

WHY IS THE POSTAL INSPECTION SERVICE INVESTIGATING THE FLINT WATER CRISIS?

I hope to have a further update about the ongoing effort to bury the Flint water crisis before the Oversight and Government Reform hearing on Wednesday morning.

But in the meantime I wanted to point to this passage, helpfully dropped out of the US Attorney's investigation in Detroit:

The Federal Bureau of Investigation said on Tuesday it was joining a criminal investigation of lead-contaminated drinking water in Flint, Michigan, exploring whether laws were broken in a crisis that has captured international attention.

Federal prosecutors in Michigan were working with an investigative team that included the FBI, the U.S. Postal Inspection Service, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Office of Inspector General and the EPA's Criminal Investigation Division, a spokeswoman for the U.S. Attorney's Office in Detroit said.

An FBI spokeswoman said the agency was determining whether federal laws were broken, but declined further comment.

I'm actually not at all surprised FBI is involved in this investigation. That sort of comes with the territory of a US Attorney investigation, it seems.

But the US Postal Inspection Service? Here's the kind of crime they investigate:

Report these issues to the U.S. Postal

Inspection Service online:

- *Mail fraud May include scams or deceptive ads via the mail, or postage fraud.*
- *Mail theft Under Inquiry Type, select Problem. Under Customer Service, select Support, and Mail Theft. Under Additional Information, explain why your complaint is mail theft-related.*
- *Identity theft*
- *Unsolicited Sexually Oriented Advertising*

If you believe you're a victim of fraud related to the U.S. Mail, including mailed sweepstakes, lotteries, on-line auctions, work-at-home scams or chain letters, report your concern to the U.S. Postal Inspection Service as mail fraud.

They often get brought in as an investigative partner if the government needs to track what has been mailed, and mail fraud charges can serve as hand add-on charges in cases where someone used the mail to help commit a crime.

I can imagine a lot of things the FBI might be investigating. But I know of no facts, thus far, that involve mail-related crimes.