



What to Know About the **JACKSON, MS** **WATER CRISIS**

What is going on in Jackson?

Water is a human right, but for many families in Jackson, Mississippi, regular access to clean water is out of reach. Intermittently, over the past year, many families in Jackson had unclear water and little to no water pressure. Residents routinely complain of the color of the water and the smell of the water. Over the past few weeks, schools were unable to function. Businesses shuttered their doors for weeks on end and hospitals, the places we rely on to provide routine and emergency care, were impacted.

According to the law, schools must have clean water in their facilities. Hospitals and other care providers need clean water to execute their operations and procedures that support the well-being of the community. Businesses need water to keep the local economy flowing.

But this crisis is manmade—and preventable. The state of Mississippi has not stepped up to ensure the basic needs of its residents are met.

Why is the quality of my water important?

Water contamination has been linked to decreased fertility rates, learning impairments in children, and the development of skin diseases, according to studies.

What exactly do people mean when they talk about water infrastructure?

Water infrastructure encompasses more than just the water you consume. It also covers wastewater and storm water. Your wastewater collection system gathers wastewater from your home and returns it to rivers, lakes, and other bodies of water. Because this water will be recycled into other bodies of water, it must be treated. Storm water aids in the prevention of problems such as flooding. It collects rainwater and transports it to the nearest canal.

Climate conditions, such as extreme heat or heavy rain, will increase the likelihood of these systems failing if they are already old. Most Black communities do not have enough money to rebuild their water infrastructure. This is often because of racist policies and actions, such as keeping money from Black communities on purpose. Jackson is one of the locations.



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Is it normal to consume bottled water on a daily basis?

Although many Jackson residents drink bottled water, many residents in Mississippi cities with fewer Black people have more trust in their water. It is normal for people to have the option to drink tap water. Unfortunately, in numerous Black cities across the country, drinking bottled water is the norm. This is due to a common lack of investment in majority Black cities' water systems. However, your tax money is used to pay for officials like the Governor to assist ensure that you can drink safe water. This is why it was such a big deal when Flint residents were told to drink dirty tap water. It demonstrated that someone was not performing their duties. In Jackson, if the Governor is aware that the water is polluted, he is supposed to help residents have safe drinking water during emergencies.

How has the state government reacted?

The state currently has millions of dollars available to give to Jackson to assist with water issues that it got from the federal government. In fact, the state has at least \$75 million in funds set aside for communities of color and areas that have faced problems for a lot of years. One of the federal government authorities in charge of water and environmental issues advised states to prioritize communities of color. The Governor is aware of all of this, and during the height of the Jackson water issue, he decided to only give cities a small portion of the money. In addition, the Governor enacted a special law stating that Jackson must take an additional step that no other city must take in order to get the certain funding for its water issues.

Instead of giving Jackson the money it needs to repair the problem, the Governor is implying that he wants to take control of the water system and possibly run it at the state level. It appears to be a problem that the Governor refuses to allow one of the largest Black cities control of its water and also refuses to give Jackson the money needed to work on the matter.

What can I do to assist?

We want the Governor to know that enough is enough. Water is a basic human right. There is no reason why the state should prevent Jackson from receiving the funds it requires. And the Governor should absolutely not be in charge of the water. Send public comments requesting that Jackson be given the funds it requires to rebuild. The comments should also state that Jackson should have control over its water.