



# BERRIEN COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

better health. stronger communities.

**For Immediate Release**

**Contact:** Mary Ann Sabo  
616.485.1432

## **Berrien County Health Department Continues Providing Free Water Filters, Filter Installation to Benton Harbor Residents**

**Benton Harbor, Michigan, April 11, 2022** – Residents of the City of Benton Harbor can receive free water filters, filter cartridge refills and filter installation assistance from the Berrien County Health Department.

A [recent study of 200 Benton Harbor homes](#) conducted by the Environmental Protection Agency found that when properly installed and maintained, filters effectively reduce excessive lead in drinking water. The health department first launched the filter initiative in 2019 when lead concerns in the city's drinking water were raised.

Benton Harbor residents can receive a free certified filter and replacement cartridges by mail by calling 844.875.9211. They also can visit BCHD at 2149 E. Napier Ave. from 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday through Friday or the Center for Better Health at 100 W. Main St. from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Tuesday through Friday. Both locations are in Benton Harbor, and neither requires appointments.

"Every family deserves access to clean, safe drinking water," said Guy Miller, acting health officer for Berrien County. "Lead has been shown to have serious detrimental effects to health, particularly among children, affecting behavior and intelligence. Exposure to lead can cause damage to the brain, nervous system and kidneys, leading to a host of issues – and even death.

"The Berrien County Health Department is committed to providing Benton Harbor residents with these resources free of charge to ensure everyone has access to lead-free water."

A PUR® Faucet Mount Filter or a PUR® Pitcher Filter is available at no cost to all Benton Harbor households that receive their water from the city of Benton Harbor. Staff at BCHD and the Center for Better Health will work with individuals to help them find the correct filter for their home.

When residents request a filter, they will be asked if they need help installing the unit. For those who need assistance, a representative of the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services will come to their home within one business day. For those who do not request assistance, BCHD will follow up with the resident one week after they receive their filter to determine if assistance is needed.

Each household will receive a new filter unit and six months of replacement cartridges. After six months, BCHD will follow up with residents to proactively fulfill cartridge replacement needs.

BCHD advises that if you choose to buy a filter, you must read the packaging to be sure it says the filter is certified to NSF/ANSI Standard 53 for lead reduction and certified for NSF/ANSI Standard 42 for particulate reduction (Class I).

MDHHS is still distributing bottled water to city residents through a local-state partnership. Information about distribution locations and times can be found at [Michigan.gov/MiLeadSafe](https://Michigan.gov/MiLeadSafe).

To arrange water delivery to homebound or residents without transportation in the City of Benton Harbor, contact 211, which is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Phones that cannot contact 211 should contact 844.875.9211.

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