

WATER AND HEALTH INFRASTRUCTURE, RESILIENCE, AND LEARNING (WHIRL)

PROJECT SUMMARY

■ OVERVIEW

Drinking water and public health depend on each other. In many places it is difficult to avoid and fix big problems related to water quality when they happen. **The NSF-funded WHIRL project will assess threats to safe water quality and what happens when people's access to clean water is disrupted. To do this, we need to better understand the connections between drinking water and public health.** We believe that understanding these connections can improve water quality and health.

Information from you can help us identify problems that impact water quality, and show ways where drinking water and public health agencies can work together. Your involvement will provide important information toward this end.

■ PROJECT GOALS

1. Describe how drinking water utilities, public health departments and communities depend on each other and the kinds of challenges these groups experience.
2. Describe what we have learned from past water-related disruptions and how we can use this information to improve drinking water utility and public health department outcomes toward achieving safe water quality.
3. Develop a way to warn people about water quality issues and to quickly respond to these issues.

■ OUR TEAM & COMMUNITY PARTNERS

The team is made up of scientists, researchers, and students who study engineering, communication, community behavior and public health. We come from Wayne State University, the University of Michigan, and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. We are working with the Water Research Foundation (WRF), National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO), Great Lakes Water Authority (GLWA), City of Flint, Genesee County Health Department, City of Toledo, Wayne County Health Department, In-Situ Inc., and American Indian Mothers, Inc. (AIMI). If you are a water utility, public health department, or another organization that is interested in ensuring safe drinking water, we are interested in working with you.

■ IMPACT

We strive to achieve the following outcomes from this project:

- improve how information about drinking water quality and public health is used,
- improve communication around safe water quality between drinking water utilities and public health departments,
- inform people from all groups and backgrounds about drinking water and public health, and
- support community education around and involvement in decisions about safe water quality.



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