

Water Main Break and State of Emergency Frequently Asked Questions

FAQ: Where can I find up-to-date information?

A: You can check this website. <http://www.baycounty-mi.gov/ESHS/Water-Main-Break-Information.aspx>. It will have links to all the sources of information, including press releases and Bay Alerts.

FAQ: When will Bay County run out of Water?

A: Bay County will not run out of water if everyone conserves water. It has been declared that non-essential use of water is restricted. This means you should not use water for things such as; watering your lawn, filling your pool, washing your car., etc. Please be conservative with your showers, washing your dishes, and things of that nature.

FAQ: Will the City shut off the water?

A: No. There are no plans (or need) to shut off the water as long as everyone participates in conserving water.

FAQ: Is my water safe to drink, cook with and bathe in?

A: Yes.

FAQ: Do I need to boil my water?

A: No. Currently water pressure is at normal operating pressure. If the pressure drops below 25psi, Bay County health officials will release a statement requiring residents to boil their water.

FAQ: Should I start storing water?

A: No. Bay City and Bay County officials made it clear that this excessive storage is not necessary. Ryan Manz, Bay County's emergency management coordinator, advised households to just have at least 1 gallon of water per person per day for 3 days.

FAQ: What can I do to help?

A: Walk around your neighborhood and look for standing or flowing water that looks unusual or isn't typically there. If you see anything, call 911.

FAQ: Who does this impact?

A: This impacts water customers across most of Bay County. The only Bay County residents not impacted by this water emergency include residents in Auburn, the village of Linwood and Frankenlust Township west of Interstate-75. Bay County residents who live within the Midland city limits are not impacted.

FAQ: What should I do if this impacts me?

A: Conserve water. Bay City and Bay County officials have said if the residential population conserves its water use for basic human needs — things like drinking water, food preparation and personal hygiene — there will be enough water.

FAQ: Can I take a shower before work tomorrow?

A: Yes you can, but do it quickly. Bay County officials said to try and cut your shower time by at least 15 percent. Cutting it by 50 percent would be better. If you take 10 minutes in the shower, shoot for a 5 minute shower.

FAQ: Could I be cited for to using too much water?

A: Bay City Manager Rick Finn said the city isn't looking to issue citations. If city officials see or learn of excessive water use, they will contact that resident or business to alert them of the emergency. If the problem continues, Finn said, a citation could be issued.

FAQ: What is being done to find the leak?

A: There are several crews across Bay County, made up of township fire department officials and Bay City and Bay County water officials searching for the source. Several dozen people are searching for standing and flowing water across the county.

The water mains that are buried beneath the Saginaw River have been checked.

FAQ: Where does the city get its water?

A: The city draws its water from a Saginaw Bay intake. Bay County draws its water from Bay City's system, according to Dave Harran, the city's public works director.

FAQ: Is there any chance there is no leak and this is actually a problem with a water meter or some other gauge?

A: No. The amount of water that is being drawn from the city's water system is too substantial to be from anything else other than a broken water main, officials said.

FAQ: Might this impact my water bill?

A: No. Bay City Manager Rick Finn said this won't impact water rates, unless it continued for a long period of time. He added that if residents conserve water, it could balance out.

FAQ: What is the worst case scenario?

A: As of now, the worst case scenario is that water pressure drops below 25 PSI, as mentioned above. "We don't anticipate getting to that point," said Finn.