

WASHINGTON  
**TOXICS**  
 COALITION

# Alternatives

protecting health by preventing pollution

## *Court Stops Pesticide Spraying Along Salmon Streams Warnings to be Required at Home and Garden Stores*

**Erika Schreder**

In a momentous victory for salmon and clean water, U.S. District Judge John Coughenour has restricted the use of 38 pesticides near salmon streams and has required point-of-sale warnings on products containing pesticides that may harm salmon. He ruled in response to a request for injunction brought by Washington Toxics Coalition, Northwest Coalition for Alternatives to Pesticides, and the Pacific Coast Federation of Fishermen's Associations.

"This is a landmark decision that finally gives salmon relief from pesticides after a decade of agency inaction," said Patti Goldman, the Earthjustice attorney who represented the groups. "The court has blocked the use of the most harmful pesticides along salmon streams until the government has ensured that salmon will be protected."

The ruling followed Coughenour's 2002 decision that found the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) out of compliance with the Endangered Species Act for failing to protect salmon from harmful pesticides. The judge ordered EPA to consult with the National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA Fisheries) to establish permanent restrictions needed to protect salmon from 54 pesticides, over a two-and-a-half-year timeline. After the 2002 ruling, we filed for an injunction to reduce contamination of salmon streams while EPA and NOAA Fisheries develop permanent restrictions.

Today's ruling puts in place no-spray buffers of 100 yards for aerial applications and 20 yards for ground applications, with exceptions for certain uses that are less likely to pollute water.

The court order also requires the following warning for products containing seven pesticides that have polluted urban salmon streams:

**SALMON HAZARD**

*This product contains pesticides that may harm salmon or steelhead. Use of this product in urban areas can pollute salmon streams.*



These warnings must be provided to purchasers in urban home and garden stores throughout Washington, Oregon, and California beginning in late March.

"Now consumers buying lawn and garden products can easily make informed choices that are better for salmon," said Aimee Code of the Northwest Coalition for Alternatives to Pesticides.

The interim measures imposed in the court's ruling will protect salmon from these pesticides during the time it will take EPA to comply with the law. The judge found "with reasonable scientific certainty, that the requested buffer zones — 20 yards for ground applications, 100 yards for aerial applications — will, unlike the status quo, substantially contribute to the prevention of jeopardy" to salmon. He further found that the evidence "demonstrate[s] that pesticide-application buffer zones are a common, simple, and effective strategy to avoid jeopardy to threatened and endangered salmonids."

"There is no 'right' to pollute rivers, kill fish

*Continued on page 2, please see Saving the ESA*

*No-spray buffers for both aerial and ground applications of pesticides were put in place in the Northwest to protect endangered salmon. The judge's decision also requires warning notices for some pesticides in stores.*

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## Clean Water for Salmon



### *Conservation Groups File Lawsuit to Stop EPA from Using Insider Chemical Group to Forge Policy*

Erika Schreder

The Toxics Coalition has joined with other conservation and pesticide watchdog groups to file a lawsuit to stop the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) from giving illegal special access to a group of chemical corporations. We found, in documents we obtained under the Freedom of Information Act, that EPA officials have regularly met in secret with this group of pesticide companies, and that the group has urged EPA to weaken endangered species protections from pesticides. The lawsuit was filed in federal district court in Seattle.

Our Endangered Species Act lawsuit (see article on page 1) to protect salmon from pesticides has forced the EPA to consult with expert biologists at the National Marine Fisheries Service on the effects of pesticides on salmon. Now the chemical companies are pushing EPA to bypass the results of our lawsuit by issuing regulations to cut those expert biologists out of consultations determining the effects of pesticides on wildlife. At the companies' urging, EPA started a rulemaking in early 2003 that would allow it to conduct these evaluations largely on its own.

"EPA is letting the pesticide industry have inside influence over the fate of endangered species poisoned by toxic pesticides," said Patti Goldman of Earthjustice, which brought the lawsuit on behalf of the Natural Resources Defense Council, the Center for Biological Diversity, Defenders of Wildlife, Washington Toxics Coalition, and Northwest Coalition for Alternatives to Pesticides.

Federal law prohibits the government from using and meeting in secret with such insider groups. Congress has established good government standards that prevent secret and one-sided advisory bodies of wealthy special interests. The Federal Advisory Committee Act prohibits the federal government from obtaining advice from committees comprised of only the regulated industry. That Act also requires that the meetings of advisory groups be open to the public.

"EPA has an open-door policy to the biggest chemical companies in America while excluding the rest of us," said Mike Senatore of Defenders of Wildlife. "That's not right. In America all voices are supposed to be heard, not just wealthy interests that

make campaign contributions."

In 2000, EPA established this chemical industry group, known as the FIFRA<sup>1</sup> Endangered Species Task Force, to develop data disclosing the locations of endangered species. The task force is composed of 14 agro-chemical companies. It meets regularly with EPA officials in closed meetings and has no public-interest representatives. Over the past year, the chemical industry task force has shifted its efforts away from generating data to advocating that EPA circumvent the Endangered Species Act for pesticide uses that harm federally protected species. It has become the chief proponent of new pesticide regulations that would eliminate expert oversight over species protections. In early 2003, EPA announced its plan to issue such regulations, and it plans to propose new rules soon.

"For years, EPA has flouted its obligation to protect endangered species from pesticides," said Aaron Colangelo of the Natural Resources Defense Council. "Now that the courts are directing EPA to comply with its duties, the pesticide industry and the Bush administration have come up with a new trick for delaying species protections."

The lawsuit asks the court to order EPA to commit to bring its actions into compliance with the Federal Advisory Committee Act. ■

<sup>1</sup> FIFRA stands for the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act, which is the federal pesticide law.

