

Citizens

Environmental
Coalition

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TOXICS IN YOUR COMMUNITY

NEWSLETTER

Spring 2000

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A TOXIC TRAGEDY

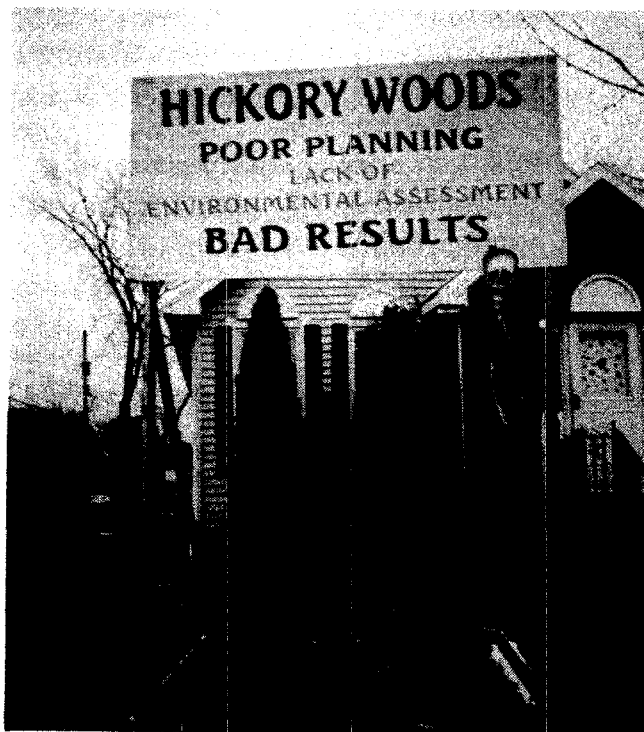
New York's "Love Canal" Brownfield Site

By Janet Hinkel

Imagine waking up one day to learn the place you and your children call home is located on top of toxic waste. That's what happened to residents of the Hickory Woods neighborhood in South Buffalo. Since this grim discovery, residents have mobilized as Hickory Woods Concerned Homeowners Association. Citizens' Environmental Coalition (CEC) is assisting them in an aggressive campaign to relocate them from their contaminated neighborhood.

"Our neighborhood has been a dumping ground with ribbons of toxic waste below our feet."

- Rick Ammerman, Homeowner



Hickory Woods Homeowner's Eloquent Sign

Many Hickory Woods residents are experiencing illnesses, including respiratory problems, skin irritations, leukemia, and cancer. Birth defects are also reported in the area, and parents fear the contaminated soil is responsible for their health effects. Some neighbors report bad chemical smells in their basements and strange, jelly-like orange sludge in sump pumps.

"I bought my home from a woman dying of liver cancer; now there are medical indications that I may have cancer," said Linda Benns, a homeowner.

Before homes were built in the late 1980's, it was a steel manufacturing site where companies used toxic chemicals in the manufacturing process. The City of Buffalo bought a parcel of the land from LTV Steel to build low and moderate income housing. State and federal subsidies up to \$20,000 enticed people to buy fast.

Across the street from the neighborhood on LTV property is the Donner-Hanna Coke Superfund site.

Hickory Woods Homes, continued on page 14

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TOXICS IN YOUR COMMUNITY

NEWSLETTER

Citizens' Environmental Coalition

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This issue went to press on June 2, 2000

Next Newsletter Deadline: July 15, 2000

Please send us your news & cartoons!

CEC Mission Statement

Citizens' Environmental Coalition is a statewide grassroots environmental organization working to eliminate pollution in New York State through our Community Assistance Program, Publication Clearinghouse and statewide Advocacy Campaigns. Our mission is to:

- ❖ Eliminate pollution in New York State and create safe, healthy communities, schools and workplaces through pollution prevention;
- ❖ Empower, educate and assist people concerned about environmental problems;
- ❖ Promote democratic, grassroots advocacy to restore New York's environment;
- ❖ Strengthen the connection from the grassroots to the statehouse and build effective coalitions; and
- ❖ Promote corporate accountability and non-violent social justice values.

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.

—Margaret Mead.

CEC Wish List

- ✓ Multi-line phone system with conference call and intercom capability
- ✓ Photocopier
- ✓ Small refrigerator for our Western NY office
- ✓ Bookshelves
- ✓ Free or low cost printing.
- ✓ Office Supplies, such as new paper, recycled paper, writing pads, pens, tape, envelopes, etc.
- ✓ Computer Disks
- ✓ TV
- ✓ Computer scanner

Attention Computer Gurus!

Do you have Database skills (particularly Access)? Do you know how to maintain and update a web site? Do you want to work for the environment? **We need your help! Volunteer to help CEC maintain our database or our web site.** If you want to help out with either of these important tasks, please contact Anne at 518-462-5527. Thank you.

CEC Activities

Health Care Without Harm

CEC is hiring a Project Director for our New York City Health Care Without Harm Project to work with hospitals on pollution prevention. We'll feature this exciting project in our summer newsletter with details on our new Resource Guide and the growing campaign for environmentally responsible health care. For more information on the NYC HCWH, contact Anne Rabe at CEC, cecanne@igc.org 518-462-5527.

NY's #1 Polluter:Eastman Kodak

CEC's effective campaign to reduce Kodak's alarming toxic pollution in Rochester, New York included a Citizens' Hearing on Dioxin (see article) and a successful press event at the company's recent Shareholder Conference. Next month, CEC, Metro Justice and the NYS Labor & Environment Network will hold an educational event to highlight Kodak's recent taxpayer subsidies – at the same time the company continues to lay off workers and pay environmental fines! For more information, contact Judy Robinson at CEC's Buffalo office, 716-885-6848, cecwny@buffnet.net

CEC Staff & Board Changes

Welcomes: Welcome to Cheryl Punzi, CEC's new Albany Office Manager, from Schenectady, NY, and David Rosen-Brand, CEC's new Buffalo Community Outreach Director, and our new volunteers -- Anitra Kupalo of Albany, Jeff Huvar and Christina Singh (SUNY Albany).

Welcome to new CEC Board Members Ellen Connett of Work on Waste; Marion Trieste of Kids Against Pollution; and Rev. Lynne West of National Council of Churches.

Goodbye and Thanks! Many thanks and farewell to Nicca Costantini, CEC's Western NY intern for all her great work on groundwater education and the Kodak campaign. Thanks to Tamar Kushman and Greg Hitchcock of SUNY Albany for all their help on Superfund and citizen assistance this spring.

Promotions: Judy Robinson has been promoted to Western NY Director and Karl Breyman has been promoted to Community Outreach Co-Director.

Superfund Refinancing Needed To Clean Up 790 Toxic Dumps

The Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) recently released a list of 790 toxic sites that cannot be tested and remediated until the State Superfund program is refinanced. The program is quickly slipping into bankruptcy and faces a \$55 million funding shortfall by the end of this fiscal year (April, 2001, DEC estimate).

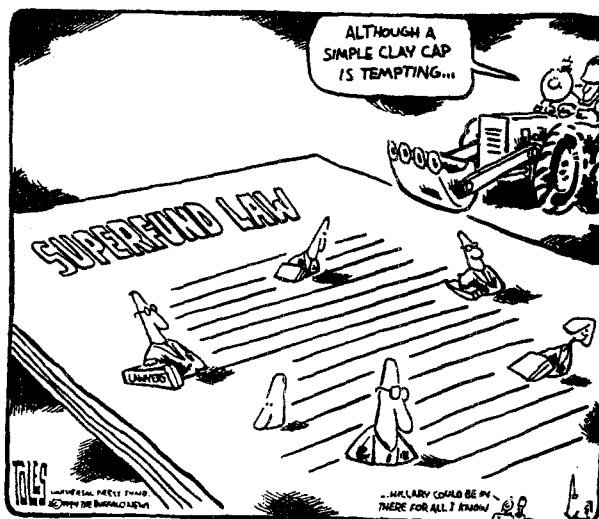
We urge you to find out about the list of unfunded sites in your county. In addition to 790 sites, there are approximately 20 new toxic sites added to the Superfund registry every year, and DEC "suspects hundreds of dry cleaner sites and manufactured gas plant sites have yet to be discovered."

CEC has reorganized DEC's list of 790 sites into county categories to provide more accessible information on local site impacts (Counties are listed in alphabetical order within the geographical DEC Regions). For many of the sites, CEC can provide a site summary description.

