

## **Governor Pence Vetoes Bill That May Lessen Ability to Maintain Clean and Safe Drinking Water**

Indianapolis – Governor Mike Pence today vetoed [House Enrolled Act 1082](#), known as the "no more stringent" bill, which would have prevented environmental standards or rules put forth by the Indiana Department of Environmental Management that impose a restriction or requirement more stringent than federal law from going into effect until after adjournment sine die of the next General Assembly.

“In recent months, public concern over clean and safe drinking water has grown as a result of the situation in Flint, Michigan,” said Governor Pence. “Our Indiana Department of Environmental Management is vigilant about requiring regular testing of water systems across the state for lead and working with any systems that are out of compliance to implement plans that will return the water to safe levels. IDEM must have the necessary flexibility to take action to protect Hoosiers. House Enrolled Act 1082 restricts IDEM’s ability to act and imposes unnecessary delay in its rulemaking process. At a time when we must do all that we can to enhance public trust in the agencies charged with protecting our environment, this bill moves in the wrong direction and will therefore receive my veto. With this veto, Hoosiers can be assured that we will continue to have the necessary discretion and flexibility to create Indiana solutions at the state level and act in a timely way to protect our drinking water.”

Background: Every six months, IDEM requires Indiana’s 1,369 drinking water systems to sample and test water for lead and copper, both at the treatment facility and at the tap. Results must be submitted to IDEM. IDEM standards also require that a system that switches sources of water to sample before distributing the water to assess treatment that will ensure safe and clean water. Water systems can treat the water with phosphorus to eliminate corrosiveness.

If more than 10 percent of results show greater than 15 parts per billion (ppb) for lead, IDEM issues a Lead Exceedance Letter that requires the system to formulate and implement a plan to reduce lead levels and do the following:

- Notify the public by newspaper and in the water bill or separate mailing to all users within 30 days.
- Educate the public about sources of lead, what the system is doing to reduce lead levels and steps that can be taken to reduce the possibility of ingesting lead by running cold water at their taps before use.
- Treat the water to reduce its corrosive characteristics.
- Add chemicals that coat the pipes to help prevent further corrosion.
- Replace lead distribution lines if necessary.

IDEM inspectors work closely with communities to help them return to compliance and oversees implementation of their plans.