

COMMUNITY MESSAGE – PLEASE READ AND SHARE

I want to take a moment to speak directly to everyone in our community about something many of us have been quietly noticing and talking about—the number of cancer cases among people we know.

Let me be very clear right from the start: *This is not about creating fear. It's about creating awareness and understanding.*

Cancer, unfortunately, is far more common than most people realize. Statistically, about 1 in 2 men and 1 in 3 women will develop cancer at some point in their lives. Because of that, it is not unusual for any of us to know multiple people who have been affected.

But sometimes, when people in the same area begin to notice patterns among neighbors, friends, and families, it raises an important question: *Is this just a coincidence... or is there something more?*

WHAT WE'RE DOING — AND WHAT THIS MEANS

Right now, there are really two separate processes that people often confuse:

1. Environmental Investigation (DEP, EPA, etc.)

This looks at things like:

- Air quality
- Soil contamination
- Water pollution
- Industrial sites (like the Aeromarine property)

This type of investigation answers the question: *Is there pollution present?*

2. Cancer Cluster Investigation (NJ Department of Health)

This is completely different.

This process looks at:

- Number of cancer cases
- Types of cancer
- Ages, timing, and patterns
- Comparison to expected rates in similar populations

It asks *if there is more cancer here than there should be.*

And if so, *is there any possible connection to a common cause?*

This process follows a structured protocol, starting with community reports, then reviewing cancer registry data, and, in rare cases, proceeding to more in-depth statistical or epidemiological studies.

HERE'S THE HARD TRUTH

Even when something feels obvious, **proving a cancer cluster is extremely difficult.**

Why?

Because cancer includes over 100 different diseases, often with different causes. It can take years or decades to develop after exposure. Lifestyle, genetics, and environment all play a role.

Sometimes patterns that look real turn out to be statistical coincidences. Even when a cluster is confirmed, linking it definitively to a specific cause is one of the hardest things public health scientists do.

So, why speak up at all? Because community awareness is how these investigations begin.

I have examined a number of case studies throughout the country and learned that most cancer cluster inquiries start with residents noticing something and asking questions.

Without that, no data gets reviewed, no patterns get evaluated, and no answers are even attempted.

WHAT WE CAN DO (WITHOUT PANIC)

If you are concerned, there are practical, proactive steps you can take:

Be aware of your health and get regular screenings

Share accurate information—not rumors

If you know of multiple cases, document details (type, age, timeframe)

Contact your local health department if you believe there is a pattern

Stay engaged, informed, and level-headed

MY FINAL THOUGHT

This is not about saying something is wrong. This is about saying: **“We care enough to ask the question.”**

We are not trying to alarm people. We are trying to make sure that if there *is* something to understand, it doesn't go unnoticed.

Concern is not panic. Concern is responsibility. And as a community, we owe that to each other. Therefore, I believe our local government contacted the New Jersey Department of Health, but I will also check and report back to ensure NJDOH has been notified and is beginning an investigation. Then, I will report back to you.

If you want to contact the NJDOH to add another voice of concern to their files on Keyport, visit: <https://www.nj.gov/health/ces/public/community.shtml>

Incidentally, join us at www.KeyportUNITED.org to learn more.

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