

Citizens Against Covance

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tuberculosis Outbreak Uncovered at Madison Covance Facility

CHANDLER – Citizens Against Covance (CAC), a Chandler-based grass roots organization, made public a series of documents Wednesday that reveals an outbreak of tuberculosis among primates at Covance’s Madison, WI facility in June 2006. CAC member Michael Boerman obtained these documents from the State of Wisconsin Dept. of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection by making a Public Records request.

Citizens Against Covance plans to use this information to educate citizens in Chandler about not only Covance’s potential for disease outbreaks and health risks, but also about the company’s long history of secrecy, deception, and violations of federal law. “Covance has never been straightforward with the citizens of Chandler,” says Boerman. “In these modern times of media relations and good publicity, Covance has a markedly poor reputation for not being forthcoming about their faults, and this recent bombshell confirms it.”

Chandler Mayor Boyd Dunn and City Manager Mark Pentz recently toured Covance’s facility in Madison. “They only saw what Covance wanted them to see; surely nothing like this tuberculosis outbreak would have been brought up,” adds Jan McClellan, CAC co-founder. This failure to disclose critical information brings up other issues, including Covance not sharing this TB outbreak with other contract research organizations (CRO’s). A former Covance employee now working for one such CRO says her company buys monkeys directly from Covance Research Products, but has never been notified of the outbreak. “I wish I could say that I am surprised Covance is apparently acting in an unethical manner towards its customers, and flouting laws designed to protect human health and welfare, but I can’t say that. I’m not in the least surprised,” she says.

The controversial contract lab Covance has been subject to intense opposition since the announcement of its plan to build a new facility in Chandler’s Price corridor. The controversy heated up in October with the surprise announcement of Covance’s relocation to a 50-acre site at the Chandler Airpark, essentially circumventing not only the Planning & Zoning procedure and Council action, but skirting Chandler residents’ voices and their participation in the decision-making process.

Citizens Against Covance has conducted an analysis of all communication the City of Chandler has received from residents regarding Covance, dating back to August 2005 up to the present. At last count, over 86% of email feedback the City has received from Chandler residents has been opposed to Covance.

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