

# Wisconsin Conservation Voters: Gov. Evers takes action to protect children from lead exposure

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CONTACT: Ryan Billingham, Communications Director, Wisconsin Conservation Voters, 608-208-1129 (office), 608-213-6972 (mobile/text), or [ryan@conservationvoters.org](mailto:ryan@conservationvoters.org)

KENOSHA – Today Gov. Tony Evers took a step toward protecting children from the devastating effects of lead exposure by signing an executive order that creates a new interagency coordinator.

The coordinator will direct resources aimed at eliminating lead pollution, including that in drinking water. Lead pipes are abundant in Wisconsin. More than 176,000 lead service lines are in operation today, while more than 80 communities have lead pipes in their systems. Child blood-lead levels exceed the national average, hovering around five percent. Since 1996, more than 200,000 children have been identified as having dangerous amounts of lead in their bodies.

Executive Director Kerry Schumann had this to say on Gov. Evers' action:

“Today marks an important step toward ensuring all of Wisconsin’s children are protected from lead exposure. No level of lead exposure is safe, and its effects are devastating to individuals and communities. Brain damage, reduced IQs, behavioral problems, even increased violent behavior – all of it is tied to lead exposure. We thank Gov. Tony Evers and his administration for taking this very real threat seriously, and prioritizing our health and families over politics. Unfortunately – and inaccurately – some politicians have used children’s health as a way to polarize voters. The truth is, lead exposure via drinking water is a serious problem in rural,

suburban, and urban communities across the state. With Executive Order 36, Wisconsin can begin to address this statewide problem in a comprehensive way.”