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Hidden Contamination From Major Redevelopment Project Sparks Multi-Million-Dollar Lawsuit

Self-represented entrepreneur alleges chlordane contamination from Sacramento redevelopment project destroyed inventory, collapsed business, and exposed failures in environmental oversight

SACRAMENTO, Calif. - May 2026 Sacramento business owner Betty Mitchell has issued a public statement and is pursuing an active civil lawsuit alleging that chlordane-contaminated dust from the Mirasol Village redevelopment project migrated into her indoor cannabis facility, triggering repeated pesticide-test failures and ultimately destroying her business.

Mitchell, who is representing herself in the litigation, says the contamination wiped out inventory, damaged her leasehold and purchase rights, and caused millions in business losses. The lawsuit, now in active discovery, names McCormack Baron Salazar, Inc., A. Teichert & Son Inc., and Midstate Construction Corporation as defendants.

“The decision was made not to remediate the site. I’m an unintended consequence,” Mitchell told the *Sacramento Business Journal*, which recently reported on developments in the case.

Redevelopment Project Built on Historically Contaminated Soil

Mirasol Village is a public-private redevelopment project associated with the former Twin Rivers public-housing site, where chlordane was historically used as a termite treatment.

A March 4, 2020 letter from the California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) identified organochlorine pesticides, including chlordane, as chemicals of concern and called for additional investigation at the site.

Construction continued.

Mitchell says excavation, grading, demolition, and other dust-generating activities released contaminated soil and dust that traveled into her facility through HVAC and ventilation pathways.

“The closer the construction of Mirasol Village got to my facility, the higher the chlordane tests were,” Mitchell told the *Sacramento Business Journal*.

Testing Timeline and Alleged Business Losses

According to Mitchell, her cannabis passed state-mandated pesticide testing in June 2020, with no chlordane detected.

By January 2021, her product failed for chlordane.

By August 2023, the contamination reached what Mitchell says was the highest confirmed level in the case.

Mitchell says she never used, stored, or introduced chlordane into her facility.

The lawsuit seeks more than \$9.5 million in damages, including claims for destroyed inventory, lost business value, lost revenue, lost profits, remediation costs, emotional distress, and losses tied to leasehold and property rights.

“The nightmare is that it took me almost three years to determine where this indestructible pesticide originated,” Mitchell told the *Sacramento Business Journal*.

Neighboring Dust Complaint Emerges as Key Evidence

A September 19, 2022 dust complaint from neighboring business Commerce Printing Services has become a significant part of Mitchell’s case.

According to Mitchell, the complaint described construction dust from the Mirasol Village project coating rooftop solar panels, creating cleanup costs, and raising concerns about inadequate dust mitigation.

Mitchell argues the complaint demonstrates that dust was leaving the project site long before she understood the source of her contamination problems.

Case Now in Active Discovery

The case, *Mitchell v. McCormack Baron Salazar, Inc., et al.*, Sacramento County Superior Court Case No. 25CV010077, is now moving through active discovery.

The court has allowed core claims including negligence, fraudulent concealment, trespass, and civil conspiracy to proceed.

Mitchell says the lawsuit raises broader questions about redevelopment oversight, environmental accountability, and the protection of small businesses operating near major construction projects.

Chlordane, banned in 1988, is a persistent pesticide linked to cancer, neurological effects, and developmental harm. It can remain in soil for decades and become airborne when contaminated soil is disturbed.

“It’s about ensuring the safety of everyone in this community,” Mitchell said.

About Betty Mitchell

Betty Mitchell is a Sacramento entrepreneur and former operator of an indoor cannabis cultivation facility in Sacramento, California. She is representing herself in ongoing litigation related to alleged chlordane contamination associated with the Mirasol Village redevelopment project.

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