* Please write Governor Pataki, your Assemblymember and Senator and urge them to refinance the State Superfund this year **BEFORE** it runs out of money. Contact us for a sample letter (we can e-mail it).

* Sponsor a media "toxic tour" of a local site and urge your legislators to join you. CEC can send you an information packet and help you organize the event.

* Contact us at cecanne@igc.org, 518-462-5527, or 716-885-6848 for a list of unfunded toxic sites in your county.



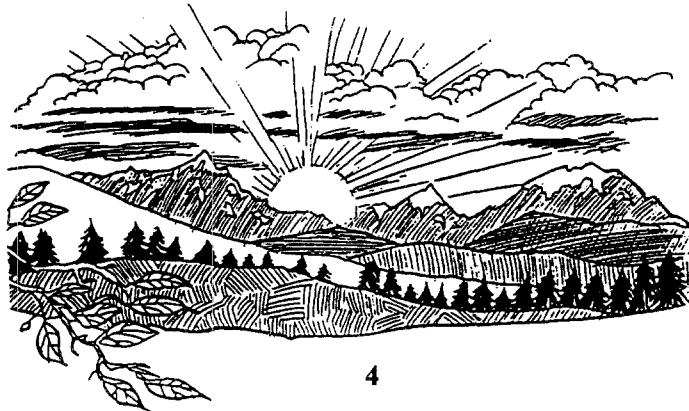
Special Thank You To CEC Donors

CEC would like to acknowledge the following people who made critically important donations to support our work to protect our children from environmental hazards and advocate for the clean up of hundreds of New York's toxic waste dumps.

Thank you so much for your special support!

(List in Progress...)

Ellen & James Adams, Margaret Addeo, Mary T. Amico, Virginia & Alan Anderson, Jennifer & Amy Aubrey, John Bachinsky, Carolyn L. Baldwin, Stella Baluch, Carol Barden, Robert Barnhart, David Barrows, Curtis Beck, Gina Berry, Phil Best, Adele Brown, Gregg W. Brown & Elizabeth Anne Bitner, William Boel, Deborah & Beatrice Boghosian, Alan Boyd, John & Doris Brann, Virginia M. Brennan, Molly C. Brindle, Adele H. Brown, Richard Brown, Steven Brown, Mary Phillips Burke, Virginia Hobart & Robert Campbell, Andrew & Carol Capoccia, Donna & Roland Chabot, Bob Lider & Candace Cole, Karen & Mike Conway, Christopher J. Coyle, Keith & Simma Cramer, Thomas & Dorothy Crowley, Scott & Lynn Curtis, Kathleen and James Curtis, Kathleen R. Darby, Karole Delaney, Chris Deluke, Vicki & Michael DiLorenzo, Barbara & Jack Draffen, Paul & Mary Drisgula, Mark A. Dunlea, Amy Durland & Robert Mains, Lois Dworkin, Phillip P. Ellis, Gene Everingham, Tamara R & David Fowler, Michael Franchell, Anne Gardner, Dorothy Gehrt, Leta Georgiopoulos, Edward & Holli Gersch, Dawn Girard-Thomas, Lenore Tokaro Gizelbawski, Bonnie & Glenn Goldberg, Andrea Goldberger, Thomas Grant, June Gray, Anthony Stoke & I.M. Haettenschwiller, Mary Ann Hart, Lloyd Hebert, Diane Heminway, Elizabeth Henry & Andrew Shapiro, David Hodgen, Matthew Hoff, Thomas R. & Meredith Holland, Gordon Deane & Elizabeth S. Hough, Thomas M. Howley, Katherine Hymy, Jill E. Iverson, James Judd, Dorothy J. Karwelat, Tammy Kishbaugh, Jeffrey & Amelia Klien, Steve Klein & Susan Radosh, James & Tina Koehler, Linda M. Kospa, Barbara G. Kouray, Deborah & Robert Kopp, Joanna LaBarge, Rebecca Langer, Debra Lasoff, Joe F. Leonardo, Tina Linden, Lael Locke, Matt London, Stephen & Holly Longo, Lou Anne Lundgren, David Mastrianni & Luele Albergo, Pamela Madeiros, Alex Frank & Stacey Lee Mandelbaum, Edward F. McClennen, Robert McClellan, Robin McClellan, Sal Medak, Elizabeth Meer & Andrew Beers, Ron Mensing, Frederick & Bonnie Meservey, Stephen Momrow, Thomas Morrissey & Marea Gordette, Cynthia & Thomas Muro, Ethel D. Murray, Kelly A. Neale, Thomas & Ellen O'Connell, Gilbert O'Sullivan, Karen & Chester Opalka, Karl Paulsen, Kurt & Kathleen Pelton, Robert K. Piccotte, Don Porterfield, David Preisinger, Joe & Julie Quickerton, Sue & Valentin Rabe, Anne Rabe & Randy Weinberg, Constance Reilly, Louis & Pamela Roberts, Debra & Hubert Robichaud-Roy, Margaret Roche, Dr. Donald Rodbell, Jean Rosenthal, Wendy & Roland Roy, Patricia Rufo, Louise Sattar, Judith & John Schnebly, Jeffrey Schumacher, Richard & Mary Jane Shave, Kathy Shearer, Jane Shouse, Joan & Fred Silva, Mark & Julie Spitzer, Cheryl Stanford-Smith, Niel Stellwagen, Thomas Taber, Lisa Teller, Norman & Nancy Tellier, Christopher & Rita Tiano, Pamela Trickett, Helen Pilch & Joe Trinchillo, Frances Van Earden, Neil & Mary Vanalstyne, Edward Walsh, John Warner, Jr., Lee Wasserman & Carol Knox, Given Wasmer, Jean & Jim Weiss, Robert & Cathie Wells, Amy Wildey-McGill, Dona Wildove, Marilyn Resnik, Wolfgang Wittkowski & Charlotte Koerner, Barry Wixson, George & Ellen Woodzell, Andrea Worthington, Joy Zimmerlin & Rich Filiaci, Laura & James Zwyenburgh.



CEC's Community Outreach Program

by Michelle Fortune

Citizens' Environmental Coalition's effectiveness as an environmental advocacy group depends on its membership support. CEC's Community Outreach Program is devoted to increasing the membership base, providing environmental education and strengthening the bond with current CEC members. Thanks to CEC's talented and devoted staff, the Community Outreach Program has dramatically increased membership, provided critical environmental education, generated advocacy in support of priority environmental policies, and helped people with their local environmental problems.

We thought our members would be interested in finding out how the canvass outreach program works. Kathy Curtis has been the Community Outreach Director since the program's inception in the spring of 1993, and has expanded community outreach to include CEC's new Major Donor Program. Kathy has extensive experience conducting environmental education with CEC and other environmental groups. She serves as Board Member with the national group Kids Against Pollution, Vice Chair of the Rotterdam Conservation Advisory Council and is a busy mother of four children. Mike Purcell is Field Manager for the Community Outreach Program. Mike has been with CEC since 1994, and is attending nursing school with ambitions to work in international nursing and mental health. Karl Breyman is CEC's Community Outreach Co-Director, and has been with CEC since December of 1998, and is an active organizer with the NYS Green Party.



Carlece Hill educating a member.

Canvassing alerts people to environmental problems and provides them with a chance to do something about it. *"People deserve the opportunity to have a part in the democratic process and environmental movement,"* says Kathy Curtis. She noted that if people are unaware of what is going on locally in their community -- such as a lengthy cleanup delay at a health-threatening toxic waste dump -- they are unlikely to get involved. Every weeknight, CEC staff contact people face to face. Canvassing is CEC's most effective way of building its membership base. *"Canvassing allows CEC to connect with people on a grassroots level, get their input, and act locally,"* says Karl Breyman. Canvassing not only enables CEC to educate the public; it also enables the public to educate CEC by giving their feedback and concerns.

Working for the Community Outreach Program is a very challenging job. *"Being outside dealing with the elements like snow and rain can be difficult,"* says Mike Purcell, *"and it is very frustrating to see the apathy from some people who just don't care about environmental threats."* Another challenge is the repetitious nature of the job. Canvassers must be pleasant, friendly, and keep up their energy level as they talk to dozens of people every night.

