

Thoughts on our water supply given Michigan water crisis

It may be some time before all the facts surrounding the Flint, Michigan water quality crisis are understood. However, there are a few lessons that seem apparent. First, when a community changes water sources or water treatment, unintended consequences can occur. Our water system operators are alert to these potential issues.



Affordability has also become a significant issue as we rebuild aging water infrastructure. The American Water Works Association in 2012 conducted a study that concluded repairing and expanding drinking water infrastructure in the United States will cost more than \$1 trillion over 25 years. That expense is largely borne by water customers.

It appears lead service lines contributed to the problems in Flint. The most likely sources of lead in household water are lead pipes, lead solder, or brass fixtures in your plumbing. Lead water services were generally installed before 1930, though lead solder was widely used in plumbing through 1986.

The Minnesota Department of Health has reported no lead in municipal water systems.

The federal Safe Drinking Water Act requires cities to hold lead concentrations below 15 parts per billion. We test regularly for lead and other contaminants and annually publish a safe drinking water report. Our Water Quality Report, as required by the Minnesota Department of Health, is available at our office, 6388 Maple Street.

Beware utility scam callers

Police departments around Minnesota continue to report scams involving utility customers. It often works like this:

A business receives a phone call. The caller says they are an employee of the city or utility. The caller tells the business that their utility bill is overdue and requests an immediate payment via a money service.

If a caller claims to represent a specific company or agency, ask for their name and employee number. Then call the company or agency back using a number from a billing statement or other reliable source.



North Branch Municipal Water & Light does not conduct business in this manner and will never request payments via a money service. If you receive one of these calls, let us know.

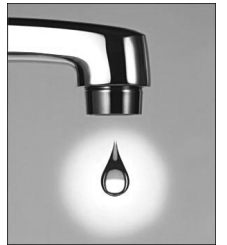
For more information on these scams, call the Minnesota Attorney General's Office at 800-657-3787 or visit www.ag.state.mn.us

The Connector

North Branch Municipal Water & Light

Water quality is in the news

North Branch Municipal Water & Light has a 75-year history of providing safe water for our customers to drink and use.



Water quality in Flint, Michigan, has recently been a hot topic. One thing is clear from this situation: When infrastructure is allowed to deteriorate, results can be disastrous.

We would like to share some pertinent facts regarding our water system.

- North Branch Municipal Water & Light meets all state and federal drinking water health standards.
- Your utility collects and tests water samples from inside 50 homes every three years to comply with the Safe Drinking Water Act.
- Our current water supply and treatment system will provide a high quality, long-term source of supply for future generations.

***We now offer online payment—
It's fast, easy and secure***

We are excited to announce that our customers can now view their bills online as well as make payments!



It's EASY and SECURE!

You start by going to <http://www.nbpuc.com> and then click on: Sign Up Now – Create an Account.

You will be prompted to enter your information as it appears on your utility bill and then enter a password. Once you have done this you can log onto your information anytime from home or your mobile device and:

- View your current bill
- View your previous bills
- Make a payment or schedule payments
- Sign up for paperless billing and receive your bill by email

Energy saving tools

Once you set up an account, you can access a variety of energy savings tools. We are excited about our new online tools, that help

our customers use energy more efficiently. Through our website, you can now:

- View your household usage this year vs. previous year
- View your household usage in comparison to other utility customers
- Click on Home Energy Analysis: Check the energy usage in your home and see how much you are spending and how you can save
- Click on Appliance Calculator and see how much that appliance is costing you.

Receive Energy Saving Tips

Most everyone wants to save money by improving the energy use of their homes, but many don't know where to start or what improvements will have the most impact. This information is to help you better understand how you are using energy and give you the tools to use energy more wisely.

We also offer mobile app

Our free mobile app is the best way to conserve energy on the go. With our new app, you won't need to be at your computer or look at your bill to see your energy usage and savings.



See our website for more information. The app is also available on android and the App Store.

***Our municipal water system
helps provide quality of life***

An estimated 3 million people die every year from preventable waterborne disease. Our municipal water supply meets rigorous federal and state health-protective standards and gives us a high assurance of safety.

Fire protection

A well-maintained water system is critical in fire protection. The ability to suppress fires also influences new home construction, business location decisions and insurance rates.

Economic support

Businesses or housing developments do not succeed without a safe and sustainable water supply. Tap water is critical to many business operations and is often a primary ingredient in the products a business creates. The value of water is magnified during times of drought and when communities expand.

Quality of life

Any measure of a successful society—low mortality rates, economic diversity, productivity and public safety—is in some way related to access to safe water. In North America, we sometimes take for granted that safe water is always accessible to drink, to wash our clothes, to water our lawns and for many other purposes.