### *Saving the ESA continued from page 1*

and destroy public resources our people depend on for their livelihoods," said Glen Spain of Pacific Coast Federation of Fishermen's Associations, a commercial fishing industry group and a co-plaintiff in the suit. "Most of these chemicals are not supposed to be used near water to begin with, but they are nevertheless showing up in our rivers where they can kill valuable fisheries. Reasonable buffer zones to keep these poisons out of our rivers only make sense."

The buffer zones will become effective in early February 2004, and will apply to salmon streams that support threatened and endangered salmon throughout Washington, Oregon, and California.

This victory for salmon, clean water, and people was made possible in large part by the generosity of our members and of the many volunteers who helped develop this lawsuit. Our partners at the Northwest Coalition for Alternatives

***"For years, EPA has flouted its obligation to protect endangered species from pesticides."***

***— Aaron Colangelo  
Natural Resources  
Defense Council***

*Continued on page 3, please see Saving the ESA*

## Toxic-Free Legacy

### Hanford Initiative Likely on November Ballot

Gregg Small

On January 2, a broad coalition of organizations submitted more than 282,000 signatures to the state to place Initiative 297 on the ballot to protect Washington residents from the hazards of the Hanford Radioactive Waste site. The number of signatures submitted was a record for any initiative ever filed in this state and demonstrates the strong support that exists in Washington for cleaning up one of the most polluted waste sites in Washington and preventing more pollution from coming in.

If passed, Initiative 297, the "Protect Washington" initiative, will:

- ❖ End dumping of radioactive waste in unlined soil trenches near the Columbia River;
- ❖ Protect Washington from risks of 70,000 truckloads of radioactive waste and "mixed radioactive hazardous" waste, keeping thousands of truckloads from going through downtown Spokane;
- ❖ Require cleanup of deadly liquid high-level nuclear waste tanks and leaks from the tanks, which the Bush administration has adopted plans to abandon. The initiative would create thousands of jobs as well as protect the Columbia River from these wastes; and
- ❖ Require landfills and tanks leaking contamination and violating hazardous waste laws to be cleaned up before more waste is added from other nuclear weapons plants run by the U.S. Department of Energy.

WTC has endorsed the initiative and believes that it is a very important measure aimed at protecting public health and the environment in Washington.

For more information about the initiative and what you can do to help get it passed, visit [www.protectwashington.org](http://www.protectwashington.org). ■

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### *Saving the ESA* continued from page 2

to Pesticides, Pacific Coast Federation of Fishermen's Associations, and Earthjustice also put in many long hours of hard work to make this case a success. The staff and board of WTC are truly thrilled to see the profound impact of our work in making Northwest waters clean. ■

### Department of Ecology Amends State Incinerator Rule but Continues Dirty, Obsolete Practice of Incineration

Brandie Smith

The burning of garbage is a dangerous game that poses unnecessary risks to human health and the environment. When wastes such as polyvinyl chloride (PVC) plastic and mercury-containing products are burned, dioxin, mercury, and other persistent toxic chemicals are emitted into the air. In addition, these chemicals end up in a toxic ash that must be landfilled. Incineration has become an obsolete technology in many communities due to health and environmental concerns as well as its cost. By far, incineration is the most expensive form of waste management.

Washington is home to only two garbage incinerators, one in Spokane and one in Tacoma, which are affected by a new rule adopted in late December by the Department of Ecology. The rule also allows other facilities around the state to burn solid waste as fuel in their operations.

The new rule adopted by Ecology contradicts their policy to eliminate persistent toxic chemicals because it allows the continuation and expansion of solid-waste incineration in Washington. The burning of garbage exposes people to the devastating impacts of persistent toxic pollution on human health, including effects on the nervous system, reproductive and developmental problems, cancer, and genetic damage.

The rule will do the following:

- ❖ Allow the currently closed Tacoma Steam Plant to reopen. The Steam Plant has been closed since September 2001 because it cannot comply with the current incinerator requirements.
- ❖ Allow the Spokane incinerator to continue operations with the option of either complying with the proposed rule or operating under less-stringent existing standards.
- ❖ Allow the burning of creosote-treated wood at the Kimberly-Clark facility in Everett.
- ❖ Allow cement kilns, such as Ash Grove and LaFarge, to continue burning tires and other wastes such as PCB-contaminated oil.

*Continued on page 6, please see **Incinerators***



## Donor and Supporter Recognition

### Thanks to Our Members

We would like to sincerely thank *all* of our members for your thoughtful support in 2003.

With your help we were able to achieve a number of important accomplishments in our work to reduce toxic pollution, including:

- ❖ leading the successful effort to pass statewide mercury pollution reduction legislation;
- ❖ working with oyster growers to reach a historic agreement to phase out the use of the pesticide carbaryl in Willapa Bay and Grays Harbor;
- ❖ winning a cutting-edge lawsuit that will impose protections for salmon from the impacts of pesticides; and
- ❖ providing information about alternatives to pesticides and other toxic chemicals to thousands of people through our hotline and other methods.

These critical victories would not have been possible without you. We deeply appreciate your concern for toxics issues and your support of Washington Toxics Coalition. Thank you!

We would like to acknowledge the following individuals and companies who made monetary donations of \$100 or more to Washington Toxics Coalition in 2003.

We truly appreciate all of our members and donors and wish we could list all of you here, but space limitations prohibit it. This list excludes donors who have asked that their names not be publicized.

