



# NSCCE

North Stamford Concerned Citizens for the Environment

## North Stamford Drinking Water Contamination Board of Representatives Factsheet

The City of Stamford has the opportunity this summer to fix a problem that has lingered beneath our feet for decades. Groundwater pollution, possibly from the Scofieldtown landfill, and possibly from other municipal properties in the immediate area, is threatening the public health.

At the end of April, Representative Mitch Kaufman provided the Health & Public Safety Commission with a report on the status of North Stamford area water contamination. Some aspects of his report may have been misstated, and there is a concern that the Board of Representatives will not have the correct information needed to make the best decisions on the matter.



Scofieldtown landfill storm drain releasing into Poorhouse Brook.  
NSCCE 2009

1) A bullet list discussed contamination “above the standard amount.” There is no standard amount as a layman would understand the term – there is an “action level” that is almost identical to a “detection level” because the CT Department of Public Health believes that if these pesticides can be detected, they should be remediated. Pesticides in drinking water are not like cholesterol – there is no “good amount” or “standard amount.”



R.A. Bartlett and assistant experiment with chemotherapy at North Stamford lab, 1946

2) NSCCE strongly urges the City to conduct Phase I Environmental Site Assessments of municipal properties in the area, including the Arboretum, Scofield Manor, Smith House and Scofield Magnet Middle School. These studies, sometimes known as “environmental impact statements” discuss historic use of a given property, and can help identify problems that might not be widely known. For example, the Arboretum site was part of a 200+ acre “Tree Research Laboratory” that conducted field experiments with a wide array of pesticides and other chemicals for over 40 years.

3) The City’s current position that “there is no evidence that the source of contamination is City property” could be a direct result of the City’s past failure to conduct a Phase I environmental site assessment of City property. It seems disingenuous to suggest there is no evidence, after failing to look for evidence.

A recent letter from the City Health Department suggested that residents should test their own wells, in advance of a scientifically grounded “grid” approach. This plan is flawed in many ways – you have already received a detailed letter enumerating the shortcomings of testing by individual homeowners. Perhaps the greatest risk is that individuals have a perverse “incentive” to NOT report contamination, fearing legal and financial impacts, and this could paint a grossly misleading picture.

North Stamford Concerned Citizens for the Environment (NSCCE) strongly urges the Stamford Board of Representatives to understand the public health dangers that are posed by this problem. It is not sufficient to remove a barrel here, and apply a band-aid there.

We urge the Board of Representatives to find the political will to solve this problem in a comprehensive manner, once and for all.