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**Lawsuits Link Frankford Arsenal Contamination
to Deadly Brain Cancers in Philadelphia Police Officers**

FACT SHEET

Who: Three Philadelphia police officers developed glioblastoma, an aggressive and fatal form of brain cancer, after spending years working in the Philadelphia Police Department's Narcotics Unit offices at the former Frankford Arsenal, according to three civil complaints filed by [William M. Davis](#) of [McMonagle Perri McHugh Mischak Davis](#) and co-counsel James McHugh of Lopez McHugh.

What: The complaints allege that longtime environmental contamination within the Frankford Arsenal -- including radioactive materials, heavy metals, carcinogenic chemicals, and PCBs -- caused the officers' fatal and life-threatening cancers. The complaints also allege that property owners and managers were aware of the dangers, but failed to offer warnings on them or act to clean them up.

Where: Philadelphia County Court of Common Pleas

When: The complaints were filed as toxic tort cases with jury trials demanded:

- **Case ID: 251201098, filed December 8, 2025**

Eric Humes, Administrator of the Estate of Michael Francis Deal (died 2019)

- **Case ID: 251201139, filed December 8, 2025**

Diana Anne Schafer, Administratrix of the Estate of Andrew J. Schafer (died 2025)

- **Case ID: 251201112, filed December 8, 2025**

Joseph P. Cooney (diagnosed 2024) and Bernadette Mary Savino

Defendants:

1. Philadelphia Authority for Industrial Development
2. Arsenal Associates
3. Arsenal, Inc.
4. Hankin Management Company
5. New Huntington Construction Company, Inc.
6. Mark Hankin
7. John/Jane Does #1-50 (fictitious employees, contractors and subcontractors)
8. ABC Corporations #1-20 (fictitious corporations, partnerships, sole proprietorships and/or other legal entities)

Details:

History of the Arsenal

- 1816: U.S. Army establishes the Frankford Arsenal for munitions design and development.
- 1970s–1980s: Army decommissions the site; reports document radioactive material use and widespread contamination.
- 1977: Arsenal ceases munitions development operations.
- 1981: Report identifies dangerous substances requiring cleanup.
- 1983: Philadelphia Authority for Industrial Development (PAID) and Arsenal Associates acquire portions of the contaminated property.
- Late 1980s–1990s: Site converted into the Frankford Arsenal Business Center for commercial and residential use.

Documented Contamination

- 2001: Radiological assessment confirms radioactive materials including depleted uranium and radium were used on site; notes contamination concerns remain.
- 2008: “Final Closeout Report” requires cleanup of underground storage tanks, batteries, and radioactive waste.
- 2011: The EPA issues an order for asbestos cleanup at the Arsenal Business Center.
- 2016: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers identifies six areas of concern (AOC), including elevated levels of lead, Aroclor 1260 (PCBs), and Benzo(a)pyrene, a carcinogen. It recommends soil removal, disposal, and capping. AOC 13 sits directly next to -- and possibly under -- Buildings 201 and 202, used by the Narcotics Unit.

Police Officers' Exposure

- Michael Francis Deal
 - PPD since 1980; Narcotics Unit from 1994 onward.
 - Worked in Buildings 201/202 for decades.
 - Diagnosed with glioblastoma in 2018; died Jan. 2019.
- Andrew Schafer
 - PPD since 1999; Narcotics Unit 2002–2015.
 - Diagnosed with glioblastoma in 2023; died March 2025.
- Joseph P. Cooney
 - PPD since 1995; Narcotics Unit since 1998.
 - Diagnosed with glioblastoma in March 2024.

Allegations and Demand:

- Defendants failed to test, remediate, clean, or monitor the property despite multiple warnings.
- Defendants failed to warn police officers or provide protective equipment.
- Officers were exposed for years primarily through inhalation, as well as dermal (skin) and incidental ingestion pathways.
- Hazardous conditions were allegedly concealed or misrepresented, preventing timely discovery.

- Plaintiffs invoke the discovery rule, asserting they learned the connection only within two years of filing.
- Plaintiffs seek compensatory and punitive damages.

Additional Information:

Any individual who was employed or involved with a business or organization situated on the grounds of the Frankford Arsenal, and who believes he or she may have contracted illness due to the property's toxicity, is encouraged to contact McMonagle Perri McHugh Mischak Davis to discuss their own legal options. You can contact the law firm via text message at (215) 372-8528, by calling (215) 981-0999, or messaging the firm online at <https://www.mpmc.com/contact>.

Formed in 1995, McMonagle Perri McHugh Mischak Davis is a nationally known criminal defense, personal injury and family law firm based in Philadelphia. The firm consistently litigates high profile cases resulting in acquittals and/or million-dollar awards/settlements. Practice areas include criminal defense, personal injury and family law. For more information, visit www.mpmc.com or call (215) 981-0999.
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