Iowa’s Response to the Flint Water Crisis

Jon Tack
Water Quality Bureau Chief
Iowa Dept. of Natural Resources
Could Flint Happen Here?

We must assume it could.

Why wouldn’t it?

- We require an engineering analysis which considers corrosivity prior to a switch in water source or change in treatment process.
- We require compliance with EPA sampling protocols.
- We enforce corrosion control requirements.
- We have maintained a high level of compliance.
- We have great operators.
2015 LCR Statistics in Iowa

- 1,098 CWS and 141 NTNC, for a total of 1,239 Iowa PWS had to meet LCR
- 5 PWS with 6 lead ALE (.4% of PWS)
  - Total population: 950
- 7 PWS had 9 copper ALE
  - Total population: 3,899
- 18 systems with Pb and Cu monitoring violations
  - Total population: 5,880
2014 LCR Statistics in Iowa

- 1,108 CWS and 135 NTNC, for a total of 1,243 PWS had to meet LCR
- 10 PWS had 1 lead ALE each (0.8% of PWS)
  - Total population: 3,094
- 6 PWS had 8 copper ALE
  - Total population: 6,509
- 14 valid monitoring violations
  - 13 failed to conduct any of the required monitoring
  - 1 monitored at 8 of the 10 sites
  - Total population: 27,641
EPA Region 7 Review

- EPA Region 7 is reviewing:
  - Any system that has had a monitoring violation in the past several years
  - Any system with an action level exceedance
  - Was PE conducted properly and on time
  - Was the Lead consumer notice done promptly
  - Were the required certifications done
  - Was corrosion control and water quality parameter monitoring met

- Iowa DNR has responded to all inquiries and requests for information.
Lead

- Large System Review (>50,000)
  - Letters sent to all 11 systems in April
  - We are reviewing the 11 large systems
    - Look at optimized corrosion control treatment
      - Ranges
      - Water quality parameter assignment
    - Tap sampling frequency
    - Sample sites consistent between sampling times
    - Sample site changes noted in file (form)
      - Make sure you use Tier 1 sites when possible
      - Note reason for change
    - Consumer notice and certification in file
    - Operation permit likely will be revised

- Two weeks per system, expect to be all finished by October
Lead

- Lead service line map on PWS’ website
- Lead tap sample data posted on DNR website for large systems (and also on PWS’ website)

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<th>PWS Name</th>
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Lead

- A lot of good information, easy to find and read.
Lead

- Any change in treatment process requires approval before it is done
  - Types of chemicals fed
  - Feed rates
- The contact information for any system with a 90th percentile lead action level exceedance will be provided to Iowa Department of Public Health’s Lead Poisoning Prevention Program staff
Additional changes in Iowa

- Any failure to complete public notice will result in direct notification by the Iowa DNR.

- We have required sampling plan updates. We are likely to require fully revised Pb sampling plans.
Making sure Flint doesn’t happen here.

- Treat every complaint seriously and respectfully.
- Compliance doesn’t equal public safety.
  - Flint was still in compliance long after there was a public health issue.
  - LCR compliance doesn’t guarantee each home is safe (i.e. Individual plumbing materials and home treatment)
- Be transparent.
IDNR Contact information

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