CEC staff see canvassing as a daily reminder of who we work for -- the people. It helps create a great relationship between CEC and the members. *"Canvassing restores my faith in humanity,"* says Kathy Curtis, *"as there are caring and devoted people out there that want to help make their community a better place in which to live."*

Canvassing generates funds for CEC to continue its citizen assistance, environmental education and advocacy work on priority environmental health problems. The Community Outreach Program has raised the profile of the group, improved CEC's relations with communities, and led to participation in town environmental hearings, press conferences, and local advisory boards. The Community Outreach Program increases the voice of the people in environmental issues. *"Canvassing gets us out into the community to become more aware of the issues and problems facing local citizens,"* says Mike Purcell. The canvass has uncovered a number of unknown leaking waste dumps through citizen interviews.

CEC staff have successfully pressured state agencies to test and clean up toxic sites and oil spills.

CEC's Community Outreach Program benefits communities, individuals, and CEC members. "*It allows people to find out about the environmental conditions in their neighborhoods,*" says Kathy Curtis, "*and learn there is a group out there devoted to improving these conditions.*" It is a symbiotic relationship that generates a lot of citizen calls for information and assistance at the Albany office (518-462-5527) or the Buffalo office (716-885-6848), where CEC recently established a Canvass Program. CEC's Community Outreach Program has been a huge success, helping to make CEC the strong environmental group it is today, thanks to our members and our knowledgeable, and effective staff -- Kathy Curtis, Mike Purcell, Karl Breyman, Solomon Samuels, Carlece Hill, and David Rosen-Brand.



CEC COMMUNITY OUTREACH STAFF (Back, Left to Right): Solomon Samuels, Karl Breyman, Mike Purcell, and David Rosen-Brand. (Front, Left to Right): Carlece Hill and Kathy Curtis.

New Yorkers Speak Out at Hearing On Dioxin Hazards

By Janet Hinkel

On December 2nd, people from all over Western New York gathered in Rochester at the New York Citizens' Public Hearing on Dioxin, sponsored by Citizens' Environmental Coalition. Dozens of people provided compelling and often emotional testimony on the harm dioxin is causing to our health and environment. Assembled to receive this testimony was a distinguished panel of experts including, Assistant Attorney General Linda White; Dr. Thomas Gasiewicz, Deputy Director of the Environmental Health & Sciences Center at the University of Rochester, who is also authoring a chapter on risk assessment for the Environmental Protection Agency's upcoming report on dioxin; Dr. Jack Manno, Director of the Great Lakes Research Consortium; and Dave Ares, Health & Safety Coordinator for 1199 Health Care Workers Union. Panelists listened and took notes, as people from all walks of life united to demand an end to dioxin production, discharge and exposure. A clear message to government regulators and dioxin-producers that arose from the hearing is that *any additional dioxin exposure is detrimental to human health and must be stopped.*

Dioxin, a known human carcinogen, is an unintended byproduct of manufacturing processes that use chlorine. Paper mills, metal smelters, pesticide factories, chemical plants, PVC plastic manufacturers, and hazardous, municipal and medical waste incinerators produce dioxin. These sources can be thousands of miles away from the foods they contaminate. Dioxin attaches to dust particles and disperses across land and water, falling on animal feed, crops and drinking water.

Many citizens shared their personal struggles with cancer and their searches to find a cause for their afflictions. Judy Robinson, CEC Western New York Director, described how hazardous waste incinerators produce high levels of dioxin. Rochester is home to Eastman Kodak, the biggest manufacturing polluter in New York and the largest emitter of cancer-causing chemicals in the country. "Rochester children must not pay the ultimate price of cancer in their lifetime because Kodak is more concerned with corporate profits than children's health," Robinson said. "We're calling on Kodak to adopt responsible practices, such as developing alternatives to hazardous waste combustion. In the interim, they should use the highest control technology achievable on their incinerator to protect our health and environment from deadly dioxin."

Ray Nelson applauded three Rochester hospitals, Strong Memorial Hospital, Genesee Hospital and Rochester General Hospital, for adopting autoclaving (heat sterilization of medical waste) as an alternative to incineration. Nationwide, medical waste incinerators are one of the largest sources of dioxin and mercury.

Dioxin in our bodies is already at or near levels that cause adverse health effects, according to a report by the federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Exposure to dioxin can cause lower IQs, cancer, birth defects, and infertility. In children, dioxin exposure can cause developmental and behavior abnormalities, such as attention deficit disorder. Dioxin is also an endocrine disrupter, a chemical that mimics hormone activity, which can interfere with normal neurological and sexual development and immune system functioning.

Cathy Finley, leader of the Rochester branch of the Endometriosis Association, spoke about her struggles with this painful disease that affects 5.5 million North American women and millions more worldwide.

"Endometriosis is an incurable disease where material similar to the lining of the uterus is trapped inside the abdominal cavity and causes pain and infertility," Finley told the panel. "As someone who struggles each day because of a disease linked to dioxin exposure, I ask you to do whatever possible to stop future emissions so that you, or someone you love, will not have to face a similar battle."

Most of us consume dioxin through foods that are a normal part of our daily diets, like fish, meat and dairy products. Our bodies accumulate dioxin. Even newborn babies have dioxin in their tiny bodies, passed from their mothers during breast-feeding.

Melissa Jacobs, a mother, Native American, act tries to provide her children with a healthy environment; yet she can't protect them from dioxin exposure. Calling on the Attorney General to listen to the citizens at the hearing, Jacobs said, "I'm sick of doing our part over and over again. It is time for government action to protect us from toxins like dioxin."

Joan Creatura told the panel how she and her preschool-age children had severe toxic reactions when pesticides drifted in through a window during a commercial application on her neighbor's lawn. She and her children inhaled the pesticide and immediately had burning eyes, noses and lips. She was instructed by poison control to decontaminate herself and her youngsters in the shower for 20 minutes. Later, Creatura requested help from government agencies, to stop this unnecessary and terrifying tragedy from occurring again.

"Their concern was nil," she testified. Her frustration wasn't. "In your home you assume you are safe. But my children suffered through no fault of their own, because my neighbor needed green grass."

Nancy Walsh submitted testimony about her 24-year-old son who died from pesticide poisoning in 1997. He worked at a tree care company that supplied him with inappropriate safety equipment. The protective gear actually augmented his inhalation of pesticides. Walsh called on the EPA to provide stricter guidelines and safety instructions that could have saved her son.

Panelist Jack Manno told the audience that what is needed is a new vision in dealing with environmental pollution, one that takes thought and care. "We have given control of our lives to the economic system," Manno said. This system places importance not on human health and the environment, but on "what can be bought and sold," he said. "Our world, our health, our children and ourselves are reaching a threshold. [Regaining control] takes watching the soil. It takes consideration and knowledge. Spraying pesticides takes none of that."

Panelist Jack Ossont, of the National Sludge Alliance, concurred. He noted the practice of applying contaminated sludge to farmland is another way government is compromising our connection to what is healthy for our environment. Both panelists called for an end to dioxin production.

"It's time that lawmakers get tough and eliminate the dioxin spewing industries that threaten our children's health and that of every American," said Lois Gibbs, founder of the national Center for Health, Environment and Justice (CHEJ). "Elected officials need to enact—and

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Farewell Message from Diane Heminway

Former CEC Assistant Director

After nine years of incredible environmental advocacy, Diane Heminway, CEC's Assistant Director, has resigned. She is continuing to work for labor and environmental justice as a Health & Safety Trainer with the United Steelworkers of America. At a farewell party last fall, many community and environmental leaders, journalists, agency staff and others praised Diane for her many environmental achievements. "New York's environment is cleaner thanks to Diane", said one speaker. Another said, "Diane is an exemplary activist and a dedicated environmental leader. Her visionary spirit and compassion have inspired us all. And her incredible persistence and followthrough won many victories and helped make CEC and its members effective and successful." Thank you so much Diane. See you in the movement. - CEC Board and Staff

My decision to leave CEC was a very difficult one. For the last 15 years, my work with this great organization has shaped and molded me to who I am today. I am grateful for the many opportunities and challenges this job provided to me in our fight for a cleaner environment; but above all, I treasure the many committed people who came into my life through CEC. Like so many others involved with environmental health issues, my activism began when my children's health was threatened. But concern alone was not what motivated me to stay involved. First, it was the anger I felt toward a polluting industry that had, for years, poisoned the environment. Next, it was a need to understand why the agencies fail to protect public health and the environment. However, what kept me involved for the long haul was the many dedicated grassroots community and labor activists, the progressive, bold scientists and health professionals, the informed reporters, and the caring people within the agencies who helped me better understand the politics of pollution. Some of those people cared enough to risk their jobs to provide crucial inside information. I will very much miss working with all of you, as well as the great CEC staff and board members who work so hard and sacrifice so much.