6 Anonymous  
 Daniel Adams and Cynthia Toops  
 Winifred Adams and Bob Gamble  
 Jason and Ann Allen  
 Laurie and Stan Anderson  
 Tom and Jackie Andrewjeski  
 Margaret Archer  
 Karl Arne  
 Lisa Arnold  
 Dave and Penny Atcheson  
 Shirli Axelrod and Michael Seamans  
 Donna and Paul Balle  
 Susan and Paul Ballinger  
 Mikhaila Barg Reudink and Mark Reudink  
 Tanya and Aaron Barnett  
 Margaret Bartley  
 Lynly Beard Ewel  
 Allison Beezer  
 William Belknop  
 Cathy and Michael Benson  
 Trudy Bialic  
 John Birnel and Mary Lou Dickerson  
 Diane Blankenship  
 Don Bollinger  
 Deborah Browler  
 Rachel Bravmann and Chris Bevans  
 William Broadhead  
 Liz Brown  
 Heather Brynn  
 Jack and Pat Bujacich  
 Michele Burns

Karin Carter and Tom Bates  
 Eddy Cates and Beth Doglio  
 Sharon Chen and Peter Carlin  
 Janet Clingaman  
 Fritzi Cohen  
 Aileen Conover Gagney and Barbara Sewell  
 Joey Corcoran  
 Dale Cox  
 Barbara Crook and Richard Ely  
 Lisa Crosby and Paul Becker  
 Jane and Paul Crowder  
 Therese and Jim Cushing  
 Martha Dale  
 Suzannah Dalzell  
 Carol Dansereau and Mike Anderson  
 Fredric Danz  
 Marc Daudon  
 Debby Davies  
 J. Elizabeth Davis  
 Jean and Dwayne Day  
 Rick Debrox and Ingrid Wertz  
 Bailey delongh and Jay Williamson  
 Vincent Depillis  
 Jean Diamond Sargent  
 Martha Dickey  
 Philip Dickey and Bridget Dacres  
 Chris Diehl  
 Alison and James Dildine

Cynthia Dold  
 Jennifer Dold and David Graves  
 Joanne Donohue  
 Judy Drake  
 Elaine and James Dubuar  
 Barbara and Jacob Engelstein  
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 Debby Gee  
 Irene Gendron  
 Jennie Gibbons and Eric Fox  
 David Giglio  
 Steven Gilbert and Janice Camp  
 Claude Ginsburg and Lynne Hyerle  
 Chris Goelz and Joanne Abelson  
 Marcy and Hellmut Golde  
 Sally Goodwin and Kurt Hoelting  
 Harold Goree  
 Stacia Green  
 Green Hotels Association  
 Sound Home Inspections  
 Keala Hagmann and Bur Davis  
 Ursula Hall  
 Douglas Hanson  
 Phyllis Harper

Jan Hasselman and Claire Carver  
 Pam Hawes  
 Elizabeth Hebert and Donald Guthrie  
 Tracy Hendershott and Greg Slayden  
 Lynn Henderson  
 Bob and Phyllis Henigson  
 Juliane Hill  
 Candice and Ted Hoffman  
 Diane Horn  
 Cheryl Houser and Dennis Wackerbarth  
 Grady Hughes  
 Marcia Hunt  
 Essie Jacobs and Chuan Nguyen  
 Lisa Johnson  
 Kate and Dennis Kasprzyk  
 Dr. Natasha Kassell  
 Elizabeth Katz  
 Christine Keyt  
 Carolynn Kim-Prelutsky and Jack Prelutsky  
 Robert Koon  
 Kelly Krieger  
 Jennifer and Marc Kropack  
 Tanya Kwast and Paul Shoeman  
 Judith Laddon and Lawrence Shook  
 Barbara LeBrun  
 Shirley Leckman  
 Ann Lennartz  
 Pauline Lindblom  
 Craig Lorch and Julia Haack  
 Chris Luboff  
 Linda and Scott Lunda  
 Robert Maas  
 Ruth MacGinitie  
 Heather MacPhail  
 Yvonne Marquis and Jon Halper  
 Stella Marrs  
 Howard and Sandy McCandless  
 Gail and Mike McCormick  
 Ingrid McDonald  
 Karen and John McDonell  
 Lillian McDonell  
 Ann McDowell Liu  
 Jill McGrath and Richard Gelb  
 Erick McWayne  
 Suellen Mele  
 Tony Mestres  
 Maxine Miller  
 Elizabeth and Sean Mitchell  
 Peggy and Robert Monroe  
 Karen Murphy and Charlie Tebbutt  
 Kate Nelson  
 Patricia Novotny  
 Susan Olson  
 Linda S. Park  
 Lorie Parker  
 Chuck Perov and Mary Jo Bishop  
 Jim Peschel and Sue Gundy  
 Christine Plested

Bill Pope  
 Rick Poulin and Christine Bounds-Poulin  
 Christopher Pringer  
 Colleen Quinn and Paul Tomita  
 Mary and Gregory Rabour  
 Lemoine and Foster Radford  
 Marney Reynolds and Page Read  
 Bonnie Rice  
 Therese Rickman-Bull  
 Paula Riggert and Thomas Grismer  
 Gail Rinehart  
 Darby Ringer  
 Juliette Ripley-Dunkelberger  
 Valerie Rose  
 Corey Satten  
 Erika Schreder and Gregory Peters  
 Kurt Schreder  
 Sally and Fritz Schreder  
 Evan and Allyson Schrier  
 Eva and Ron Sher  
 John Shimer and Cay Fortune  
 Lauren Shuck and Allison Bingham  
 Eric and Lisa Marie Sieverling  
 Eileen Small  
 John and Frances Smersh  
 Marjorie Smith  
 Richard A. Smith  
 Marcella Smith Gilson  
 Elsie Sorgenfrei  
 Johan Spieker  
 David and Shannon Steffenson  
 Jon Stier and Susan Elderkin  
 David and Laurel Stitzhal  
 Margaret Swain  
 Matthew S. Sweeting  
 Anne Takekawa  
 Alexa and Kirman Taylor  
 Liz Tennant and Peter Maier  
 Amy Theobald and Cara Beth Lee  
 Chuck Tompkins  
 Kate Turpin  
 Leonie Van Gelder  
 Jo Van Patten  
 Marion Weber  
 Manny Weiser  
 Rabbi Shifra Weiss-Penzias  
 Elaine Willey  
 Ed Zuckerman  
 StonyField Farm  
 Horizon Organic Dairy, Inc.  
 Environmental Home Center  
 Bricklin Newman Dold LLP  
 Altschuler, Berzon, Nussbaum, Rubin & Demain  
 In Harmony

