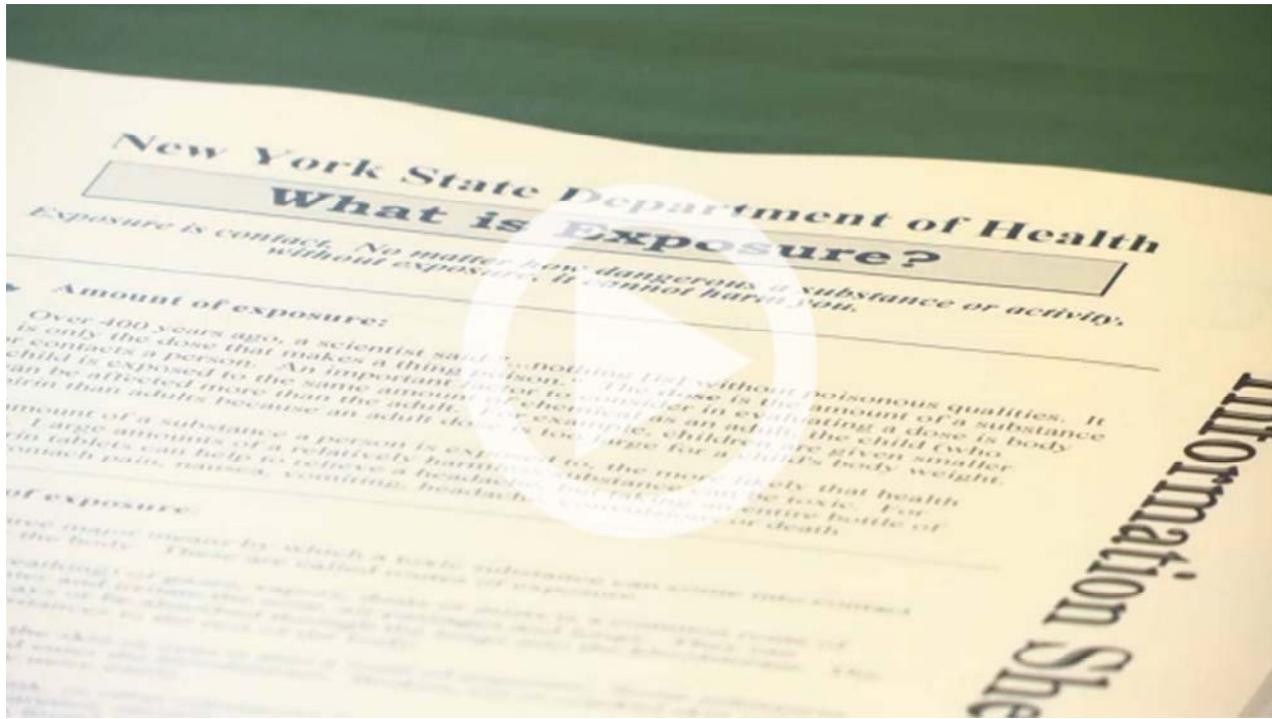


BUFFALO



DEC Holds Meeting With Residents Living Near Niagara Sanitation Site

By Maura Christie

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During a public meeting on Saturday, held by the DEC at the Wheatfield Community Center, residents of Wheatfield and North Tonawanda expressed their concerns with the [recently released report](#) on the Niagara Sanitation Landfill site.

Samples collected from the backyards of some residents and landfill were tested starting in 2017. The study found the landfill contaminants did not

present a risk of off-site exposure. Still, residents want to see the DEC test inside their homes.

"A while ago there was a big orange puddle behind our house. Those [were] chemicals. In the morning, on the water on our property, you'd see a haze. Those [were] chemicals. It's there. It's the elephant in the room nobody is addressing," said Mary DiPota.

DiPota and her family lived on Forbes Street in North Tonawanda for decades.

In 2017, after attorneys ordered testing as part of a class action law suit, PCB's and pesticides were found, resulting in them evacuating their home.

"My son and I were working in our basement, trying to get some of our family pictures and things that were important to us. [Within] 15 minutes he came out and [had to go to] the emergency room, coughing up blood and he has an aneurysm, that could kill him. My younger son Nicholas was in the house for a short time talking to me and my husband, and he wound up at Gates Vascular because they couldn't control a very bad attack," DiPota said.

In October DiPota lost her husband to cancer, and she and her two sons still suffer a number of medical problems. Now, they can not find a buyer for their house due to mold and chemicals on the walls and ceilings.

Her son AJ, wants to see more done.

"Except they are not testing in the homes they are only testing two inches of top soil basically. I think the reason they are not testing in the homes is because they are afraid of what they are going to find," AJ said.

The DEC says it would test in homes if required.

"If we found any evidence that led us to believe there would be [an impact] we would be having a totally different conversation today. We would already be doing actions on the ground, but the way we set out to do this study was to look at the source or the potential source being the landfill, and see if there were any way it could get to people's homes. What we found was there are no pathways for anything found on that landfill to get to someone's home to be impacted, so there is no need for us to continue this investigation knowing the landfill is functioning properly," said Sean Mahar, NYSDEC chief of staff.

Following this report the DEC will move into a remedial investigation, and say they will keep residents updated with any actions they take on the landfill site.

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