

## AMA addresses physicians' role in addressing unsafe water

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(HealthDay)—Clinicians should be trained to recognize symptoms of

contaminated water use in order to help prevent contamination and execute other public health duties, according to an American Medical Association (AMA) report about the October issue of the *AMA Journal of Ethics*.

In light of the ongoing Flint, Michigan, [water](#) crisis, articles in the issue examine the [role](#) of clinicians in defining and enforcing parameters of safe water and addressing barriers to safe water access.

According to one article in the *AMA Journal of Ethics*, most physicians in Flint were not trained in advocacy or leadership and had not received formal [environmental health](#) training. Lessons learned from Flint could expedite resolution of future environmental health crises. Noting that distrust of scientific and governmental authorities must be overcome, another article addresses how community-level ethical protections can re-establish trust within the community. In addition, it is suggested that the medical school curriculum should be expanded to include environmental health, public health, and health disparities, including those relating to environmental quality. Furthermore, physicians' roles and ethical responsibilities regarding safe drinking water using a human rights framework are discussed.

"While the *AMA Code of Medical Ethics* does not explicitly address clinicians' roles in preventing water contamination and treating patients who have been harmed by [contaminated water](#) consumption, it addresses clinicians' roles in preventive care and community health promotion, including their obligations not only to individuals but also to at-risk populations," according to the report.

**More information:** [More Information](#)

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