## Volunteer and Foundation Recognition

### Honoring Our Wonderful Volunteers

The year is not complete without a special thanks to the many volunteers who contributed their time and energy to WTC in 2003.

With your help, we were able to staff information booths at several fairs and festivals, pass a mercury bill, pull off a very successful "Auction for Action," gather thousands of signatures on petitions to decision makers, and more. There is no doubt that volunteers are instrumental to the success of our organization.

The list at right recognizes our wonderful volunteers. Names in **bold** indicate volunteers who contributed 20 hours or more of their time during the year.

We also wish to thank all our members and supporters. Thank you for the wonderful actions you have taken to support WTC.

Every effort has been made to recognize volunteers who have contributed to the organization. We apologize if we have missed anyone's name. ■

### Thanks to Foundation Supporters

We are grateful to all of the foundations and agencies that awarded us grants last year. Below is a list of all of them from whom we received funds in 2003.

Beldon Fund  
 Ben & Jerry's Foundation  
 Bigelow and Dewey Foundation  
 Bullitt Foundation  
 Burning Foundation  
 C.S. Fund and Warsh-Mott Legacy  
 The Dudley Foundation  
 Hugh and Jane Ferguson Foundation  
 David and Melinda Gladstone Foundation  
 Health Care Without Harm  
 Mitchell Kapor Foundation  
 Kongsgaard Goldman Foundation  
 John Merck Fund  
 Northwest Fund for the Environment  
 Patagonia  
 Public Welfare Foundation Inc.  
 Russell Family Foundation  
 Seattle Biotech Legacy Foundation  
 Seattle Foundation  
 Social Venture Partners  
 Tortuga Foundation  
 Wallace Genetic Foundation  
 Washington State Department of Ecology  
 Winky Foundation  
 Wyman Youth Trust

### 2003 Volunteers

John Abbott	Sheilah Kodimer
Kim Antieau	<b>Bill Kuhn</b>
Donna Balle	Anne Leitch
Paul Balle	Kelly Lippman
Aaron Barnett	<b>Lila Logue</b>
<b>Hayden Bass</b>	Louise Luce
John Birnel	Vincent Ma
Rose Brown	<b>Terrell Meek</b>
Andrew Burkhalter	Ed Mills
Michele Burns	Mario Milosevic
Aria Cahir	Bobbie Morgan
Amy Callahan	Nancy Morrison
Janice Camp	Moxie Media
Peter Carlin	Fred Munson
Karin Carter	Kyoko Murakama
Claire Carver	Katie Musch
Krissy Condon	<b>Kate Nelson</b>
Heather Cowdery	Elliot Newlin
Bridget Dacres	Cathy Nolan
Carol Dansereau	Aaron Ostrom
<b>Jessica DeRosa</b>	<b>Mitchell Parrish</b>
<b>Rachel DeSouza</b>	John Perkins
Sibyl Diver	Chuck Perov
Michael Doig	Greg Peters
Laura Earles	Crispin Pierce
Susan Elderkin	Anne Powell
Morgan Ferry	Robert Pregulman
Davida Finger	Karyn Quinlan
Dana Flanegin	Letha Radebaugh
Teri Fox	<b>Jezanna Rainforest</b>
Emma Freeman	Erin Riley
Ana Garzon	Tom Riter
Edie Gilliss	Bill Rogers
Joe Ginsburg	<b>Don Ross</b>
Patty Goldman	Holly Sawin
Tim Gould	Ariel Schiller
David Graves	Jill Silver
Marcie Griffin	Marjorie Smith
Scott Grohusky	Lindsay Smith
<b>James Hardison</b>	Richard Smith
Jan Hasselman	<b>Joanna Smither</b>
Sean Heavey	Katherine Sopher
<b>Amie Hirsch</b>	Cathea Stanley
Candice Hoffman	Linda Vesper
Ted Hoffman	Sean Waliser
Chris Hogan	Austin Walters
Julie Hubbs	Aleia Webb
Sarah Jaynes	Kristin Will
Pam Johnson	Heidi Wills
Paul Kampmeier	<b>Dara Woods-Calkins</b>
Laurie Keith	Melissa Zent
<b>John Kenney</b>	Jill Zimmerman

## Mark Your Calendars

WTC is proud to co-sponsor this exciting educational event.

### **3rd Annual Community Based Solutions for Environmental Health & Justice Conference**

**Saturday and Sunday April 24 and 25, 2004**  
**University of Washington Ethnic Cultural Center**  
**Seattle, Washington**

**Keynote Speaker: Chrystos; Activist, Author, and Poet**

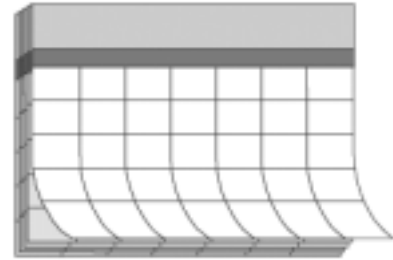
**Workshops Include:**

- ◆ Urban Environmental Justice
  - ◆ Globalization
- ◆ Indigenous Peoples and Environmental Justice
  - ◆ Militarism
- ◆ Youth Organizing and Environmental Justice
  - ◆ Rural and Economic Justice
- ◆ International Environmental Justice Issues
  - ◆ Skills Building Workshops

Registration: Conference Fee: \$0 – \$35 Sliding Scale

Childcare available. Must call by April 14 to reserve childcare.