My career with CEC was an honor that not only gave me friends, it provided an invaluable hands-on education that will allow me to continue in the struggle for justice. As some of you know, I am now doing work for United Steelworkers of America, one of the most progressive labor unions, whose leaders understand that clean workplaces mean safe communities. So despite leaving CEC, I will continue in the fight for environmental and worker justice and I look forward to working with many of you in the years ahead to create a safer and more just world for future generations. As a consultant for USWA, I will be using the skills and knowledge I gained from CEC to teach Union members about toxic hazards and environmental laws while encouraging them to work closely with grassroots environmental activists.

If you would like to contact me, I can be reached 716-682-5573, where I now live on the shores of Lake Ontario. I can also be reached by email: heminway@eznet.net which I check regularly. I extend a special thanks to CEC's Executive Director, Anne Rabe, whose guidance, friendship, knowledge and skills so deeply enriched my life and to Judy Robinson, who now heads up the Western NY Office in Buffalo. Working closely with Judy during my last 18 months with CEC was extremely enjoyable, not only because of her remarkable communication skills and ability to learn quickly, but also because of her strong support and clever humor. CEC is indeed lucky to have these two fine women. While I am sad to leave, I am also excited about the work that lies before me. I share with you two quotes that inspired me in my early days of activism and still motivate me today.

Almost anything you do will seem insignificant, but it is very important that you do it.

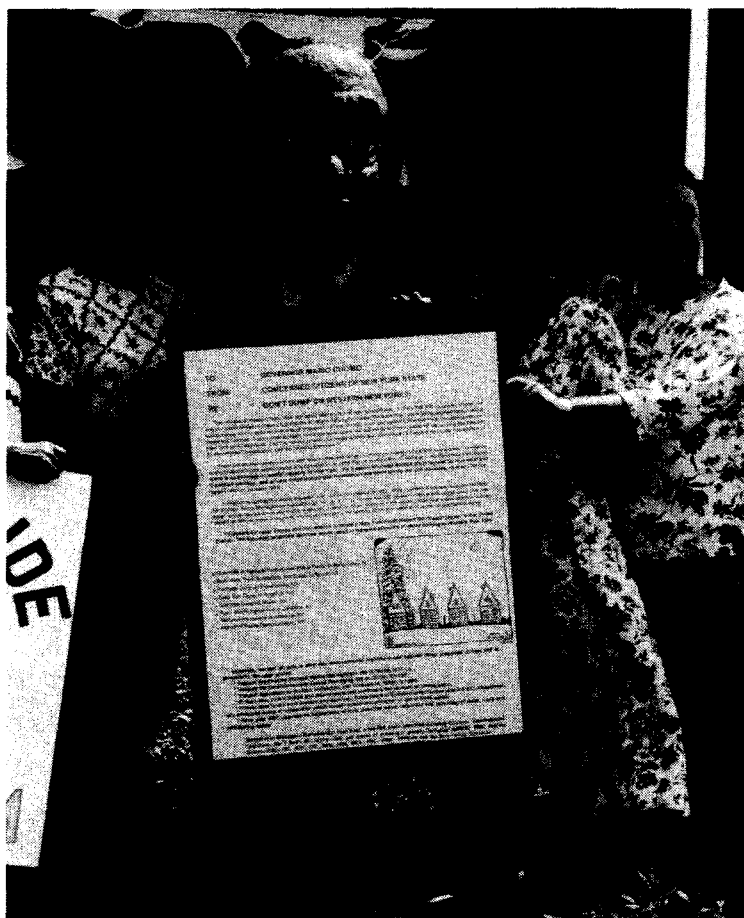
- Gandhi

Pessimism is when someone stops believing in themself and just gives up.

- Aaron Heminway, age 10.



Diane suits up for chemical spill protection at a United Steelworkers safety training in 1993.



Diane (center) and community activists deliver a memo to "Governor Cuomo" in 1994 urging him to oppose the siting of hazardous and radioactive waste dumps and the Wheelabrator incinerator in Western New York.



Diane (center 2nd row) supports a ban on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPS) at the United Nations 1998 conference with a "pregnancy costume" to symbolize the serious hazards POPS (endocrine disruptors) pose to children.

Diane relaxes with CEC Board Member Mary Ann Hart & State Wildlife Pathologist Ward Stone at CEC's 10th anniversary party in 1993.



Grassroots Efforts Do Work!

By Pat Wood, SPOC *Stop Polluting Orleans County*

Western NY 1991 - finally the contaminated Orleans Sanitary Landfill (OSL) in Albion was closed. SPOC (Stop Polluting Orleans County) was the force behind that closure. We were the impetus behind the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) closing them down -- without our proof that more tonnage was being brought in and dumped than allowed, without our counts of the trucks that went in after hours. But our work all at once seemed in vain. Another ugly monster reared its head. Waste Management of NY (WM) leased the OSL land and decided to apply for an expansion to make this landfill 200' high. That would be 100' higher than the existing one.

The sad thing about this story is that this site is within yards of the Erie Canal. The same canal on which the state is spending millions of \$\$\$, hoping to revitalize canal town communities like Albion. Also on this site is a State Superfund hazardous waste dump that is already leaking into the canal. To make matters worse, the main route that leads to this dump is past the whole Albion Central School system. 75% of the 950 vehicle trips per day will pass those schools! Just those things alone are enough to say NO to an expansion.

SPOC has been successful in warding off WM for years. How have we done that? The number one way was to make sure the town officials that were elected supported our "No Landfill" view. We bought billboard ads leading into and out of the town during election time. We participated in the phoning of just about everybody to get out and vote. We have found that is definitely the #1 way to keep landfills out -- by not having the application accepted in the first place.

But to make a long story short....the application did get accepted by what we considered a corrupt town board, but some board members decided to fight it by not accepting it. Waste Management sued them. The Town buckled under the oppression of a multimillion \$\$ lawsuit and decided that an Administrative Law Judge (ALJ) from the DEC could decide one part of our fate. So we had Legislative Hearings last July. Over 350 people turned out to express their opposition, peacefully. One by one they spoke to the Judge. He listened. We had erected a HUGE yellow blimp near the landfill up 200 feet -- the height of the proposed dump. That brought the people out! The

visual impact of that blimp was really something else.

Then the DEC permit Issues Conference convened and SPOC gained party status. Without an attorney, we did research and decided to have as an issue Waste Management's fitness, or lack of compliance. We all knew that they cut corners, and they have been fined numerous times, only to go out and repeat the offense. They have been caught bringing in illegal red bag material to solid waste landfills. We only had to prove those things ended with fines. We did that. And it went on for days, a team of black suited WM attorneys, DEC attorneys (who, by the way, want the landfill !) attorneys for the Town of Albion, Town of Murray and SPOC, and the grass roots environmental group (No black suits here!)

Finally, the word came in December. The ALJ ruled in our favor on the Fitness issue!!! We presented the case with facts, and he was appalled at WM's lack of compliance. Now it is in the "appealing his decision" phase. Because of their noncompliance, Waste Management has to go back 10 years for ALL of the Waste Mgt. subsidiaries and all of USA Wastes subsidiaries and report to him ALL of the fines. When I say ALL I don't just mean NY state -- it means ALL companies that belong to WM and USA Waste all over the country.

Needless to say, it was a real coup for us. We are now waiting for Commissioner Cahill's decision. He has the right to overturn the conclusion of the ALJ. When I said this is a real coup ... it is. Grassroots groups usually don't get this far with an ALJ. Both the DEC and Waste Mgt. were mighty surprised by that decision.

Regardless of what happens, we have proved that grassroots groups CAN stand up and be counted! It just takes perseverance and determination and a lot of sleepless nights.

For more information see website:

http://www.homestead.com/concernedcitizens/maplink_Albion.html, or <http://members.aol.com/spocinc/spoc.htm>



Hazards of Waste Fires

By Don Hassig, *St. Lawrence Environmental Action*

St. Lawrence County's rural residents need to take responsibility for the effects of their waste fires on the health of millions of milk drinkers. Dioxins, furans, PCBs and hexachlorobenzene created and released into the environment by barrel and refuse heap burning unavoidably follow the route from air to deposition on feed crop, to cow, to milk. 500 million pounds of milk are shipped each year from St. Lawrence County to the NY metropolitan area. This great quantity of food carries the signature of the myriad molecules of waste-burning toxicants which sprinkle invisibly down out of the North Country skies. A survey of open waste burning conducted by the St. Lawrence County Planning Office in 1993 estimated a minimum of 10,000 burn barrels for the county. A high percentage of the 1000 plus farms burn waste plastics, rubber, treated lumber and paper in on-farm refuse heaps.

