

WASHINGTON
TOXICS
COALITION

Protecting Health & the Environment



ANNUAL REPORT



Mission Statement

Washington Toxics Coalition protects public health and the environment by eliminating toxic pollution. WTC promotes alternatives, advocates policies, empowers communities, and educates people to create a healthy environment.

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Policy Victories

Washington passes landmark legislation to ban toxic flame retardants (PBDEs)

Washington Toxics Coalition (WTC) deployed our crack team of policy experts, doctors, nurses, public-interest lobbyists, firefighters, children's advocates, moms, and scientists and told the truth about the potential dangers of the toxic flame retardants (PBDEs). We pursued a reasonable approach to phasing them out in favor of safer alternatives and won the support of legislators on both sides of the aisle.

Rep. Ross Hunter (D-Medina) and Sen. Debbie Regala (D-Tacoma) shepherded the bill from its inception in 2005. Rep. Hunter worked day and night to ensure the passage of this bill because of his concern for children's health.

The final tally makes it clear that legislators heard the truth and saw the need for action to prevent these flame retardants from building up in our children and threatening their health: both houses passed the legislation with overwhelming bipartisan majorities, 71 to 24 in the House of Representatives and 41 to 8 in the Senate.

The Washington State Departments of Ecology and Health requested the legislation, which was supported by Gov. Gregoire, three state fire associations, the Washington State Nurses Association, the Washington Medical Association, and many others.

While other states have passed bans on the penta and octa forms of PBDEs, which have been phased out of manufacture, Washington is the first to act on the deca form. Deca has by far the highest production volume of the PBDE forms.

"Fire fighters are concerned about preventing fires and reducing exposure to toxic chemicals, because we're on the front lines in both cases," said Keven Rojecki of the Washington State Council of Fire Fighters. "Fire fighters are already exposed to so many deadly carcinogens, it is critical that safer alternatives be used to ensure products are fire safe. This bill is a victory for protecting the health of firefighters and the public from harmful toxic chemicals."

The legislation does the following:

- Bans the use of the penta and octa forms of PBDEs, with limited exceptions, by 2008;
- Bans the use of the deca form in mattresses by 2008; and
- Bans the use of the deca form in televisions, computers, and residential upholstered furniture by 2011, as long as a safer, reasonable, and effective alternative has been identified by the state departments of Ecology and Health and approved by fire safety officials.

Three hundred health care professionals signed a letter supporting the ban on PBDEs, citing harmful health impacts from PBDEs including learning and behavioral disorders, memory impairments, disruption of thyroid function, reproductive effects, and cancer. The letter's authors noted that substantial evidence shows the buildup of PBDEs in people, orca whales, and the environment, and new studies find that the deca form breaks down into other forms of PBDEs that have already been phased out.

"This is truly a case where prevention is essential," said Judy Huntington, MN, RN, executive director of the Washington State Nurses Association. "By passing this legislation, we are making vital progress in protecting our state's children, families and workers from permanent yet preventable harm."



Legislature funds healthy food and farms

WTC's second legislative priority for 2007 was increased funding for Washington State University's Biological and Organic program. This program helps Washington growers take advantage of the phenomenal growth in the organic food market, providing the research and training they need to switch to organic. The program has been in place for several years, but only just received its first legislative funding in 2006. This year, Washington State University (WSU) included the program in its \$10.8 million Unified Agriculture Initiative, a legislative request that included research funds as well as faculty positions.

The final budget passed by the legislature provided \$6 million in funding and included additional funds for the Biological and Organic program. The budget specifies that \$400,000 go to a competitive grants pool for biologically intensive and organic research; this is half of the \$800,000 that the university requested. In addition to the research dollars, the budget adds several new staff positions that are part of the Biological and Organic program, supporting value-added agricultural product research and economically and environmentally sustainable food production.

Rep. Kelli Linville (D-Bellingham) was a champion for the funding and expressed gratification that WSU made the BIOAg program part of its original budget request. "I am glad that we're making a concerted effort to fund one of the fastest-growing segments of our agricultural economy," she stated.