For more information see [www.ccej.org](http://www.ccej.org).



### ***Incinerators*** *continued from page 3*

Despite many comments submitted to Ecology asking to eliminate incineration, the rule continues to allow the dirty practice of incineration. The reopening of the Tacoma Steam Plant will create a new source of persistent toxic pollution as the plant begins to fuel its operations by burning solid waste, including polyvinyl chloride (PVC) found in the waste stream.

We are also concerned about the burning of creosote-treated wood. The new rule justifies the practice of burning creosote-treated wood by explaining that a facility must obtain a permit before burning the wood. However, the required permit does not require testing for persistent toxic chemicals, even those already present in the creosote.

As mentioned previously, the new rule allows cement kilns to continue burning tires and PCB-contaminated waste oil. Cement kilns should not even be allowed to burn wastes, particularly in urban areas that suffer from poor air quality. According to U.S. EPA, tire combustion is a source of dioxins, furans, lead, and PCBs. Under the new rule, tires are excluded from the definition of solid waste in order to allow Portland-cement plants to use tires as a fuel source. This exclusion results in allowing cement kilns to burn tires, a source of persistent toxic chemicals, without triggering the new state incinerator rule, which includes emission limits for dioxin and mercury.

The Department of Ecology's new rule does not go far enough to protect the health of Washington's people and environment. Eliminating incineration is an essential step for reducing persistent toxic pollution and should be a key part of Ecology's program to eliminate persistent toxic chemicals.

Thank you all for your support on this issue over the past months. Your comments to the Department of Ecology were very important. ■

## Creative Ways to Support WTC

### Start Your Spring Cleaning Early by Donating Used Goods to WTC

Need some extra room in your closet for those holiday presents? Start your spring cleaning early by donating the used goods filling your much-needed space to Washington Toxics Coalition. Books, CDs, DVDs, and videos are welcome donations that can help us raise money. Your used goods will be collected by us and given to Eco Encore, a Seattle-based non-profit, who will sell your items online and direct the proceeds to us. The money raised will help us to protect public health and the environment from toxic chemicals and pollution. This is a great way to recycle and raise funds at the same time!

#### How to donate:

You can drop off your items at the Washington Toxics Coalition office (in the Good Shepherd Center at 4649 Sunnyside Avenue N, Suite 540, Seattle, WA 98103) or call us to arrange a pickup.

We can be reached at 206-632-1545 ext. 20 or volunteer@watoxics.org.

#### Your donation will help us:

- ❖ Get the Department of Agriculture to ban pentachlorophenol, a toxic wood preservative that is banned in 26 countries.
- ❖ Keep our Toxics Hotline functioning and open for questions on alternatives to toxics.
- ❖ Restore funding for the Department of Ecology's program to eliminate persistent pollution.
- ❖ Continue creating fact sheets on alternatives to pesticides in the lawn and garden.
- ❖ Pass a pesticide phase-out policy for the City of Renton. ■

### Match Making

Would you like to double or even triple your contribution to WTC? Even in today's economy, most large corporations and many small businesses maintain a matching-gift program. In the past year, we received \$5,670 in corporate matching gifts!

It's a simple process: the donor fills out a form and includes it with the donation or sends it in separately. Upon receipt of the gift, we complete the form and return it to the corporation. In a few weeks we receive a check matching your gift. Ask your human resources director for information about the program where you work. It's not too late to double your holiday contribution. ■

### Quilting Class to Benefit WTC

Learn quilting basics using applique techniques with fiber artist and WTC board member Karen McDonell. This will be a fun, casual event where you can meet other supporters of WTC.

**Date:** Sunday, February 22  
**Time:** 1:00 – 4:00 p.m.  
**Place:** Karen's home on Burley Lagoon (near Gig Harbor)

Participation in this class is \$35 and includes supplies. You will leave with a finished potholder.

Karen has been making potholders for Washington Toxics Coalition supporters for several years and wants to share the joy of this wonderful hobby with others.

All proceeds will be donated to WTC.

To preregister please mail a check for \$35, payable to WTC, to Karen McDonell, 14410 Sherman Drive NW, Gig Harbor, WA 98332. Karen will contact you with directions to her house. ■

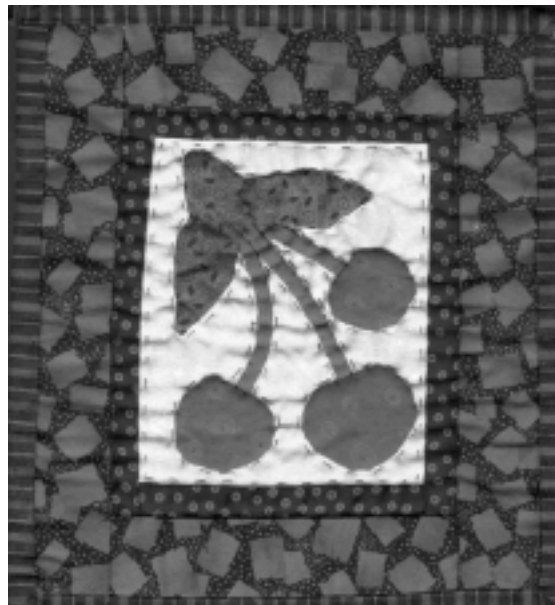
### Raise \$\$ for WTC when You Shop at PCC

One simple act will help generate critical funds for WTC!