The 1997 US EPA report, *Evaluation of Emissions from the Open Burning of Household Waste in Barrels* provided a quantification of pollutant releases. The authors state that burning the residential waste of 1.5 families in barrels released an equal amount of dioxins into the environment as a municipal solid waste incinerator burning 200 tons per day. Each year, St. Lawrence County's open waste fires release approximately 904.76g total dioxins/furans and 51.9 kg PCBs.

Many combustion sources contribute to the totals of persistent organic pollutants (POPs) which contaminate milk: hazardous waste incineration, medical and municipal waste incineration, primary metals smelting, gasoline and diesel engines in cars, trucks, heavy machinery and farm equipment and open waste burning. The US FDA has limited data from the analysis of milk samples for POPs. Milk consumption causes the greatest exposure of the American public to dioxins, according to the FDA.

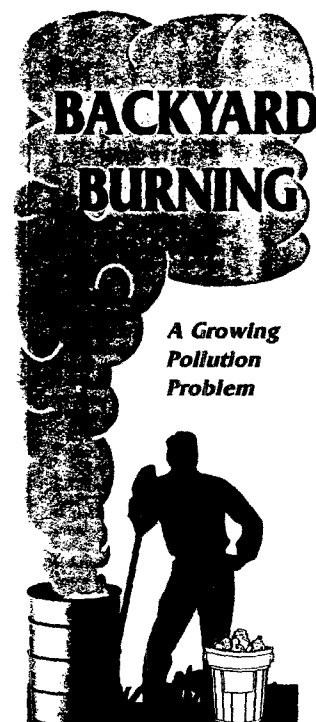
A Total Daily Intake (TDI) of 1 picogram of Toxicologically Equivalent Quantity (TEQ) dioxin per kilogram of body weight per day was recommended as a safe exposure limit by the Health Council of the Netherlands in its report, *Committee on Risk Evaluation of Substances/Dioxins* (1996).

FDA data from *Exposure and Hazard Assessment of Dioxins/Furans Via the Consumption of Dairy Foods and Fish* (March 1998) indicates

that 90th percentile milk consumers receive a diox exposure far in excess of the Netherlands TDI. Considering the broad array of health damaging effects from POPs exposures -- carcinogenesis, immune system impairment, reproductive failures, behavioral abnormalities, cognitive deficits, and hormone disruption -- it makes ultimate preventive sense to strive for elimination of these toxicants from the environment of milk-producing areas.

New York State's Legislature fails to ban open waste burning year after year. Tremendous support for this measure in the Assembly has repeatedly been demonstrated by easy passage. Senators are preventing a ban from becoming law. Their version of the burning prohibition has never been voted upon, remaining stalled in Senator Carl Marcellino's Environmental Conservation Committee. Will Senators from both rural and metropolitan New York recognize the public health threat of open waste burning and take the necessary steps to assure passage of this vital legislation?

For More Information: Don Hassig, St. Lawrence Environmental Action, 315-393-1975



CEC Board Profile: Beven Long

Beven Long is a new CEC Board member who works on sewage sludge problems. Beven graduated from the American International College in Springfield, Massachusetts, receiving a Bachelor in Science degree in financial accounting. Currently, the Director of Finance for the Visiting Nurses Association of Ithaca, he is a devoted father of four children and a dedicated NY environmentalist.

Life in Rochester NY, from 1984 to 1992 was an awakening experience for Beven. A sailing enthusiast owning a twenty-seven foot sailboat, and an assistant Scout Master, he became aware of the dangers that Great Lakes industries were having on water and fish life. "Poor people are eating fish and drinking water contaminated by heavy metals that industry has continuously dumped in the lakes," he points out.

Thinking to escape to a twelve and a half acre farm in Butternut, NY, leaving behind the ill effects of industrial pollution, Beven innocently thought the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) would do its job to protect the environment in rural areas. Four years ago, he found he was terribly wrong.

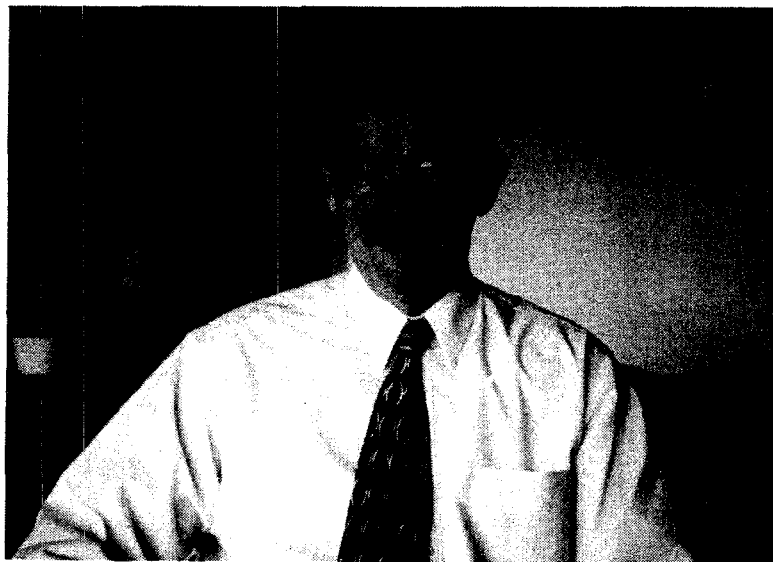
In 1996, a local rotor rooter franchise decided to help a farmer fertilize by spreading raw sewage near wetlands running into Butternut Creek. After a DEC hearing, the agency approved a permit to allow the use of the septage, stating that it did not want to interfere in the farmer's right to farm. Outraged by this action, and feeling betrayed, Beven realized he needed to exert pressure on the agency by forming a coalition. In

February 1997, Beven founded CAPE.

The Coalition to Actively Protect the Environment (CAPE) is a small community organization formed to actively protect the land and water from sewage sludge by exerting public pressure on legislators. "When people lead, the leaders will follow," states Beven. "Change has to start at the grassroots level." Since CAPE was formed, Beven proudly states that no sewage has been spread in his region. Working with other concerned environmentalists like Jack Ossont, Valerie Gardner, and Charlotte Hartmann (CEC Board Members), he says, "each individual must work with people and take a stand on environmental issues."

"Industry has a poor record in environmental safety. Manufacturers don't want to pay to clean up their pollution. In Rochester, Kodak is a major polluter. Pollution from smoke carries dioxins downwind affecting the surrounding communities. General Electric dumped over two million pounds of PCB in the Hudson River and GE didn't have to pay a dime to clean up their mess. The cost of pollution gets passed off to the taxpayer. There are hidden costs that go with pollution. For instance, the insurance industry is picking up the tab for health costs related to the problems of industrial pollution," notes Beven.

Asked what the best method is to achieve environmental goals, Beven says: "Politicians look forward to the next election. When you publicize ecological problems, the politicians get on board because they can't stand adverse publicity. Vote! Vote! Vote!"



Bevan Long

continued from page 1

When residents purchased their homes, they were never informed they would be living across the street from a toxic waste dump. Nor were they informed that a second Superfund site is down the street or that inadequate testing meant contamination issues would plague their own neighborhood. In fact, they were told the land was safe. By March 1999, an entirely different story emerged.

Negligent from the beginning, the City of Buffalo built homes on the brownfield property before adequate testing had been conducted to fully assess the toxic pollution at the site. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Department of Health (DOH) concur, saying there's no way to determine long-term health effects based on the city's poor sampling.

EPA originally became involved at Hickory Woods after 100,000 ppm (parts per million) of cancer-causing PAHs (polynuclear aromatic hydrocarbons) were discovered during the excavation for the 18th home. This discovery led to remediation of three occupied properties and an open lot, and temporary relocation of three families. The father of one of these families testified his three-year-old daughter had played in the toxic soil during the construction of their home.

During the contaminated soil removal in 1999, the City failed to hold even one public meeting about safety precautions. In fact, the City has never convened a meeting since discovering contamination in March 1999. Residents want answers to questions. Why was a thousand gallon underground storage tank discovered in the front yard of a home? Although the leaking tank was removed, the City admits the neighborhood may contain more buried tanks -- they just don't know.

