



**WATER
EQUALS
LIFE**

**CLEAN SAFE AND
AFFORDABLE
WATER**

FOR ALL MICHIGANDERS



We aim to ensure that all Michiganders, including people of limited means, can access clean, safe, and affordable water. Together, our coalition of water rights advocates, water utilities, legislators, and Michigan residents are working on proposed legislation to meet that goal.

WATER = A THRIVING MICHIGAN ECONOMY

Water insecurity directly constrains economic growth because sectors such as agriculture, health, industry, and energy rely on water availability, quality, and affordability.

It is much more likely that a portion of uncollectable revenue will be obtained through an affordability program (meaning a minimum or mid-point cost) than not obtaining any uncollectable revenue at all (maximum cost). **That is, more revenue will be realized from households paying an affordable rate, as compared to nonpayment of the current, unadjusted, rate.**



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**\$8.58
BILLION**

The US economy loses \$8.58 billion annually due to the water access gap (539,000 Households; 1.57 million people)

\$15,800

Each household without access to running water or basic plumbing costs the US economy \$15,800 per year in health care costs; time spent collecting and paying for bottled water, loss of time at work or at school, and premature death.

\$1,350

Closing the water access gap will transform lives by eliminating 36,400 cases of diabetes a year and **helping families save the \$1,350 they spend on bottled water to drink, cook, and bathe.**

**\$200
BILLION**

Closing the water access gap could create nearly **\$200 billion of economic value over the next 50 years.**



Low-income families and their communities bear most of these costs.

WATER = HEALTHY MICHIGAN RESIDENTS

Lack of sanitation threatens public health, individual safety and dignity, equity, and the protection of freshwater resources. Just a few years ago, **Michigan experienced one of the largest Hepatitis A outbreaks in the U.S. since the introduction of a vaccine.** Hepatitis A is largely spread through contaminated food and water, and handwashing is a mainstay of prevention. From 2016 to 2018, the case fatality rate for Hepatitis A outbreak infections in Michigan was 3.3%.



Every year, the water access gap causes 219,000 cases of waterborne illness and 71,000 cases of mental illness; it costs us 68.7 million work hours and an estimated 610 lives.



Patients admitted to Henry Ford Hospital with water-related illnesses were significantly more likely to live on a block that has experienced water shutoffs. **Patients diagnosed with skin and soft tissue diseases were 1.48 times more likely to live on a block that has experienced water shutoffs.**



Living on a block that has experienced water shutoffs increases the likelihood that the patient will be diagnosed with water-related illness.



People living with water insecurity experience substantial, statistically significant emotional, social, and psychological distress.

OUR PROPOSED BILL WILL:

- ✓ Ensure that all people will have access to clean, safe, and affordable water
- ✓ The Act requires that water systems apply an income rate to qualified customers so everyone pays a bill they can afford
- ✓ Limit the circumstances in which a utility may shut off a customer's water service
- ✓ Provide a process for customers to receive forgiveness of their water debt

YOU CAN HELP TO ENSURE ALL MICHIGANDERS HAVE ACCESS TO CLEAN WATER.

Scan the QR code to read the economic feasibility study: Water Affordability Analyses for Six Michigan Communities



SOURCES

https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/water-action-plan_final_formatted.pdf

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<https://www.wethepeopleofdetroit.com/post/water-insecurity-and-psychosocial-distress-effects-of-the-detroit-water-shutoffs>

<https://www.wethepeopleofdetroit.com/post/economic-feasibility-study>

Water Shutoffs Impact Public Health. Kyle Moxley, ABD. Alexander Plum, MPH, CHES. Marcus Zervos, MD. In collaboration with We the People of Detroit Community Research Collective