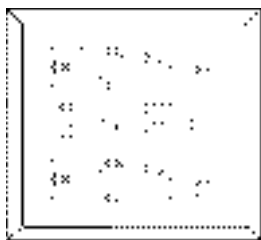
The next time you shop at PCC, please save your receipt. When you have collected a bundle, mail them to WTC (or drop them off at our office). We will turn them in and will receive 1% of the pre-tax total to put to work on our issues.

Over the past year this simple program has raised nearly \$1000 for Washington Toxics Coalition. This is nice start, but we know that if all of our members who shopped at PCC participated, we'd raise considerably more. So, please consider participating in this program!

Receipts should be mailed to: Washington Toxics Coalition, Attn: Lori Mudge, 4649 Sunnyside Ave N, Suite 540, Seattle, WA 98103. ■



*This is an example of the beautiful quilt work done by Karen McDonell. You can visit the Events and Outreach page of our website at [www.watoxics.org](http://www.watoxics.org) to see a color picture of this lovely potholder.*



## Home Safe Home

# Taking Control of our Home Environment

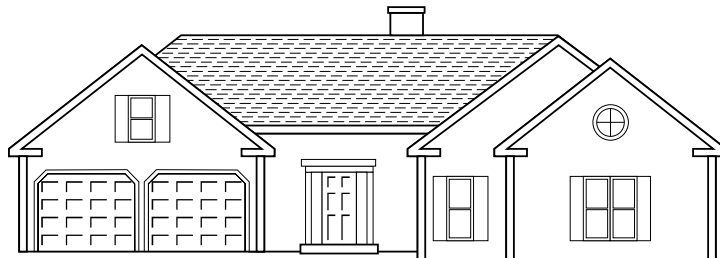
Philip Dickey and John Roberts

We like to think of our homes as places where we and our families are safe from toxic chemicals and other threats to our health and well-being. Actually, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) burst that bubble years ago when they measured pollutants in indoor air and found much higher levels (two to five times) in homes than outdoors. Considering that most of us spend 90% of our time indoors, this means that contact with many toxic compounds indoors may be from 18 to 45 times as much as outside (Wallace 1991). More recent studies have put the magnifying glass to house dust and found that in addition to dust mites, those tiny but terrifying-looking critters that aggravate asthma symptoms, dust can contain high levels of lead and an array of pesticides and other chemicals. The latest study, from the Silent Spring Institute and collaborators, found a large number of endocrine disrupting chemicals in air and dust in Cape Cod homes, some at high levels (Rudel et al. 2003).

Where does all this stuff come from and should we worry? Some dust and air pollutants come from household products that we use indoors. Some of them come indoors on our shoes or our pet's paws. And some pollutants, such as DDT and PCBs, are widely distributed and persistent in the environment, so they tend to be found everywhere, including in your home.

Can these chemicals in our homes harm us? The answer seems more and more clearly to be yes. We've known for years that lead exposure in homes can reduce children's IQs. But only more recently has it become clear that pesticides tracked into the home from treated lawns can greatly increase children's exposures to chemicals that may cause cancer and other serious diseases. For some of the other chemicals in dust the health effects are less well known, but the Silent Spring study mentioned above found 15 compounds at levels that exceed government health-based guidelines for air and soil. Unfortunately, as the authors state, "no guidelines exist for 28 compounds [detected], and existing guidelines do not consider endocrine effects."

As a reader, you may understandably feel angry to learn that your home may contain harmful chemicals that you didn't knowingly put there. You



*The air inside the average home is often much more polluted than outside air. Many steps can be taken to improve indoor air quality and protect your family from associated health risks.*

may feel that it shouldn't be your responsibility to keep these chemicals out of your home. Consider a two-part approach in which you channel your anger and frustration into community activism and support of organizations like the Washington Toxics Coalition that are working to rid our environment of the worst chemicals. At the same time, learn enough to take the easy steps that have the largest and quickest impact in your own home. You can easily reduce home exposures to some pollutants. For example, an asthma study in Seattle has already shown that making a few simple changes in the home environment can reduce asthma severity by half. There is a lot help available if you want a healthier home. Consider the following two examples.

### Asthma

Asthma is an expanding epidemic that affects over five million children. Seattle Healthy Homes I, the first phase of a large study of children with asthma, reported a 50% reduction in asthma severity and an 80% reduction in sleeplessness after doing these simple things: installing allergy-control bedding covers, reducing deep dust in carpets by vacuuming, and reducing total exposure to toxics in the home (Krieger et al. 2003). If you or a family member has asthma, consider the benefits of an integrated management plan that includes the home environment. Selecting a home that is away from heavy traffic and other asthma-related emissions is desirable but not always possible, and working to reduce outdoor emissions such as diesel particles and other pollutants that can trigger symptoms may take many years before there is a reduction in

**Be sure that people with asthma are not exposed to products with chlorine bleach, ammonia, solvents, or fragrances.**

exposure. You can reduce exposure to asthma triggers such as cigarette and wood smoke, dust mites, dust, and mold in the home indoor air. By washing blankets and sheets in hot water and installing allergy control covers on the mattress and pillow you reduce the exposure of a child to dust mites and mold. The allergy control covers appear to be the most effective and quickest way to reduce asthma symptoms. They are widely available at four Group Health Take Care Stores in the Puget Sound region, other retail outlets, and by phone at 1-800-422-DUST. A high quality set for a twin bed may cost around \$65. After addressing the biggest risks, you can take a look at the products you use in your home and be sure that people with asthma are not exposed to products with chlorine bleach, ammonia, solvents, or fragrances.