After this dramatic incident, additional soil sampling revealed high levels of PAHs throughout the neighborhood. The City notified residents by putting notes in their mailboxes, and again, no public meeting was held to discuss the results.

Why Were Homes Built on Polluted Land?

"We dig holes, and there's no dirt; it's all ash," said Patrick Blake, a father who lives with his family in Hickory Woods. Linda Benns of O'Connor Street said when she was trimming her hedges and stepped around a bush, she sunk down two feet into ash "like snow."

It is unclear how the city-contracted developers could have ignored the obvious visual signs of contaminated coke waste and ash.

Michael McCarthy from the Buffalo Urban Renewal Agency, the City agency that oversaw the development project, would not comment on how reckless it was to build this neighborhood without adequate testing. "It doesn't change the fact that it was done," McCarthy said "and now we have to deal with it."

Homeowners Release Explosive Video

In December 1999, the Hickory Woods Concern Homeowners Association released a video to a packed room of concerned citizens, and representatives from the Department of Health and the Department of Environmental Conservation (DOH and DEC), the federal Agency of Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR), and the City of Buffalo. That video showed unmarked vehicles under supervision of city employees, excavating large amounts of soil from sites that had been deemed "safe" by the City's own testing. (Soil testing was performed five years *after* the City first began development on the poisoned land.)

The video also documents the city removing soil to a berm on LTV property adjacent to the neighborhood. Recent samples of the berm show high levels of toxic contamination. Also captured on video was a disturbing scene of neighborhood children playing around the construction sites of two new homes which were partially filled with suspicious bright red and green liquid.

Most neighborhood residents had repeated contact with the soil by planting flower beds and vegetable gardens, landscaping, building porches and laying fences.

CEC and other environmental organizations have joined with the Buffalo Common Council to advocate for the relocation of Hickory Woods residents. Led by Council President James Pitts, the Council passed a resolution calling on the Mayor to fund immediate relocation of residents, clean up the contamination, and provide avenues for full public input in the process.

"I believe we face a crisis at this site and feel that all levels of government are obliged to work together to help the residents who have been put at a great disadvantage," Pitts said. Along with CEC, he requested immediate relocation of residents who want to leave and action by the DOH and EPA to protect health and the environment.

Unfortunately, EPA did not start sampling until the spring. It was far too late for residents who have found foundation bricks from Donner-Hanna Coke, trucks, barrels, and other clear indications that dumping took place on their properties. In addition to orange sub-

stances in septic tanks, residents have encountered gray-white liquid that wouldn't freeze and bubbling black goop -- undeniable signs of chemical contamination.

"Anything people could bring, they dumped here," said Rick Ammerman, President of the Hickory Woods Concerned Homeowners Association. "It's been a mixing bowl with ribbons of toxic waste below our feet."

CEC, the Hickory Woods Concerned Homeowners Association, Environmental Advocates, Great Lakes United, the Green Party of Erie County, Kids Against Pollution, Metro Justice, NYC Environmental Advocates, NYPIRG and Sierra Club Atlantic Chapter say the land is not habitable and are calling for immediate relocation of the residents, a buy-out of contaminated properties,

comprehensive investigation of poisons, open avenues for public participation, and total remediation of contaminated land.

"What about our property values?" asked Rick Ammerman, father and Hickory Woods Homeowner. "It's not about the money. Because our property values are shot, we're trapped in this area with dangerous pollutants. What can I do for my wife and son?"

To get involved, call Congressman Jack Quinn (202-225-3306) and Governor George Pataki (518-474-8390) and demand immediate relocation and environmental justice for these families. For more information, contact CEC's WNY office at 716-885-6848, cecwny@buffnet.net.



Toxic Waste - Only A Shovelful Away!

POINTS OF INTEREST

Vinyl Flooring Linked to Respiratory Problems

Exposure to vinyl (PVC) flooring is associated with increased breathing problems, according to a study published in the American Public Health Journal. 251 children with bronchial obstruction were compared with a group of children without similar symptoms. The Norwegian researchers theorize plasticizers used in polyvinyl chloride (PVC) are the cause. Children with bronchial obstruction were more likely to have PVC flooring and textile wall material.

Source: Jaakola, Jouni J., et al. 1999. Interior Surface Materials in the Home and Development of Bronchial Obstruction in Young Children in Oslo, Norway. *American Journal of Public Health*.

Plastic Wraps Leach Into Food

Commonly used plastic wraps can leach toxic additives into cheese, according to a study by the Consumers Union (CU). Testing cheese wrapped in polyvinyl chloride (PVC) cling film, the CU found 153 parts per million of the plasticizer DEHA. DEHA has been found to cause reproductive effects, liver cancer and birth defects in laboratory, and is a suspected hormone disrupter. It is recommended that consumers not use vinyl wraps for food, such as Saran Wrap or Reynolds Wrap. Alternatives include wax paper or polyethylene-based wraps such as Handi-wrap or Glad wrap.

Source: Consumers Union, May 1998.

Toxic Exposures & Learning Problems

Research has shown children exposed to common environmental toxins like dioxin and PCBs before birth and during infancy can suffer behavioral, learning and memory problems. A University of Maryland School of Medicine psychiatry professor now suggests the underlying cause of apparent health problems may be disruption of the normal action of the thyroid hormone function. Because of the thyroid gland's crucial role in early brain growth and development, even moderate impairment of thyroid

hormone function has been associated with various problems in behavioral and intellectual development, such as attention deficit disorder.

Source: Hauser, Peter, et al. 1998. Resistance to Thyroid Hormone. *Toxicological and Industrial Health*.

Pesticides & Pancreatic Cancer

Researchers found that high blood levels of organochlorines - such as dichlorodiphenyltrichloroethane (DDT), dichlorodiphenyldichloroethylene (DDE), & polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) - have been linked to gene mutations found in patients with cancer of the pancreas. The study is the first to link a genetic alteration commonly found in pancreatic cancer patients and an environmental substance. "Patients who were already diagnosed with pancreatic cancer were 5 to 10 times more likely to show increased blood levels of organochlorines than were patients hospitalized for other reasons," the researchers report.

Source: *The Lancet*, 12/21/99

Exposed Workers Call For Medical Testing

In Fulton, New York, six state workers are outraged that New York State will not pay to see if a chemical they were exposed to on the job made them ill. The Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) employees have filed a grievance with their union. The workers were exposed to pentachlorophenol at Camp Summit prison. The chemical was used at a wood dipping plant for fungi and termites between 1964 and 1975 as a part of an inmate work program. Five workers are already receiving medical disability and workers compensation, and have a host of other health problems including asthma and cancer. But doctors say detecting the level of exposure can only be determined through expensive blood and tissue tests. That's what the workers want the state to cover. The state has found fish and other wildlife on the site to be contaminated. Currently, the DEC is reviewing a proposal to add the area to the State Superfund.

Source: Associated Press, 12/10/99

Accidents Waiting to Happen

A new report, *Accidents Waiting to Happen*, shows nearly 5,000 facilities in the U.S. have Bhopal-scale storage of dangerous chemicals. It lists facilities that pose major hazards to nearby residents. See this report at www.pirg.org. There are nice "clickable" maps for each state. U.S. PIRG and the Working Group on Community Right-to-Know released this report on the 15th anniversary of the world's worst chemical accident at Bhopal, India, which killed several thousand people.

Source: Working Group on Community Right-to-Know, 218 D Street, SE; Washington, DC 20003, Phone: 202-544-9586; Fax 202-546-2461

EPA To Phase Out Bioaccumulative Chemicals

The Environmental Protection Agency has proposed a plan to phase out the discharge of bioaccumulative chemicals (BCCs) into "mixing zones" over a ten year period in the Great Lakes Basin. For years polluters have been allowed to dump BCCs like polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) directly into receiving waters. States like Indiana, Wisconsin, and Minnesota have already eliminated them, but the EPA's proposal would also prohibit the same in Illinois, New York, Ohio, and Pennsylvania. It is estimated the proposed plan would reduce mercury from direct water discharges into the Great Lakes by up to 90 percent.

Source: EPA Press Release, 9/24/99

More Information: EPA's website at www.epa.gov/ost

DEC Creates Environmental Justice Program

The Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) has announced the creation of an environmental justice program to "improve community participation in DEC's permitting process. The program will develop new policies to ensure fair treatment of all individuals regardless of race, ethnic origin, or socioeconomic status. New initiatives may include enhanced community outreach, public hearings, use of alternative dispute resolution, and additional public information efforts."

