

Timeline of Toxic Contamination and Supply of Clean Water in the Communities Next to Union Carbide factory.

1.	1969	Union Carbide sets up pesticide formulation plant in Bhopal. Hazardous waste routinely dumped in factory premises in 21 unlined pits.
2.	1977	Solar Evaporation Ponds built on 32 acres for dumping of hazardous wastes. Ponds flood toxic material annually in monsoon season.
3.	1982	<p>➤ Telex dated March 25, 1982: “Phase II evaporation pond almost emptied. Reps of KR Datey at site and investigation of the leakage in progress. Unfortunately, emergency pond has also shown some signs of leakage.”</p> <p>➤ Telex dated April 10, 1982: “Continued leakage from evaporation pond causing great concern.”</p> <p>➤ Farmers agitate over death of cattle due to contaminated surface water. Union Carbide settles matter out of court.</p>
4.	1989	<p>Union Carbide Corporation’s scientists report severe contamination of local ground water but the report is suppressed by the Corporation. “Samples drawn in June-July ’89 from land-fill areas and effluent treatment pits inside the plant were sent to R and D. The solid samples had organic contamination varying from 10% to 100% and contained known ingredients like naphthol and naphthalene in substantial quantities.</p> <p>“Majority of the liquid samples contained naphthol and/or Sevin in quantities far more than permitted by ISI for onland disposal. All samples caused 100% mortality to fish in toxicity assessment studies and were to be diluted several fold to render them suitable for survival of fish.”</p>
5.	1990	Bhopal Group for Information and Action sends samples of ground water and soil to Citizen’s Environmental Laboratory in Boston, USA. This laboratory identified highly toxic materials (dichlorobenzenes and polynuclear aromatic hydrocarbons) in the soil and water surrounding the plant. Findings are presented before Union Carbide Corporation and clean up demanded.
6.	1991	State Research Laboratory of the Public Health Engineering Department, Government of Madhya Pradesh reported severe chemical contamination in samples taken from 11 tube wells in the area.
7.	1994	Union Carbide’s advisor Arthur D. Little, USA retained National Environmental Engineering Research Institute (NEERI) on behalf of Union Carbide India Limited to study contamination inside the factory premises. NEERI reported that over one-fifth of the factory site was contaminated with hazardous waste.
8.	1996	State Research Laboratory of the Public Health Engineering Department once again reported severe chemical contamination in samples taken from 11 tube wells in the area. The municipal corporation declared water from 100 tube wells unfit for drinking though no alternative drinking water source was suggested or provided.

9.	1999	Greenpeace International conducts a study that finds solid wastes, soils, groundwater samples collected within plant area to be high in mercury, organochlorine compounds and 12 volatile organochlorine compounds (VOCs). Mercury concentrations were found to be 20,000 to six million times higher than expected.
10.	2002	Soil samples, groundwater and vegetables from residential areas surrounding UCIL were found contaminated by: mercury, chromium, nickel, lead, organochlorines, hexachloroethane, hexachlorobuta-diene, pesticide HCH and other chemicals by the Fact Finding Mission on Bhopal, New Delhi. These same contaminants were also found in breast milk.
11.	May 2004	Order of the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India dated May 7, “.....The State Government of Madhya Pradesh and Gujarat are directed to take steps to supply fresh drinking water in tanks or pipes particularly, taking into consideration, the fact that summer season has already set in. It shall be done expeditiously. Industrial estates of Vapi, Ankleshwar and Vadodara in the state of Gujarat and Union Carbide plant in Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh were inspected by the committee. The two state governments would ensure supply of water in such villages, areas which are effected, list whereof has already been given by learned counsel for the petitioner to learned counsel appearing from two states.”
12.	May 2005	On May 18, 2005 several hundred residents of the 18 communities gathered first outside and then inside the Directorate of Bhopal Gas Tragedy demanding clean drinking water. Several peaceful protestors were beaten up with sticks and 7 persons were charged under Sec. 332 and other sections of the IPC.
13.	2006	<p>➤ On January 21, 2006 well over a thousand residents of the communities affected by contaminated ground water sat outside the residence of the Minister of Bhopal Gas Tragedy Relief & Rehabilitation demanding clean drinking water. 9 persons were charged under Sec. 148 and other sections of the IPC.</p> <p>➤ 52 Bhopalis including survivors of the disaster, residents of the communities affected by contamination and activists marched for 37 days to cover 850 kilometers from Bhopal to New Delhi. Supply of clean drinking water to the communities affected by ground water contamination was one of the prominent demands of the Padyatra. On April 17, following a seven day fast by Bhopalis, the Prime Minister met with a delegation of Bhopalis and among other assurances promised to ensure funds for clean water supply. As per the direction of the Prime Minister, a Coordination Committee on Bhopal (CCB) with bureaucrats from the central and state governments and representatives of Bhopali organizations was formed. An amount of Rs. 14. 85 Crores was sanctioned by the Prime Minister for supply of clean water to the communities affected by contamination of ground water. In June the amount was transferred to the state government. One of the principal</p>

		<p>tasks of the CCB was supervising the work of provision of clean drinking water to the 18 communities in the vicinity of the abandoned factory.</p> <p>➤ Officials of the State government assure supply of water by the deadline of September 2008.</p>
14.	2007	<p>➤ Six activists including three residents of communities affected by groundwater contamination fasted for 19 days demanding that the State government provide clean water to residents of communities affected by groundwater contamination. The official representative of the Chief Minister conceded this and other demands.</p> <p>➤ Deadline for completion of work shifted to November 2008.</p>
15.	2008	<p>➤ 55 Bhopalis marched on a second Padyatra with essentially the same set of demands including the demand of supply of clean drinking water in the 18 communities. On August 8, the Minister of Chemicals and Fertilizers conceded the demand for clean drinking water and other.</p> <p>➤ In the meeting of the CCB in September 2008, State government officials assure completion of work of supplying clean drinking water by March 2009.</p>
16.	2009	<p>➤ The report of the Centre for Science and Environment, New Delhi analysed samples of soil and ground water from in and around the factory along with the Central Pollution Control Board. They reported presence of high concentrations of toxic chemicals and heavy metals at three kilometres distance from the factory and at depths greater than 30 metres.</p> <p>➤ In the meeting of the CCB in August 2009, State government officials move deadline to November 2009.</p>
17.	March 2012	In a meeting presided over by the Commissioner, Bhopal Division, officials of the Bhopal Municipal Corporation assured that the work of supplying clean water to the 18 communities will be completed by March 2012.
18.	May 2012	<p>Hon'ble Supreme Court's order of May 3, 2012</p> <p>“The entire exercise should be completed within three months from the date of communication of this order to the Executive Chairman of the State Legal Services Authority and the Members of the Committee and both the State Government and the Bhopal Municipal Corporation, shall ensure that the work does not suffer or is not obstructed on account of inadequate or insufficient funds.....”</p>
19.	June 2012	Field visit and meeting of the Supreme Court Monitoring Committee presided over by Justice K K Lahoti, Chairman, M P State Legal Services Authority.