### Lead

Lead from paint used years ago is still a problem today. Even if peeling paint is not apparent in a home built before 1950, remodeling by a contractor or do-it-yourself homeowner without the awareness and training produces high lead risks to children. Washington state is developing a program for training and certification of contractors working with lead-based paint, but personal outreach, assessment, and information are needed now for families who are at risk. Our fact sheet *Reducing Exposure to Lead in Older Homes* is a good start. It describes paint removal and remodeling procedures to protect children, as well as information on how to vacuum effectively to remove lead-contaminated dust. Unfortunately, just having the information alone isn't enough to motivate many people to act.

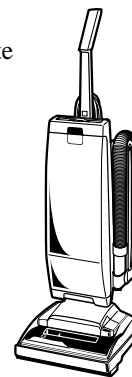
### Making a Plan

The family is faced with exposure to many pollutants in air, dust, soil, food, and water, not just to lead and to asthma triggers. They need a summary of the best information on their personal exposure and action options to make strategic decisions to manage their total exposure, risks, and health. A questionnaire called the Home Environmental Assessment List™ (HEAL™), designed by the American Lung Association's Master Home Environmentalist Program, is one of the best tools available to empower your family. The HEAL™ evaluates potential concerns in your home and suggests priorities for actions to address them. For families living in the Puget Sound area and a few other communities, a trained volunteer can be requested to make a home visit and perform the HEAL™. Phone 206-441-5100 for more information. If you don't have an MHE program close by, you can download a do-it-yourself HEAL™

questionnaire from the Internet and complete it yourself. The HEAL™ can be found at [http://www.alaw.org/air\\_quality/master\\_home\\_environmentalist/free\\_home\\_assessment.html](http://www.alaw.org/air_quality/master_home_environmentalist/free_home_assessment.html).

We recommend contacting an environmental professional or talking to your health department if high risks or high-cost solutions are found.

The ever-higher cost of healthcare is a huge burden for all of us and our economy. Many improvements have been made in treatment and medicines but the costs go up. Primary prevention programs have greater potential to reduce cancer and other diseases, disability, premature death, pain, suffering, and the enormous costs. It was estimated in 1994 that less than two percent of the Washington state health budget (20 billion dollars in 1994) was spent on public health and prevention (WSDH 1994). Primary prevention includes assessment, health promotion, and health protection. Health promotion brings healthy living conditions and lifestyles, while health protection lowers exposure to toxicants and other hazards. These two aspects compliment each other. Similarly, reducing exposure of the fetus and small child in the home and day care compliments reduction of major outdoor pollution sources. An integrated exposure management plan for children is an idea whose time has come. It can start long before you decide to have a child, or even if you choose not to have one. Environmentalists can take the lead in reducing health costs as they develop their own personal integrated exposure management plan. ■



***The first phase of a large study of children with asthma reported a 50% reduction in asthma severity and an 80% reduction in sleeplessness after doing these simple things: installing allergy-control bedding covers, reducing deep dust in carpets by vacuuming, and reducing total exposure to toxics in the home***

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## Point of View

# Keeping Children Safe from Toxics

Kate Davies and Steven Gilbert

Children are a society's greatest asset; they are our future. We, as parents and adults, share the societal responsibility to ensure that children have a healthy environment in which to develop and achieve their full potential. But we now know that exposure to toxic chemicals can permanently reduce children's ability to achieve that potential as adults.

Children's exposures to toxic chemicals often are greater than those of adults. Pound for pound, kids eat more food, drink more water, and breathe more air than adults because their rapid growth and development require more energy. When the food, water, or air contains toxic chemicals, children have higher exposures.

There are other risks to children because they are growing. Infants double their birth weight within the first four to six months of life and triple it by their first birthday. Cells that are rapidly growing are more likely to be affected by contaminants than those that are less active. In addition, children's bodies and organs are immature and different from adults'. For example, children absorb about four times more lead from their gut than adults.

The very first environment a developing infant confronts is her mother's womb. The fetus is especially vulnerable to such chemicals as polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), lead, and alcohol that can cross the placenta and enter the fetal bloodstream. The brain develops over a period of years beginning at gestation and remains vulnerable to toxic effects.

After birth, the infant confronts a new environment and challenges. Its source of nourishment — breast milk — can contain many of the "dirty dozen" toxic chemicals, such as DDT and PCBs. These contaminants are so toxic that they are targeted for elimination in the recent Global Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants. Though it is still better to breastfeed, what used to be considered nature's "purest food" is now contaminated. Because of the infant's small size, a little is a lot when it comes to contaminants in breast milk.

As children begin to explore their environment, they face new hazards. As every parent knows, infants put almost anything and everything in their mouths — there is nothing not worth tasting. The problem is contaminants in the dust and dirt, on

their hands or on the object. For example, dust contaminated with small amounts of lead causes learning problems, reduced intelligence, and attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder. Other neurotoxicants such as mercury, solvents, and many pesticides can have similar impacts on brain development.

What all this means is that we are gambling with our children's health by conducting this massive chemical experiment.

According to the Greater Boston Physicians for Social Responsibility, "Nearly 12 million children (17 percent) in the United States under age 18 suffer from one or more learning, developmental or behavioral disabilities." Even the normally conservative Environmental Protection Agency estimates that between 3 percent and 8 percent of babies born each year will be affected by neurodevelopmental disorders that may have links with environmental exposures.

As well as the health costs, the economic and social costs of neurodevelopmental disorders caused by environmental contaminants are huge. One study found a small reduction of (one microgram per decilitre) in blood lead levels in U.S. children could save the American economy between \$5 billion and \$7.5 billion a year, taking into account savings in health and educational costs and earning potential.