The new research dollars will add to a pool for research grants that was established last year, when the Legislature approved \$400,000 in its supplemental budget. In the past year, WSU has used the funding to support research in organic grain production, alternative crops, winter organic vegetable production, and providing information to ranchers on sustainable rangeland management for livestock.

Dennis Nicholson, an orchardist from Peshastin, has converted his family orchard to organic. "Going organic can help keep farmers in business, but they need support to be successful with new production practices that they're not experienced with. We need to find biological solutions to pest and weed management. The BIOAg research program is a critical source of information for farmers that want to grow organic and sustainable produce."

Other supporters of the funding include the Washington Sustainable Food and Farming Network, PCC Natural Markets, the Washington Cattlemen's Association, the Lutheran Public Policy Office of Washington, the Washington Toxics Coalition, Tilth Producers, and dozens of growers, farmers markets, chefs, and other organizations and businesses.

Paul Benz, director of the Lutheran Public Policy Office of Washington, led the Olympia lobbying for the funding. "Funding the BIOAg program helps local farmers stay farming. Research is needed to provide the solutions that will keep them viable in today's agricultural economy."



Public Education and Outreach

Pesticide Free Zone project

Our little orange ladybug signs are encouraging chemical free organic management of lawns, gardens and greenspaces. We distributed more than 800 signs in 2007 to mark landscapes maintained without the use of toxic pesticides. This brings our total distribution to more than 4000 since the program began in 2003. The sign has been adopted as a symbol by the National Coalition for Pesticide-Free Lawns (NCPFL), a growing movement of more than 700 organizations and concerned individuals dedicated to educating retailers, landscapers, policy makers and consumers about the hazards of lawn chemicals and the viability of safe alternatives. WTC is a charter member of NCPFL and is responsible for more than one-third of all the signs posted in the country. Unlike other groups, we give the Pesticide Free Zone signs away free of charge to residents of Washington state, thanks to a grant from the Washington State Department of Ecology.



HealthyToys.org

After testing toys and other children's products, the Washington Toxics Coalition and the Toxic-Free Legacy Coalition, together with the Michigan-based Ecology Center and environmental health organizations across the country, have created an online database, HealthyToys.org, to show the extent of the problem of toxic ingredients and provide guidance for parents wishing to purchase less toxic toys.

At HealthyToys.org, you can search for toys by name, brand, and type. Each toy is given a rating for five elements that represent the presence of chemicals of concern. Those elements are lead, mercury, cadmium, chlorine and arsenic. Products were assigned a low, medium or high level to indicate the relative level of a chemical in a product.

Plastics, paints, fabrics and other materials used in toys contain chemicals that give the toys rigidity, durability, flame resistance, or other desirable properties. Unfortunately, these chemicals have also been linked to long-term health impacts such as birth defects, impaired learning, liver toxicity, and cancer. The fact that we found high levels of toxic chemicals in toys and other products that children come into contact with multiple times a day is troubling and unacceptable, because:

Children's bodies are growing and developing, they are especially vulnerable to the effects of toxic chemicals. Even small amounts of a chemical can impact a child's ability to reach his or her full potential. For example, there is no safe level of lead for a child—the smallest amount can cause a drop in IQ points.

When children put these products in their mouths, the chemicals can enter their bodies through contact with saliva. Some of the product ingredients, which are not always chemically bound to the products, can also be released directly into the air that children breathe, or the dust in their homes. Children are exposed to toxic chemicals from many sources in addition to toys, and the combination of these many exposures may lead to harm.

Despite the worrying data on chemicals in toys, our research also showed that safe toys are possible. Some manufacturers are already making safe toys. Many of the products we tested did not contain any lead, cadmium, arsenic, mercury or PVC, including many made in China. These results show that manufacturers can make toys free of unnecessary toxic chemicals.



