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Xandersol

Xandersol, a new, potentially lethal drug, is being blamed for numerous illnesses and the deaths of six Anchorstown residents. According to water and sewer authority officials, the drug has somehow found its way into the city water system, resulting in the contamination of household drinking water for thousands of local residents.

The question lies not in determining how, but, more importantly, where the drug entered the city water system; once the leak is found it can quickly be contained. Experts agree that, given the relative scarcity of Xandersol in amounts large enough to affect an entire community, the leak could only have occurred in the following three locations: 1) the Griffen Pharmaceuticals Production Facility (GPPF), 2) the Waste Pharmaceuticals Processing Plant (WPPP), or 3) the Riverdale Testing Center (RTC).



Support for the claim that Xandersol entered the city water system at the GPPF is widespread. According to a recent poll, an overwhelming majority of local residents—nearly 80%—believe this to be the case. Marcia Downing, a mother of three, advocates that the GPPF is to blame. "It seems pretty obvious that the leak happened at the GPPF," she says. "Just ask around. Nearly everyone on the block will tell you so. I mean, I don't understand what the big mystery is. If everyone says it's true, then it's probably true. Strength in numbers," she says. "That's what my mom used to say." As a result of the disaster, Marcia has had to take off work to care for her children, whom she believes have been adversely affected by the contaminated water. "I've taken off three days since the disaster. And those are unpaid days. I don't have the luxury of paid sick days like some people." She shakes her head. "You know things are bad when you can't even drink the water."

While support for the claim that Xandersol entered the water at the GPPF is popular, this theory lacks the support of widely recognizable figures such as big name actor Evert Milkin. Milkin, on location for a shoot for his upcoming blockbuster movie, had a chance to spend two days in Anchorstown. Upon being warned about the drinking water problem, he decided to investigate for himself. Milkin was shocked at what he found. He purports to have discovered a dried pool of Xandersol residue collected about the entrance of a city sewer opening just outside the WPPP. Acting upon these findings, Milkin has galvanized many to support the claim that the Xandersol entered the city water system at the WPPP. Alyssa Davis, one of Milkin's newest followers, explains, "If a nationally recognized and highly respected actor like Milkin tells you it's true, you can rest assured it most definitely is." Milkin says that he won't comment on his plans to indict the WPPP for negligence, but he says that the "wheels are in motion."

Since Milkin's investigation, the WPPP has come under increased scrutiny. But that is not to say the RTC is not also feeling the heat. According to local engineer Todd Severs, the RTC is the one at fault. "It should be pretty clear to everyone that the RTC is responsible for the disaster. Just take a look at their past record. In the last two years alone, the RTC has incurred 16 citations for

noncompliance with federal and state drug testing standards." Severs continues, "Make no mistake, a corporation like that is the one to turn your attention to in a situation like this." In recent days, Severs' statements have begun to resonate with the public. When confronted with growing concern, the RTC issued the following statement in its defense: "We of the RTC are troubled by the recent accusations regarding our involvement in the contamination of the city water system. While we understand that much of this blame stems from our poor record of upholding testing standards, we would like to remind local residents of the simple, yet important facts: The RTC has been testing the drugs that the people have come to depend on. What is more, we have done it on a shoestring budget. Many of our employees are forced to work under meager circumstances—circumstances that few would put up with unless they weren't so dutifully driven to carry out this noble endeavor.

Several of our employees are barely able to clothe their children and put food on the table. In our quest to create safe, helpful, reliable drugs, regardless of the hardships we suffer, it seems we have now become completely unappreciated."

Reports of those adversely affected by Xandersol are on the rise. In desperation, residents have been resorting to fitting out their taps with makeshift Xandersol filters. For many, it seems no solution is on the horizon. In passing, we conducted a final interview with a man pushing a cart who, despite our efforts, evades identification. "Instead of wasting time blaming everybody," says the man, "why not just check all three?" It seems he is referring to the GFFC, WPPP, and RTC—the three potential leak sites. "I'm thirsty," he continues, moving away. "You wouldn't happen to have any bottled water, would you?"