Source: DEC Press Release, 10/4/99

Environmental Justice Areas

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region 2 has released a draft policy on identifying low-income and minority communities unfairly affected by environmental policies. The policy will help Region 2 (which includes New York State) implement President Clinton's Environmental Justice Executive Order. The policy describes how EPA should assess proposed environmental impacts, such as the siting of an industrial facility, that might affect a community.

Source: "Revised Draft Interim Policy on Identifying Environmental Justice Areas," is available at: www.epa.gov/region02/community/ejpolicy/ejindex.htm

For More Information: Contact the Region 2 Environmental Justice Coordinator, Melva Hayen at 212-637-5027.

Group Cries Foul on Nuke Reactor Buyout

Citizens Awareness Network (CAN) is a grassroots, volunteer organization concerned with the environmental and health impacts associated with the nuclear power industry. A CAN chapter was recently formed in Central New York and others are being organized in New York City and the Hudson Valley. CAN protested a controversial transnational corporate joint venture between British Energy (BE) and PECO, a Philadelphia-based energy company. AmerGen is in the process of acquiring 20 American nuclear reactors and is committed to buying most of the country's 104 reactors including Nine Mile Point 1 and 2 in Scrub, New York.

Source: The Green Sheet, November 1999.

For More Information: CNY-CAN, 315-475-1203, nonukes@rootmedia.org



Resources and Publications

Power Lines & Leukemia

Health Effects from Exposure to Electric and Magnetic Fields is a new report by the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS), that states exposure to powerline extremely low frequency electric and magnetic fields (ELF-EMF) is a "possible" human carcinogen. This decision was based largely on "limited evidence of an increased risk for childhood leukemia with residential exposure and an increased occurrence of chronic lymphocytic leukemia (CLL) associated with occupational exposure."

Source: NIEHS. June, 1999.

than 16,000 and wounding more than 500,000 according to local estimates. The Environmental Health Fund, Earth Rights International and several other health, environment and human rights organizations in fifteen countries charge the chemical industry with numerous human rights atrocities in connection with 20th Century environmental disasters.

To Obtain: <http://home.earthlink.net/~gnprojec/chemcentury.htm> or contact Sanford Lewis, Strategic Counsel on Corporate Accountability, P.O. Box 79225, Waverly, MA 02479, 617-489-3686.

Protecting Groundwater

Protecting Groundwater is a new guide by Friends of the Earth on groundwater and pesticide issues to help people become informed participants in debates about pesticide management in their own backyard.

To Obtain: Friends of the Earth Groundwater Protection Project. 1025 Vermont Ave., NW, Suite 300 Washington, DC 20005-6303 or 202-783-7400.

Pesticide Exposures Handbook

Pesticide Exposures Handbook is an 8 page handbook by Californians for Alternatives to Toxics to keep on hand for identifying and responding to pesticide exposure, first-aid treatment and medical care, legal advice, testing laboratories, and emergency facility listings (for California).

To Obtain: CATs, P.O. Box 1195 (900 I St.), Arcata, CA 95518. E-mail is catz@reninet.com or see website www.reninet.com/catz

No More Bhopals

No More Bhopals: Beyond the Chemical Century: Restoring Human Rights and Preserving the Fabric of Life is a new report released on the 15th anniversary of the Bhopal, India disaster. On December 2, 1984, poisonous gases escaped from a Union Carbide pesticide factory in Bhopal, India, killing more

A Canary's Tale

A Canary's Tale: The Final Battle, Politics, Poisons, and Pollution vs. The Environment and The Public Health is a book by Jacob Berkson. One reviewer notes the book provides "careful reporting on how a percentage of our population is susceptible to low doses of common chemicals (especially in combination with other familiar chemicals) that can in various amalgamations be harmful to a person's health. Anyone suspicious that our environment might be deleterious to their health will find this book useful, enjoyable to read, and educational. The dead canary should not be ignored."

To Obtain: Available from CEC for a discount rate of \$5.00, cectoxic.igc.org or call 518-462-55

In the Backyard

In the Backyard: A Potent Source of Pollution found household trash burned in one backyard barrel may release more dioxins, furans, and other chlorinated pollutants to the air than tons of trash burned by a municipal waste incinerator serving to thousands of homes. According to the report from the federal Environmental Protection Agency's Open Burning Test Facility in Research Triangle Park, N.C., an estimated 20 million people in rural areas burn trash in their backyards. Although emissions of dioxins and furans -- two chemically similar groups of pollutants -- vary considerably from barrel to

barrel, backyard burning may contribute as much of these compounds to the air as all the nation's municipal waste incinerators combined, according to Dwain Winters, director of the agency's Dioxin Policy Project.

Source: *New York Times*, 1/4/2000.



Pandora's Poison

Pandora's Poison: Chlorine, Health, and a New Environmental Strategy, is a new book by Joe Thornton that presents a solution to the global build up of toxic chemicals. Everywhere on the planet, hundreds of industrial chemicals called organochlorines are accumulating in the environment, the food supply, and our bodies. These substances -- such infamous pollutants as dioxins, PCBs, and DDT, along with thousands of lesser-known hazards -- are produced when chlorine gas is used to make plastics, paper, pesticides, and many industrial chemicals. In a thorough and accessible analysis, biologist Joe Thornton shows how global organochlorine pollution is already contributing to infertility, immune suppression, cancer, and development disorders in humans and wildlife.

To Obtain: \$34.95. Book available in bookstores.

Toxic Turnaround

Toxic Turnaround: A Step-by-Step Guide to Reducing Pollution for Local Governments is a guide with arguments and case studies that demonstrate the need for a major change from cleanup to prevention and describe how the regulatory system must be shaped to achieve that end. *Toxic Turnaround* should be a valuable resource for local government planners as well as citizens' groups working on local environment concerns. It is authored by The Environment Health Coalition, a nonprofit advocacy organization that works on toxic pollution issues.

To Obtain: EHC, 1717 Kettner Blvd., #100, San Diego, CA 92101. 619-235-0281, e-mail: ehcoalition@igc.apc.org or see webpage at www.environmentalhealth.org.

Privileged Goods

Privileged Goods: Commoditization and Its Impact on Environmental and Society is a new book that suggests our propensity toward environmental destruction - a tragic flaw of the modern economy -- can be understood as a result of hidden economic forces. These forces drive social and economic development towards increasing mobilization of energy and material beyond what is actually needed to achieve general prosperity and meet basic human needs. The author explains the complex concept of commoditization using examples from key sectors of society.

To Obtain: Send \$36.00 to author Jack Manno at 102 Avondale Place, Syracuse, NY 13210, 315-422-9633.

NYS Labor History Map

A new poster map, *NYS Labor History: From the 1600's to the Present*, is a colorful and interesting publication. John Sweeney, AFL-CIO President notes, "From Long Island to the Adirondacks to my old neighborhood in the Bronx, we New Yorkers have a rich tradition of working people who have joined together to speak with one voice and fight for justice. Our parents and grandparents achieved a

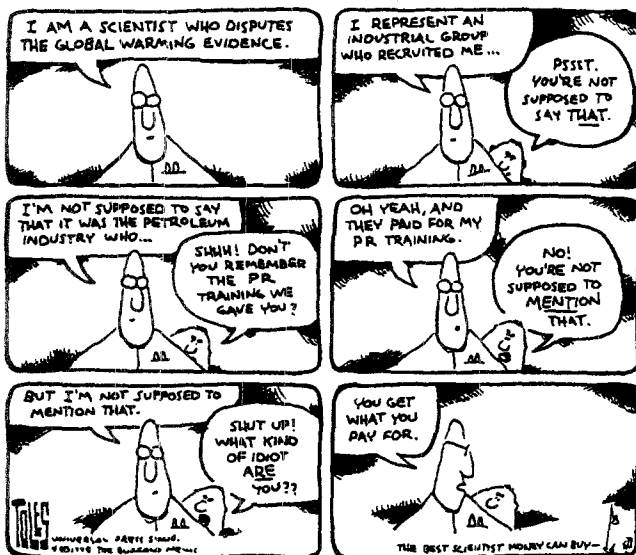
tremendous amount against terrific odds, and the New York Labor History Map tells us where and when it happened. This Map is not only a wonderful picture of where we have been, but a compass for where we are going."

To Obtain: Send \$2.00 to Map Committee, NYLHA Wagner Labor Archives, Bobst Library, NYU 70 Washington Square South, NY, NY 10012. (Checks payable to New York Labor History Association).