Staff Members

Gregg Small

Executive Director, joined the staff in 2001

Jim Dawson

Field Coordinator, joined the staff in 2006

Philip Dickey

Staff Scientist, joined the staff in 1989*

Gylan Green

Finance Director, joined the staff in 2007

Michael Grenetz

Environmental Advocate, joined the staff in 2007

Maria Mergel

Information Services Coordinator, joined the staff in 2004

Lori Mudge

Development Director, joined the staff in 2000

Ivy Sager-Rosenthal

Environmental Health Advocate, joined the staff in 2005

Joshua Schramm

Publications and Website Manager, joined the staff in 2007

Erika Schreder

Staff Scientist, joined the staff in 1997

Ken Steffenson

Communications Director, joined the staff in 1996*

Angela Storey

Pesticides Organizer, joined the staff in 2002*

Tiffany Suitts

Development Associate, joined the staff in 2007

Kristin Tremoulet

Development Associate, joined the staff in 2006*

Laurie Valeriano

Policy Director, joined the staff in 1995

** Left the staff in 2007*

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Staff Farewells

Philip Dickey Staff Scientist



After 19 years on staff at WTC (and four years before that as a volunteer), Philip has decided to retire.

Philip led WTC's research and education projects and may be best known by our members for his column in the newsletter called "Home Safe Home." His

column mainly covered topics related to household chemicals and safer alternatives. Philip left us with 72 columns altogether, which are available for download at www.watoxics.org.

We celebrated Philip's years of service at the 2007 Auction for Action, where Philip was awarded the "Axis of Good" Champion award by from the San Francisco Department of the Environment and an award of appreciation from the Local Hazardous Waste Management Program in King County.

Philip says he will continue being involved with WTC as a volunteer, but we will miss working and talking with him on a daily basis. Staff Scientist Erika Schreder will be taking over many of Philip's duties.

Ken Steffenson Communications Director



Ken started at WTC as the information services person, responding to phone calls, mail, and eventually emails about pesticides and other toxic chemicals. He worked with Philip on his Home Safe Home articles and eventually he took over upgrading and maintaining the WTC website,

and publishing the Alternatives newsletter. All in all he worked for WTC for 11 years. He was very dedicated to WTC's mission and we will miss him, but we wish him the best of luck in all of his future endeavors.

Gregg Small Executive Director



By now, you may have learned that Gregg Small, Washington Toxics Coalition's Executive Director since 2001, is leaving our organization to take on the executive leadership role at Climate Solutions, a nonprofit organization addressing issues of global warming. Gregg's last day with us is January 11, 2008.

I know you share both my excitement for Gregg as he steps into this new opportunity and my sadness to see him go. Gregg has brought tremendous leadership to WTC these last seven years, helping us to achieve remarkable victories and significantly expand and diversify the organizations that we work with here in Washington and across the nation.

Since Gregg announced his departure to the Board in mid-November, we have worked quickly and diligently to insure both a smooth transition and a thorough, thoughtful search for the leader who can build on Gregg's legacy and grow WTC into an even more potent advocate for environmental and public health.

Organizational change at this level is always a time of both sadness and great opportunity. With the continued support of our committed friends and allies and the leadership of our staff and Board of Directors, we are confident that WTC will continue to thrive and grow just as it has throughout its 26-year history.

New Staff Members

Gylan Green

Finance and Administration Director



Gylan joined the WTC staff in April 2007. Gylan has nearly 20 years experience in nonprofit leadership, fund development, and marketing. His past service includes director of In Touch, a community-based AIDS service organization; executive director of Lambert House, Seattle's sexual minority youth center; director of

stewardship and development for St. Mark's Episcopal Cathedral; and director of stewardship and communications for the Center for Ethical Leadership. Gylan holds a B.A. in theater from the University of Washington with a focus in directing and technical theater. He brings his talent for organizing many moving parts to managing WTC's finances and operations.

Michael Grenetz

Environmental Advocate



Michael joined the staff of WTC in August 2007. Before taking this position, he spent the past three years organizing wilderness campaigns in southern California for the California Wild Heritage Campaign. Previously, Michael was an organizer for the New York Public Interest Research Group (NY-PIRG) and Director of the Recycling Department at

Wooster College. He holds a B.A. in religion from Vassar College where he founded their environmental sustainability programs and first got involved in toxics in the effort to remove PCBs from the Hudson River. Michael is responsible for creating and implementing our strategies on pesticide reform and supporting the burgeoning sustainable farming community.

