



State of Michigan  
**Attorney General Dana Nessel**

**Media Contacts:**

[Courtney Covington Watkins](#)  
(c) 517-290-1560

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

Thursday, Jan. 14, 2021

## **Nine Indicted on Criminal Charges in Flint Water Crisis Investigation**

**FLINT** – Michigan Solicitor General Fadwa Hammoud and Wayne County Prosecutor Kym L. Worthy today announced that after 12 months of grand jury proceedings nine individuals have been indicted on a total of 42 counts related to a series of alleged actions and inactions that created the historic injustice of the Flint Water Crisis. The Chief Judge of the Seventh Circuit in Genesee County appointed Judge David Newblatt to act as a one-man grand jury to investigate crimes related to the crisis. Indictments were issued after the grand juror listened to and evaluated the evidence presented.

The following defendants were charged by Solicitor General Hammoud and Prosecutor Worthy as part of the criminal investigation into the Flint Water Crisis:

- **Jarrold Agen** – Former Director of Communications and Former Chief of Staff, Executive Office of Gov. Rick Snyder
  - One count of perjury – a 15-year felony
- **Gerald Ambrose** – Former City of Flint Emergency Manager
  - Four counts of misconduct in office – each a five-year felony and/or \$10,000 fine
- **Richard Baird** – Former Transformation Manager and Senior Adviser, Executive Office of Gov. Snyder
  - One count of perjury – a 15-year felony
  - One count of official misconduct in office – a five-year felony and/or \$10,000 fine
  - One count of obstruction of justice – a five-year felony and/or \$10,000 fine
  - One count of extortion – a 20-year felony and/or \$10,000 fine
- **Howard Croft** – Former Director of the City of Flint Department of Public Works
  - Two counts of willful neglect of duty – each a one-year misdemeanor and/or \$1,000 fine

- **Darnell Earley** – Former City of Flint Emergency Manager
  - Three counts of misconduct in office – each a five-year felony and/or \$10,000 fine
- **Nicolas Lyon** – Former Director, Michigan Department of Health and Human Services
  - Nine counts of involuntary manslaughter – each a 15-year felony and/or \$7,500 fine
  - One count of willful neglect of duty – a one-year misdemeanor and/or \$1,000 fine
- **Nancy Peeler** – Current Early Childhood Health Section Manager, Michigan Department of Health and Human Services
  - Two counts of misconduct in office – each a five-year felony and/or \$10,000 fine
  - One count of willful neglect of duty – a one-year misdemeanor and/or \$1,000 fine
- **Richard Snyder** – Former Governor of Michigan
  - Two counts of willful neglect of duty – each a one-year misdemeanor and/or \$1,000 fine
- **Eden Wells** – Former Chief Medical Executive, Michigan Department of Health and Human Services
  - Nine counts of involuntary manslaughter – each a 15-year felony and/or \$7,500 fine
  - Two counts of misconduct in office – each a five-year felony and/or \$10,000 fine
  - One count of willful neglect of duty – a one-year misdemeanor and/or \$1,000 fine

The defendants turned themselves in and were arraigned today before Judge Elizabeth A. Kelly for the Seventh Circuit Court and Chief Judge Christopher Odette for the 67th District Court. Details on their arraignments and subsequent court dates will be forthcoming.

The prosecution team sought and obtained indictments based on evidence that could be proven in court. Status, position or political affiliation of a defendant are not factors in the charges sought. Furthermore, charges were not pursued unless the evidence and law supported it. The secrecy provisions over the grand jury proceedings do not allow for discussion of the grand jury evidence underlying the charges at this time. However, going forward, the cases will proceed in the respective courts to which they are assigned, presided over by those judges in accordance with Michigan law.

“When an entire city is victimized by the negligence and indifference of those in power, it deserves an uncompromising investigation that holds to account anyone who is criminally culpable. That is what all residents in this state are entitled to, regardless of their ZIP code. And that is what this prosecution team did. Our approach was simple—where we believed the evidence would prove a criminal charge, we sought and obtained indictments for those crimes,” said Solicitor General Hammoud. “We must remember that the Flint Water Crisis is not some relic of the past. At this very moment, the people of Flint continue to suffer from the categorical failure of public officials at all levels of government, who trampled upon their trust, and evaded accountability for far too long. We understand that our work is not done and although the

criminal justice system alone cannot remedy all the suffering that every person endured, we took our part seriously. We hope others will do the same to ensure this never, ever happens again.”

“This case has nothing to do with partisanship. It has to do with human decency, resurrecting the complete abandonment of the people of Flint, and finally, finally, holding people accountable for the unspeakable alleged atrocities that harmed this city for years,” said Prosecutor Worthy. “Pure and simple this case is about justice, truth, accountability, poisoned children, lost lives, shattered families that are still not whole, and simply giving a damn about all of humanity.”

In April 2014, the water supply reaching thousands of homes, schools and businesses within the City of Flint was switched from water sourced from Lake Huron to the Flint River. As a result of that switch, the Flint Water Crisis quickly became an ongoing public health crisis that has left a lasting impact on thousands of Flint residents. By early 2016, then-Gov. Snyder declared a State of Emergency in Genesee County and an investigation was launched by a private law firm – appointed by then-Attorney General Bill Schuette – that was then designated as the former Office of Special Counsel (OSC).

In late 2018, Attorney General Dana Nessel was elected and upon taking office in 2019, she made decisions to put a conflict wall in place to ensure the criminal investigation and civil litigation following the Flint Water Crisis were conducted by completely separate teams. Nessel decided to lead the civil litigation team. The OSC – which proved to be an unnecessary cost to taxpayers – was no longer needed, and Hammoud and Worthy were tapped to lead the criminal investigation.

Citing grave concerns about the investigative approach and legal theories embraced by the former OSC – particularly regarding the pursuit of evidence, [Hammoud and Worthy announced in June 2019 the dismissal without prejudice of all pending criminal charges](#) previously brought by the OSC. The prosecution team’s voluntary dismissal allowed them to move forward in conducting a thorough, methodical and ethical investigation. The dismissal also was not a determination of any defendant’s criminal responsibility, nor was the team precluded from refiling charges against the specified defendants, or adding new charges and additional defendants.

[Copies of the nine indictments announced today are available here.](#)

###

*Please note: A criminal charge is merely an allegation and the defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty. The Attorney General’s office does not provide photos of defendants, but one may be available from the booking agencies, Genesee County Sheriff’s Office.*