Given what we know, it is clear that we must strive to prevent harm and to create an environment that will allow all children to reach their full potential. When we invest in healthy food, clean air, and clean water, we invest in children. This means implementing better regulations and legislation that reduce or eliminate exposures and supporting the development and use of safer alternatives.

Although there is much that we do not know about how environmental contaminants affect health, we know enough to take action to reduce children's exposures and to ensure that they are no longer in harm's way. ■

*Kate Davies is on the core faculty in environment and community in the Center for Creative Change at Antioch University Seattle. Steven Gilbert is director of the Institute for Neurotoxicology and Neurological Disorders and is a WTC board member. This op-ed first appeared in the Seattle Post-Intelligencer on November 5, 2003.*

***Given what we know, it is clear that we must strive to prevent harm and to create an environment that will allow all children to reach their full potential.***

**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.

**Clean Water for Salmon**

This Campaign seeks to phase out the use of pesticides that impact salmon and other species. We keep pressure on state and federal agencies for strong actions to protect salmon, seek pesticide phaseout policies by city and county governments, and watchdog the EPA to ensure that they comply with the Endangered Species Act.

**Healthy Schools**

The goals of the Healthy Schools project are to eliminate the use of highly hazardous pesticides in Washington's schools and to institutionalize school pest management practices that focus on prevention of pest problems. We accomplish this by working with community members to pass and implement school district policies to replace toxic pesticides.

**Home Safe Home**

The Home Safe Home program works to reduce the use of hazardous materials in household products and to reduce the purchase of toxic pesticides and chemicals by consumers. We publish informative fact sheets, perform educational presentations, maintain a fact-filled website, and have a toll-free hotline to answer questions and promote alternatives.

**Toxic-Free Legacy**

The goal of the Toxic Free Legacy campaign is to phase out and clean up persistent toxic chemicals (PBTs) such as mercury, PBDEs, dioxin, and PCBs. We do this by working for strong policies to phase out these chemicals, reducing major pollution sources, and pushing for cutting-edge government and business procurement policies and practices that establish strong markets for non-polluting products.

*Join the Advocates Circle*

As a member of the Washington Toxics Coalition, you know how important our work is and how effective we have become in working to make Washington a cleaner and safer place to live.

As we enter the new year, we would like to provide you with an important opportunity to maximize your impact in helping WTC by joining our **Advocates Circle**.

The Advocates Circle is our program for donors who would like to make a direct contribution to WTC on a monthly basis. Joining the Advocates Circle is simple. All you have to do is fill out the form below and return it to WTC. You decide what giving level works best for you, and WTC will automatically deduct your donation on the 1<sup>st</sup> or 15<sup>th</sup> day of each month.

This simplified form of giving means you will no longer receive annual renewal reminders. This will save WTC valuable resources and you will receive less mail.

The Advocates Circles provides us with the funds we need to make a difference on the issues that you care about. So please consider becoming a member of the Advocates Circle.

Thank you.

**Alternatives** is published quarterly by the Washington Toxics Coalition. Copy deadlines are the first of January, April, July, and October. Press run is 2000 copies. Distribution is free to WTC members. If you would like extra copies of an issue, please write or call.

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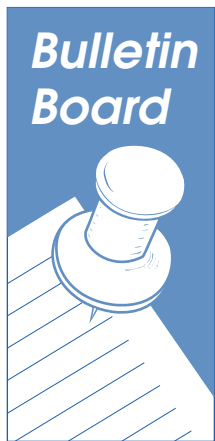
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## *Toxics Hotline Fields Questions about Pesticides and More*

**Doug Collins**

In 2003 nearly 1100 people contacted the Toxics Hotline with more than 2000 information requests. Questions regarding pesticide toxicity, persistence, and laws accounted for 23% of the inquiries. Other common types of question were about building materials (9%), cleaning products (7%), and alternative control of structural pests (7%).

Pesticides continue to be used in schools, on roadsides, by landscape companies, and in office buildings and airplanes. They are seemingly everywhere, and our members and others encounter them with interest and suspicion. We work with homeowners looking for more information about pesticides and alternatives and with those trying to influence policy decisions about pesticide use in their communities.

The rise of building materials as the second most common type of question parallels much of the policy and educational work that the Toxics Coalition has accomplished recently. In 2003 we worked with the City of Seattle to formulate a purchasing policy to phase out polyvinyl chloride (PVC) building materials and published an informative Home Safe Home fact sheet on alternatives to vinyl in the home. Because the potent toxic compound dioxin is produced when vinyl is made or incinerated, the Toxics Hotline urges consumers to

avoid vinyl siding, vinyl flooring, shower curtains, and the other vinyl-made household items that pervade the market. Other building materials can deteriorate indoor air quality. Working with consumers, we help them figure out the best and safest alternatives for their home repair budget.

Remember to contact the Hotline with your questions and concerns. The number is 800-844-SAFE. We can also take e-mailed questions at [info@watoxics.org](mailto:info@watoxics.org). ■

## *Welcome to Courtney Schenk*

Last summer I came to Seattle and stopped by WTC to interview for an opportunity to be an intern this winter. By the end of the interview, after I had heard about past and current projects, I was very excited to become part of an organization doing so many amazing things.

I'm from Brooklyn, New York. Currently I am a junior at Dartmouth College, where I am pursuing an environmental studies major and an education minor. I was able to be a part of WTC because I received funding from the Nancy Boehm Coster Public Policy Program at Dartmouth. Being in Seattle and working at WTC gives me an invaluable opportunity to get hands-on experience and to get to know the environmental community better. And it also allows me to do the thing I love most: spending time in the outdoors cross-country skiing and snowshoeing. I look forward to my time here and working on the pesticides and purchasing campaign in Olympia and other WTC projects. ■

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