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## **Superfund Community Organizer Heroine Coming to Springfield**

Lois Gibbs, Executive Director of the national organization Center for Health, Environment and Justice (CHEJ), comes to Springfield on Saturday, June 7<sup>th</sup>, to develop a winning strategy with People for Safe Water and local citizens for cleaning up the Tremont City Barrel Fill. With more than 1.5 million gallons of hazardous waste buried in barrels at the site, local officials and citizens want EPA to permanently remove all hazardous wastes.

Leading an all-day strategy session with citizens, Gibbs brings more than 35 years of experience fighting to protect communities whose citizens' health is threatened by the presence of toxic substances and hazardous wastes

Gibbs stepped into the limelight in the late '70's, when the very toxic Love Canal in New York was sickening her family and more than 800 families. She led the effort which successfully challenged the responsible corporations and government officials, leading to the relocation of affected families.

Ever since she founded Center for Health, Environment, and Justice in 1981, her organization's mission has been "to prevent harm to human health by providing technical and organizing support to individuals and communities facing a toxic hazard." Over the years CHEJ's work has touched over 35,000 individuals and groups.

According to CF Water founder Laura Kaffenbarger, "Lois was a force from Day One in our local efforts to demand action at the Barrel Fill site." Kaffenbarger contacted her in 1983, and from then on Gibbs and her co-workers helped local citizens navigate government inaction to address the highly toxic wastes that had been buried at the Barrel Fill.

"When it comes to Superfund sites, the Number One person in the country to help citizens challenge EPA's bad decisions is Lois Gibbs," says Marilyn Welker, president of People for Safe Water. "We are honored to have her help us set our course, guided by her experience and wisdom."

Gibbs will be available for phone interviews on Friday, June 6<sup>th</sup>, from 3 p.m. through the evening. Contact Marilyn Welker or Teresa Mills at the phone numbers and email above to schedule.

Websites: Center for Health, Environment and Justice: [www.chej.org](http://www.chej.org)  
People for Safe Water: [www.peopleforsafewater.org](http://www.peopleforsafewater.org)