



## City of Howell

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### PRESS RELEASE – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 19, 2016

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**Howell, Michigan, February 19, 2016** - In light of water quality issues in Flint, the Howell Public Schools proactively began efforts to assure water quality at their eleven facilities. Testing began at their four oldest buildings with initial results revealing potential elevated lead levels at only one facility, Northwest Elementary School. Tests at the other three facilities within the City showed them to be lead safe. As a precautionary measure, Howell Public Schools will be immediately placing portable water coolers at Northwest for student and staff use while additional testing is conducted.

City of Howell and Howell Public School Staff are working closely together to conduct additional testing to verify or refute the initial findings. "I commend Howell Public Schools for taking the initiative to test their various facilities" said Mayor Nick Proctor, "and we are working closely with them to identify first, whether the initial test results at Northwest Elementary are accurate and, if so, to identify contamination sources and quickly implement remediation actions." A coordinated comprehensive sampling effort will be conducted over the weekend of February 20<sup>th</sup> with results being available as early as next Tuesday, February 23<sup>rd</sup>.

In 2012, the City of Howell replaced the water main feeding Northwest Elementary as part of its comprehensive multi-year street program. The water main was updated to a twelve inch main to provide appropriate water pressure in the area. The City was able to verify at the time the connection into Northwest School meets current EPA and MDEQ standards.

The City of Howell has been in full compliance with Federal and State environmental lead requirements since their inception in 1986. "This is the first positive lead test within the Howell water system since we began testing in 1992" said Director of Public Services Erv Suida. "While lead contamination is often associated with a property's water service line or private plumbing components within the property" noted Mr. Suida, "the City of Howell is not aware of any within the public system as it has been a long standing policy to replace a public lead line upon discovery." He also noted "Brass fittings or faucets that pre-date the 1986 Federal Lead Ban may contain higher levels of lead and should be replaced."

The City of Howell has a very proactive corrosion control program that predates the City's new Water Plant which began production in 1992. While this program prevents water from corroding the metal pipes, it will not prevent lead components such as brass faucets or lead solder from leaching into water that sits for long periods of time. To learn more about what you can do to prevent lead in your drinking water visit, <http://www.epa.gov/lead>.

For further information regarding the City of Howell water system, please visit the City's website at <http://www.cityofhowell.org> or contact the Department of Public Service at 517-546-7510.