARD
CHICAGO, IL 60604-3590

JUN 16 2017

Via E-Mail and Regular Mail

REPLY TO THE ATTENTION OF:

Ms. C. Heidi Grether, Director
Michigan Department of Environmental Quality
525 West Allegan Street
P.O. Box 30473
Lansing, MI 48909-7973

Re: Operational Status of Flint Drinking Water Treatment Plant

Dear Director Grether:

As a follow-up to our call this morning, I wanted to confirm EPA's concerns about the operational status of the Flint Drinking Water Treatment Plant. It is EPA's understanding that the City employee currently serving as the Plant's Limited Treatment System operator-in-charge will be resigning his position effective Friday, June 23rd, 2017. It is critical that when the existing operator-in-charge resigns, a properly certified (D-1) operator be prepared to immediately take over as operator-in-charge of the Plant. This is required by Michigan Rule 325.11905, as well as Paragraph 61 of EPA's January 21, 2016 Administrative Order which requires the City to demonstrate, and MDEQ and the State to ensure, that the City has the "necessary, capable and qualified personnel required" to ensure that the City's water treatment and distribution system complies with the Safe Water Drinking Act and other applicable requirements.

In today's call, MDEQ explained the City and State's approach for ensuring that there will be a properly certified operator-in-charge at the Plant on and after June 23rd, with no gap in coverage. Currently, the City's engineering consultant is working to contract with the civil engineering firm of Fleis and Vandenbrink (F&V) to provide a properly certified operator(s) to act as the Plant's operator-in charge. EPA understands that F&V will be at the Plant as early as this Monday, June 19th, to begin the transition to the role of certified operator-in-charge, with the goal of having an F&V employee in place when the current operator-in-charge resigns. EPA also understands that the use of F&V is likely to be temporary, i.e., until such time as the City can again utilize a City employee to fill the role of operator-in-charge.

EPA's primary concern is to ensure the continued proper operation of the Flint Drinking Water Treatment Plant such that clean, high quality drinking water is provided to the citizens of Flint. To that end, I ask that MDEQ keep EPA updated on its efforts to ensure such continued proper operation.

EPA thanks MDEQ for its concerted efforts in addressing this issue.

Sincerely,



Chris Korleski
Director, Water Division

cc: Mr. Robert Kaplan, EPA
Mr. Keith Creagh, MDEQ
Ms. Amy Epkey, MDEQ
Mr. Richard Baird, Michigan Governor's Office
The Honorable Karen Weaver, Mayor of Flint