

Clean Wisconsin: Gov. Evers shows commitment to eliminating lead in drinking water

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New lead appointee tasked with tackling lead poisoning

KENOSHA — Clean Wisconsin praises Gov. Tony Evers for signing an executive order that creates a new interagency coordinator to tackle lead pollution in drinking water. The governor signed the executive order at Gateway Technical College's daycare facility on Monday.

“Child lead poisoning is a real issue in every corner of Wisconsin,” said Carly Michiels, Government Relations Director at Clean Wisconsin. “Tackling lead pollution in drinking water requires a coordinated effort involving health and water experts at DNR and DHS. This is a big undertaking, and we applaud Gov. Evers for committing to eliminate lead pipes and protect public health, especially during the Year of Clean Drinking Water.”

There are roughly 176,000 lead service lines still delivering drinking water in Wisconsin. While the majority are in Milwaukee, lead pipes are a statewide issue: over 80 communities around the state still rely on lead service lines. Child blood lead levels in Wisconsin, which are around 5%, exceed the national average.

Gov. Evers proposed spending \$40 million on lead pipe replacement in his state

budget proposal. The Republican-majority Joint Finance Committee removed that funding from the final budget.

Earlier today, Sen. LaTonya Johnson (D-Milwaukee) and Rep. Kalan Haywood (D-Milwaukee) introduced a bill that would recommit that \$40 million for lead pipe replacement around the state.

“There is no safe level of lead in a child’s blood,” said Michiels. “While many lawmakers have refused to solve lead pollution in drinking water, Gov. Evers and legislators like Sen. Johnson and Rep. Haywood are showing they’re committed to making sure everyone in Wisconsin has access to clean drinking water.”