Why Unions Are Good For You

Why Unions are Good For You is a pamphlet that explains the value of belonging to a union and uses solid facts and figures. It offers convincing rebuttals to propaganda used by the media and union busters to bad mouth the labor movement and gives a clear message on why unions are good for workers.

To Obtain: Harry Kelber P.O. Box 2368 New York, NY 10185 or 718-858-7728.



WTO Guide

Everything you Need to Know to Fight for Fair Trade is a new publication on the World Trade Organization (WTO) -- the focus of massive protests in Seattle recently. The pamphlet describes the key WTO and fair trade issues.

To Obtain: Send \$3.50 to Working Group on the WTO/MAI 914-271-6500.

Free Organizing Video

The Democratic Promise: Saul Alinsky and His Legacy, narrated by Alec Baldwin, is an award winning, one hour documentary on community organizing and social change. Aired on PBS, the film revisits Alinsky's pioneering organizing efforts and highlights the continued vitality of community organizing today. Co-produced by Media Process Educational Films and Chicago Video Project, *The Democratic Promise* is being offered free of charge, for a limited time, to social change organizations for use in training and education. To **request a free copy of the video**, please send organization name, contact person, address, phone number and a brief description of your organization's work to: Chicago Video Project, 800 West Huron, Suite 3 South, Chicago, IL 60622 or, by e-mail to: saualalinsky@chicagovideo.com. This video is not available to individuals.

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continued from page 7

enforce—health protections that will prevent this life-threatening chemical from harming our families.”

CEC sent testimonies from the New York Citizens' Public Hearing on Dioxin to the EPA to call on them to end production, discharge and exposure to dioxin. Rochester newspapers, radio and television stations publicized the well-attended event.

The Dioxin Hearing was CEC's contribution to the *Stop Dioxin Exposure Campaign*, a national effort by dozens of environmental organizations across the United States, to bring attention to environmental and health hazards associated with dioxin.

A copy of *The American People's Dioxin Report* can be obtained from CHEJ at (703) 237-2249 or cchw@essential.org.

To learn how you can get involved, call CEC's Western New York Office at 716-885-6848, cecwny@buffnet.net.

New Research Finds Telephone Cords Contain Lead

A few years ago Hybrivet Systems reported on the dangers of LEAD contamination from mini-blinds. Recently they discovered yet another source of lead poisoning - TELEPHONE CORDS. When we think of electrical, telephone and computer cords, we don't worry about lead poisoning, we worry about young children strangling from them. New research from the laboratories

of Hybrivet Systems, Inc., the manufacturers of LeadCheck Swabs, shows that many of these cords (which are on both old and new equipment and old and brand new telephones) contain lead which comes off on the hands of everyone who touches them. This is very disturbing because young children tend to put their fingers into their mouths after handling the telephone cords. Once again, we discover another new lead hazard for parents to worry that their children have been effected by.

Research shows that when 27 cords were chosen at random and tested with LeadCheck Swabs to see if they contained lead, 23 of the 27 tested positive for lead. Researchers then handled the positive cords for 10 seconds and tested their hands using a protocol developed for OSHA to test workers' skin. When the hands of the researchers were then tested, it was confirmed that high levels of lead were transferred to the researchers hands.

Young children tend to grab on to the telephone cord when Mommy gets on the telephone. If they put their fingers into their mouths after handling the cord, they may ingest lead which, at the very least, can cause an elevated blood lead level. There is no need for such cords to be sold in the United States. Help us alert parents and the public to this danger.

Hybrivet Systems is the nation's leading manufacturer of home lead testing kits. Call for a sample swab to test your telephone cords and any further information you might need about this pervasive problem.

Source: Hybrivet Systems, Inc., P.O. Box 1210, Framingham, MA 01701, 800-262-5323.



CEC presenting the 2000 Environmental Initiative Award to the Rotterdam Town Board for establishing the first Rotterdam Conservation Advisory Council. (Left to Right): Anne Rabe, CEC; Council persons: Carolina Lazzari, Holly Vellano and Diane Marco. Judith Dagostino and Supervisor Joseph Signore are accepting the award. (Thanks to Citizens Against The Dump for all their good work).

Highlights from the Attorney General's Report on Recycling

"Are We Throwing It All Away? A Call For New York To Recommit To Recycling"

- The benefits of recycling are well-known and compelling. Recycling reduces landfilling and incineration of waste and the negative environmental impacts of these disposal methods, including air and water pollution. Use of recycled products reduces the pollution and energy consumption associated with the manufacture of the same products from raw materials.
- Recycling has become a significant element in New York's economy. Some 3,925 New York businesses are engaged exclusively in recycling activities, including manufacturers who use only recycled materials.
- The need to reduce landfilling of New York waste is more urgent than ever, since there are only 28 operating landfills in New York, down from 294. The largest of these, Fresh Kills, which has been receiving one-third of all solid waste generated in the state, is scheduled to close by Jan. 1, 2002.
- Individual New Yorkers support recycling, because it enables them to contribute directly to a cleaner environment through their own efforts.
- Published reports indicate that recycling rates have leveled off in recent years after rising steadily through the mid-1990s.
- Responses to a survey conducted by the Attorney General's office reflect a large number of localities recycling common materials;
 - ✓ 95% recycle newsprint and glass;
 - ✓ 89% recycle metal cans;
 - ✓ 86% recycle plastic;
 - ✓ 68% recycle cardboard; and
 - ✓ 63% recycle other kinds of paper.
- The Attorney General's survey also revealed that residents in 68% of localities have registered complaints about waste collectors mixing recyclables with regular trash.
- The Environmental Protection Bureau of the Attorney General's office is investigating complaints about waste haulers mixing recyclables with regular trash. Evidence is being gathered that may result in legal action against haulers engaging in this practice.
- The City of Amsterdam recently became the first and only municipality to formally abandon recycling since the state recycling law was enacted in 1988. After unsuccessful attempts to convince city officials to comply with the recycling law, the Attorney General is preparing to file a lawsuit against the city.

The Attorney General has introduced two bills to enhance recycling in New York. The first bill, the Recycling Enforcement Act, would clarify existing law to prohibit waste haulers from mixing recyclables with trash, and would specify which materials are to be recycled pursuant to local recycling laws. The second bill would expand the "bottle bill" to require deposits on non-carbonated beverage containers, including water, fruit juice and ice tea. **For More Information, contact Attorney Robert Rosenthal, Attorney General's Office, The Capitol, Albany, NY 12224 518-474-8096.**

The Plan

In the beginning there was THE PLAN
And then came the assumptions.
And the assumptions were without form,
and THE PLAN was completely without substance,
And darkness was on the face of all the workers.
And they spoke unto their Supervisors, saying,
"THE PLAN is a crock of shit and it stinks."

And the Supervisors went unto their Unit Heads, saying
"It is a pail of dung and none may abide the odor thereof."

And the Unit Heads went unto their Division Directors and said,
"It is a container of excrement and is very strong, such that none here
may abide by it."

And the Division Directors went unto the Assistant Commissioner and
said unto him,
"It is a vessel of fertilizer and none may abide its strength."

And the Assistant Commissioner went unto the Deputy Commissioner
and said,
"It contains that which aids plant growth and is very strong."

And the Deputy Commissioner went unto the
Executive Deputy Commissioner and said unto him,
"It promotes growth and is very powerful."

And the Executive Deputy Commissioner went unto the Commissioner
and said unto him,
"This powerful new plan will actively promote the growth and efficiency
of the Department and this area in particular."

And the Commissioner looked upon the plan and saw that it was good
and the plan became a policy.

*- From Anonymous
Department of Environmental Conservation employee*

Citizens' Environmental Coalition
33 Central Avenue
Albany, NY 12210
518-462-5527

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PERMIT #557

Yes, I want to join CEC and clean up New York!

Please clip out and mail to:

Citizens' Environmental Coalition, 33 Central Avenue, Albany, NY 12210
518-462-5527, Fax: 518-465-8349, email: cecanne@igc.org.
CEC is a tax-exempt organization.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Membership Dues:

_____	\$25	Individual Membership	_____	\$52	Sustaining Member
_____	\$10	Student/Low Income/Senior	_____	\$30-80	Group Membership*
_____	\$36	Family Membership	_____	\$100	Contributing Membership

*Group Fee - \$30 (annual budget less than \$20,000); \$50 (\$20,000 - \$140,000); \$80 (over \$140,000)

