

**4/30/25 Statement of Marge Barber, Town of Big Flats Resident, Regarding
Pollution Concerns at the Former Fertilizer Factory on Hammond Street in Big
Flats, NY**

My name is Marge Barber. I have lived on Church Street in Big Flats, NY for about 40 years. I grew up here with my family and also raised my kids here. It has recently been brought to our attention that there have reportedly been serious contamination concerns at the old Fertilizer plant on Hammond Street that is close to my home.

Growing up, I saw different types of substances on the railroad tracks next to the factory and I remember the smell in the air from the fertilizer production. Sometimes, when the smell was really bad it would burn my eyes. My brother remembers seeing piles of different powder-like substances dumped way out back of the factory. As a kid you don't think much about it.

Now, learning that our drinking water could have been contaminated is very concerning. As far as I know, we are one of the only town residents still drinking from a private well near the factory that had two toxic pollutants. It definitely leaves me wondering if that could be the reason for some of my family's health issues. My stepfather who moved into this house in 1972 was diagnosed with Lewy Body Dementia in 2009. Dieldrin was one of the chemicals found in the groundwater at the factory site and it is reported to increase the risk of Lewy Body Dementia. My mom, brothers, and I moved into this house in 1979. In 1993, my mom was diagnosed with kidney cancer. And, in 2010, I was diagnosed with MS. Very recently, I learned that some solvents are possibly linked to MS.

I'm not sure why the factory property was never properly cleaned up, even though there have been reported concerns for decades. It makes no sense to me. The Town of Big Flats should require Governor Hochul to comprehensively investigate and remediate the old fertilizer plant on Hammond Street and other toxic sites in my neighborhood. There should be no hesitation or question about taking action when it comes to public health and safety.

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