FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 15, 2019

WAYNE COUNTY OFFERS LEAD-REDUCING WATER FILTERS TO ELIGIBLE LOW-INCOME HOUSEHOLDS

DETROIT – In response to lead found in drinking water provided by Garden City Department of Public Works, the Wayne County Department of Health, Human and Veterans Services Public Health Division is providing lead-reducing water filters to low-income households in Garden City with children or pregnant women. The free filters are part of a larger response that includes distributing educational materials and helping residents identify ways to lower their exposure to lead.

Because children and fetuses are most at risk of harm to their health from lead, the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) recommends the use of water filters in any residence served by the Garden City Department of Public Works that is home to a child or a pregnant woman. If a household has a child or pregnant woman and receives WIC benefits, Medicaid insurance, or cannot afford a water filter, they can receive a free one (filters cost about $35, and their replacement cartridges cost about $15.)

The Wayne County Public Health Division will be distributing filters at Maplewood Community Center located at 31735 Maplewood from Wednesday, October 16 to Friday, October 18 between 2 PM and 6 PM to those who are eligible.

Drinking water provided by the Garden City Department of Public Works was found to be above the action level of 15 parts per billion in at least 10 percent of the homes tested in Garden City. When lead in drinking water is above the action level, public health officials recommend precautionary actions to protect residents—especially those most at risk of harm to their health: children and fetuses. Swallowing lead can be a serious issue for children because their bodies and nervous systems are still developing. Too much lead can cause problems with learning, behavior, speech, hearing, and growth rates.

In homes with children or pregnant women, MDHHS recommends using only cold filtered water for drinking, rinsing food, cooking, mixing powdered infant formula, and brushing teeth. Bottled water could also be used for these activities. When buying a water filter, make sure it is certified to NSF/ANSI Standard 52 for lead reduction and NSF/ANSI Standard 42 for particulate reduction. It is important to follow the manufacturer’s instructions for installing and maintaining the filter.

Other ways to reduce the amount of lead in your drinking water include:

- Regularly running water through faucets for at least five (5) minutes before drinking or cooking
- Cleaning your faucet aerators, which can trap small pieces of lead.
- Using only cold water for drinking or cooking; lead dissolves more easily in hot water.

Don’t try to remove lead by boiling the water. Water evaporates during boiling, so the amount of lead in the water may end up higher after boiling.

For more information, call the Wayne County Public Health Division at 734-727-7400 or visit our website at www.waynecounty.com. For information about lead and your health, visit Michigan.gov/MiLeadSafe.

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