Josh Schramm

Publications and Website Manager



Josh joined the WTC staff in November 2007. Josh comes to us from another Seattle based non-profit, People For Puget Sound, where he worked as a graphic and web designer. Josh brings his various talents as an artist, writer, musician, and designer to WTC, where he is responsible for

creating and designing newsletters, postcards, websites, and many other communications pieces. Josh holds a B.A. in Theater Arts from the University of California, Santa Cruz and a certificate in Audio Production from the University of Washington, Seattle.

Individuals and Businesses

We would like to thank all of our donors for your generous support in 2007!

With your help we were able to achieve an extraordinary win in the fight against toxic chemicals, as well as providing great educational resources to help protect children's health. These and many other critical victories would not have been possible without you!

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We also wish to thank those who made contributions through workplace giving campaigns with these organizations:

- Earth Share of Washington
- United Way of King County

To find out more about donating to Washington Toxics Coalition through payroll deduction, contact your employer's Human Resources office or contact Earth Share of Washington 206-622-9840, eswinformation@esw.org, or visit their website at www.esw.org.

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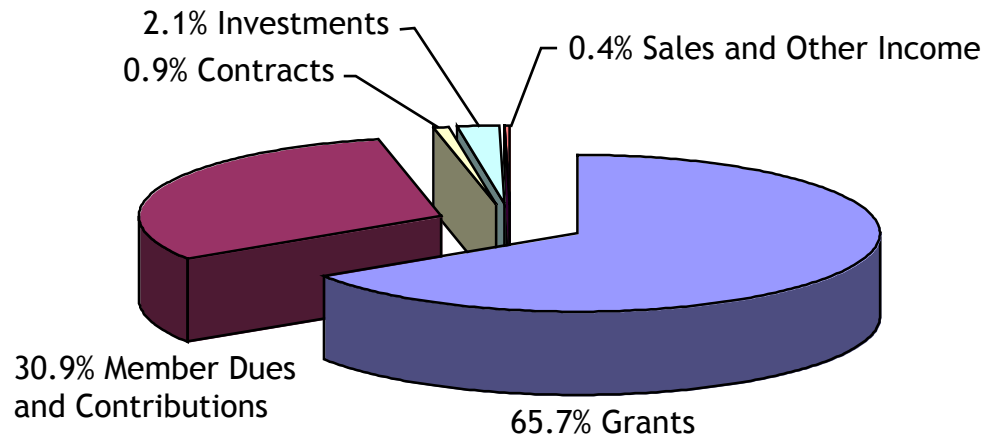
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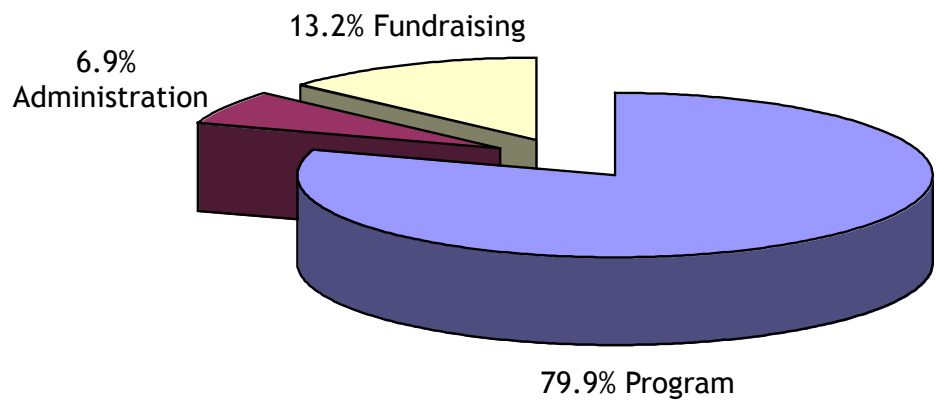
*Income

Grants	\$620,093
Member Dues and Contributions	\$291,247
Contracts	\$8,870
Investments	\$20,233
Sales	\$1,684
Other Income	\$1,663
Total	\$934,920



Expenses

Program	\$928,141
Administration	\$79,565
Fundraising	\$153,317
Total	\$1,161,023



*\$226,003 from prior years earnings were directed to organizational support in 2007

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