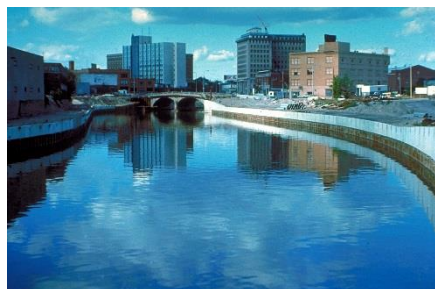


# Flint Water Crisis

## Michigan – 2016



View of the Flint River in Flint, MI. Credit: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

### What was the need?

On April 25, 2014, the City of Flint, Michigan changed their municipal water supply source from the Detroit-supplied Lake Huron water to the Flint River. The switch caused water distribution pipes to corrode and leach lead and other contaminants into municipal drinking water. In October 2016, Flint residents were advised not to drink the municipal tap water unless it had been filtered through a NSF International approved filter certified to remove lead. Although the city reconnected to the original Detroit water system that same month, the potential damage was already done and a state of emergency was declared on January 16, 2016.

### What were the objectives?

In addition to likely health effects from lead exposure, there were concerns about behavioral health of Flint residents, including feelings of anxiety or depression and substance abuse. To assess these concerns, we<sup>1</sup> conducted a Community Assessment for Public Health Emergency Response (CASPER) in May 2016 evaluating the following city-wide:

- Behavioral and physical health concerns for adults (21+ years old) and children (less than 21 years old) in each household
- Household access to behavioral health services and barriers to access
- Resources used for water-related needs and barriers to access
- How community members were getting information about the crisis



Water pickup sign in Flint, MI. Credit: USDA

### KEY RESULTS

- 66% of households reported one or more adult members reported experiencing at least one behavioral health issue "more than usual"
- 54% of households reported that at least one child experienced at least one behavioral health issue "more than usual"
- 22.5% of households reporting difficulties getting access to behavioral health services
- 34% of individuals self-reported symptoms of anxiety and 29% self-reported symptoms of depression
- 51% of households felt that the physical health of at least one member had worsened due to Flint water crisis

### What was the outcome?

Based on the results, federal, state, and local government and community health partners could guide their ongoing recovery efforts through focused behavioral health interventions and communication messages.

Data from the CASPER supported the need for continued mental health services along with five-year follow-up activities by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) aimed to promote resilience in the Flint community.

These activities aim to support youth and their families, alleviate the impact of trauma, reduce behavioral health disparities, and increase opportunities and training for Flint's youth through strong community engagement<sup>2</sup>.

### Where can I find more information?

The CASPER report on the Flint Water Crisis is available online at [https://www.cdc.gov/nceh/hsb/disaster/casper/docs/flint\\_mi\\_casper\\_report\\_508.pdf](https://www.cdc.gov/nceh/hsb/disaster/casper/docs/flint_mi_casper_report_508.pdf)

<sup>1</sup> The Flint Community Resilience Group, Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, Genesee County Health Department, Genesee Health System, University of Michigan–Flint, and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention conducted the CASPER

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.cityofflint.com/2016/10/11/flint-awarded-5-year-nearly-5-million-samhsa-grant-for-trauma-informed-care-in-flint/>