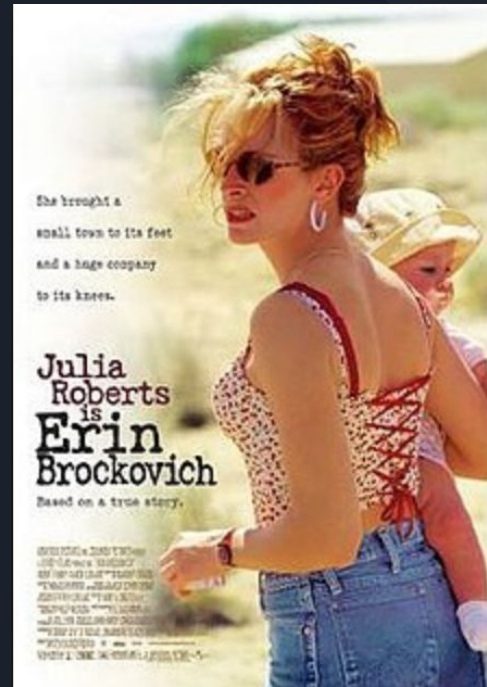


Erin Brockovich



By: Kurt Schwoerer, Brian Jackson, Ryan Carroll, James Borowski, and Jake Guertin

Background

- Born
 - June 22, 1960 Lawrence, Kansas
- Education
 - High School: Lawrence High School
 - Lawrence, Kansas
 - College
 - Kansas State (Manhattan, Kansas)
 - Wade College (Dallas, Texas)
 - Associates degree in applied arts
- Social
 - Married
 - Shawn Brown
 - Steve Brockovich
 - Eric Ellis
 - 3 Children



Professional Career Or Lack Thereof

- Moves out west
 - Management Trainee
 - Beauty pageant in 1981
 - Wins Miss Pacific Coast
- Brokerage Firm, Reno Nevada
 - Car Accident
- Masry & Vititoe
 - Injury Settlement
 - Clerical Position



Hinkley California

- Considered an unincorporated community
- Located in the Mojave Desert, in San Bernardino California
- Population currently at 1,915 people
- Considered a ghost town now due to the hexavalent chromium that contaminated their groundwater supply.



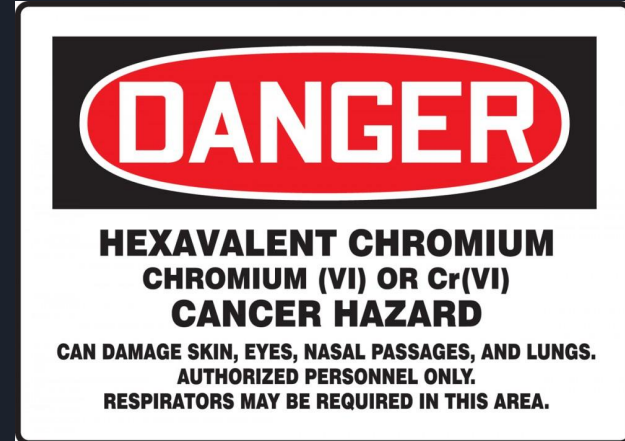
PG&E and Hinkley, California

- Investigation of Hinkley
 - Found blood samples in a case involving PG&E and spiked curiosity
- PG&E
 - Big name gas and electric company supplying energy to the west coast
- PG&E used the area around Hinkley to dispose of wastewater
 - Ponds where PG&E were dumping wastewater were unlined.
 - Over the years between 1952 to 1966 approximately 370 million gallons of wastewater that had been contaminated with hexavalent chromium were dumped into these ponds.
 - This caused the groundwater in Hinkley, California and surrounding areas to become contaminated and unsafe for human consumption.
 - PG&E didn't inform the residence until 1987



Hexavalent Chromium

- Any type of chemical that contains chromium in the +6 valence state (Cr(VI)) usually produced through an industrial process.
- Typically used in alloy steel to increase hardenability and resistance to corrosion or found in dyes and paints.
- Known to cause cancer and can target the lungs, kidneys, liver, skin, and eyes.
- Legal limit in drinking water is 10 parts per billion for chromium-6 and 100 parts per billion for total chromium.
- California EPA goal for chromium 6 in drinking water is 0.02 parts per billion.
- Levels of chromium 6 are still elevated at 3.6 ppb





Brockovich Working towards Conviction

- Erin began to take water sample in the areas surrounding the PG&E plant where the waste water was being disposed.
- Once she discovered the levels of Hexavalent Chromium in the ponds and well she began to raise public awareness.
- PG&E began to threaten Brockovich for spreading the information to the community.
- Finally with enough evidence to convict PG&E, a lawsuit began.



Lawsuit & Settlement: “Hinkley vs PG&E”

- 600 of the town’s residents hired Masry & Vititoe (1993)
- PG&E was aware of and tried to cover up the pollution.
 - Study done in 1986 showed increased cancer rate.
 - ChemRisk on behalf of PG&E paid original scientist to redo his study.
- PG&E initially offered a settlement of \$20 million dollars which was declined.
- The ending settlement was largest in US history
 - \$333 million to the plaintiffs
 - Brockovich received \$2.5 million
- Settlements were still being settled 20 years later in 2012 with PG&E paying an additional \$3.3 million because the pollution was not fully contained and continues to spread.

Hinkley & Brockovich Today

- Hinkley
 - PG&E has spent over \$700 million on remediation.
 - As of 2013 Chromium 6 is still in the groundwater.
 - 3.6 ppb of Chromium 6.
 - Residents have found traces of arsenic and manganese in groundwater as well.
- Brockovich
 - Created Brockovich Research & Consulting an environmental consulting firm.
 - BRC is in charge of crowdsourced map that tracks health hazards around the world.
 - Also continues to work as a consumer advocate and environmental activist.



Questions?





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