



Michigan EGLE Deputy Director Reports On Priorities To The Michigan Chamber

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Aaron Keatley
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As part of the [2020 Michigan Chamber Environmental Issues Forum](#) sponsored by Barnes & Thornburg on June 17, EGLE Deputy Director Aaron Keatley presented on the department's current priorities and areas of focus.

The Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) has been working on unique challenges related to the COVID-19 pandemic. For example, they have had to evaluate certain field work and whether it should continue or if it could be postponed. EGLE has also set up a process for regulated entities to notify the department if there are compliance challenges and find a path forward that provides the regulated entities certainty and protects the environment. EGLE has reportedly received approximately 150 requests for regulatory or permit relief due to COVID-19 constraints. Longer-term effects include the need for EGLE to have significant investment in information technologies, not only to make their processes more efficient, but also to reduce transaction costs and administrative burdens for regulated entities. State budget concerns have reduced EGLE staffing to four days per week and implemented a hiring freeze.

Other EGLE priority areas include dam safety, particularly in response to the [Edenville Dam failure](#), and work on lead in drinking water including implementation of the new [Michigan Lead and Copper Rule](#). Water infrastructure across the board – stormwater, wastewater and drinking water – is getting increased EGLE focus as well.

RELATED PRACTICE AREAS

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EGLE is also looking for ways to implement process improvements to address enforcement consistency across district offices, as well as ways to get faster cleanups with better oversight and using a partnership approach to reduce legacy contamination.

There are many other areas of focus for EGLE, including pipeline permitting, PFAS regulation, high water level permit priority processing, Part 115 solid waste legislation, ozone non-attainment, and climate change.

The 2020 Michigan Chamber Environmental Issues Forum is [available to watch on demand](#) if you were not able to join the live event.