



WASHTENAW COUNTY Board of Commissioners

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MEDIA RELEASE

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WASHTENAW COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS JOINING WITH ANN ARBOR CITY COUNCIL, SCIO TOWNSHIP BOARD OF TRUSTEES AND ANN ARBOR CHARTER TOWNSHIP BOARD OF TRUSTEES IN A JOINT MEETING TO DISCUSS THE GELMAN DIOXANE PLUME

The Washtenaw County Board of Commissioners, in partnership with the Ann Arbor City Council and the Ann Arbor & Scio Township Boards of Trustees are holding a Joint Working Session meeting to discuss the Gelman Dioxane Plume on Thursday, June 6th at 6:30 p.m.

Gelman Sciences, a company that conducted business in Scio Township from the 1950's until 1997, is responsible for a growing plume of groundwater contamination from a probable carcinogen, a chemical called 1,4 dioxane. Thousands of Washtenaw County homes and businesses are already impacted by the plume, and there is growing concern that it may reach the Huron River, the main supplier of Ann Arbor's drinking water, prompting a collaboration that aims to achieve resolution via cleanup through a Superfund Designation.

This important meeting will be facilitated by Congresswoman Debbie Dingell and will focus on three primary goals:

1. Unify all affected municipalities, increase public awareness regarding options for next steps on remediation of the plume.
2. Discuss Superfund Designation and begin to develop a plan that impresses upon our State leaders the importance of their support.
3. Develop a unified strategy for the ongoing lawsuit against the Gelman Corporation – as this portion involves discussion of legal strategy with attorneys, it will likely happen in a closed session. The groups have committed to holding this agenda item until after all dialogue with the public has been conducted.

Until recently, the affected municipalities have been working individually to bring attention to this issue; this convergence of local leaders is intended to demonstrate a unified expectation that remediation of the Dioxane Plume be afforded the level of priority it requires, as the safety of all residents of Washtenaw County is paramount.

In an effort to further demonstrate solidarity on this issue, and impress the importance of action, invitations have also been extended to the following: Michigan State Representatives Donna Lasinski, Yousef Rabhi, Rebekah Warren, Ronnie Peterson; State Senators Jeff Irwin and Lana Theis; The Huron River Watershed Council, Coalition for Action on the Remediation of Dioxane (CARD), Huron Valley Sierra Club; Washtenaw County Water Resources Commissioner Evan Pratt, Washtenaw County Public Health Officer Ellen Rabinowitz, and Washtenaw County Environmental Health Director Kristen Schweighoefer.

Washtenaw County Commissioner, District 9 Representative Katie Scott states, *“I am committed to a transparent process for coming up with a plan to finally tackle this ongoing problem. I encourage the public to come out and listen to the discussion and comment. In addition to the transparency, I am most heartened by a joint effort of those involved to strategically come up with a plan, together, for a meaningful solution in our community. And I am very thankful for those at the state and federal level, including Congresswoman Debbie Dingell for hearing our concerns and their willingness to continue working with us.”*

District 1 Commissioner Jason Maciejewski adds, *“Before us is an important decision on the 1, 4 Dioxane plume. This joint meeting is an opportunity for impacted residents and leaders to thoughtfully discuss the situation and move forward together. I look forward to considering actions with our municipal partners and Congresswoman Dingell.”*

“Our community has been grappling with this issue for nearly 40 years and it is our hope that this joint meeting will move us toward a strategic and unified path forward,” said County Commission Chair Jason Morgan. *“Calling for Superfund designation would be a significant action for our community, and it is important that our residents have the opportunity to engage with us and help guide our decision-making on this issue.”*

Congresswoman Debbie Dingell is in alignment with our local leaders, stating, *“It has been almost 40 years and there still is not a plan in place to clean up the Gelman site. It is imperative that all parties involved be at the same table and agree on a joint strategy that will address this problem once and for all,”* said Dingell. *“We must remain committed to working toward our common goal. Ensuring the*

Gelman dioxane plume contamination is properly remediated, and the environment and residents are protected is important.”

The meeting location is the former Gelman site: MI-HQ, Michigan Innovation Headquarters & 242 Community Church, 648 Wagner Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48103. Members of the public are invited and encouraged to participate during a public comment opportunity or during the facilitated discussion, helping the group to identify the best, most effective course of action.

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