

## **FLINT WATER CRISIS CASE STUDY**

The Flint water crisis began when the city's water source was changed and government officials failed to apply the chemicals needed to purify the water. As a result, lead from aging pipes contaminated the water supply, leading to extremely elevated levels of the heavy metal neurotoxin and exposing over 100,000 residents to contaminated water. The residents drank the water with high levels of lead, this will affect their health forever, and some will die earlier than otherwise would be the case.

The Michigan Civil Rights Commission found that race and racism played roles in the water crisis, and that the decisions which caused the poisoning were a violation of the residents' civil rights and perpetuated a pattern of discrimination and segregation which had affected them for years. They concluded that the situation in Flint would not have been allowed to happen in primarily white communities.

### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

- Do you have a right to clean water?
- What was the crisis? What were the causes of the crisis? What were the consequences?
- How did young people from inside or outside the city, respond to the Flint water crisis? Did they bring water bottles to the city, step forward and speak out, or mobilize for social action and community change? What would you have done?
- Why are low-income and minority communities exposed to more pollution than other groups? What are the root causes of racism and poverty, and how does this affect efforts to create change?

### **FLINT RESOURCE MATERIALS:**

- Michigan Civil Rights Commission, Flint Water Crisis Report and Hearing Information, at [https://www.michigan.gov/mdcr/0,4613,7-138-47782\\_77964—,00.html](https://www.michigan.gov/mdcr/0,4613,7-138-47782_77964—,00.html)
- Flint Water Crisis and Youth Taking Action | Learning to Give [www.learningtogive.org › news › flint-water-crisis-and-...](http://www.learningtogive.org/news/flint-water-crisis-and-...)
- The science of Flint's water crisis | TED-Ed [ed.ted.com › best\\_of\\_web › HSPnp900](http://ed.ted.com/best_of_web/HSPnp900)
- The Science and Civics of the Flint Water Crisis (High School ... [teachrock.org › lesson › the-science-and-civics-of-the-f...](http://teachrock.org/lesson/the-science-and-civics-of-the-f...)
- The Flint Water Crisis - The Water Cycle · Science in the City [scienceinthecity.stanford.edu › resources › the-flint-wat...](http://scienceinthecity.stanford.edu/resources/the-flint-wat...)
- Flint Michigan Water Crisis Worksheets & Teaching ... [www.teacherspayteachers.com › Browse › Search:flint ...](http://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Browse/Search:flint...)

- **Teaching Tools to Understand Flint's Water Crisis | GHELI**  
[gheli.harvard.edu](http://gheli.harvard.edu) › [news](#) › [teaching-tools-understand-fl...](#)
- **The Flint Water Crisis - HBR Store - Harvard Business Review**  
[store.hbr.org](http://store.hbr.org) › [product](#) › [the-flint-water-crisis](#)

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