



Clean Water Action News

November/December 2001

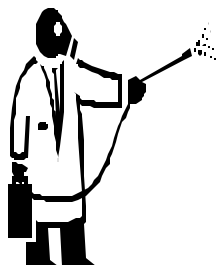
Pennsylvania Newsletter

PROGRESS IN HARRISBURG

PESTICIDE BILL NEARS PASSAGE!

After many years of organizing and lobbying, the Pesticide Notification Act, for which Clean Water Action has been leading the fight, is nearing passage.

HB 1289, the House version of the PNA, was unanimously passed by the House in June of 2001. In November, the Senate passed its version, SB 705, too.



Now, all we need to do is to get each body to pass the other bill, adopting it into law. With the unanimous votes in both houses, this should be easy. But even the best laid plans can go astray, so we need to be vigilant and make sure that action is taken.

WHAT YOU CAN DO:

Write to Sen, David Brightbill, Senate Majority Leader, and Rep. John Perzel House Majority Leader. Thank them for helping getting initial action on the Pesticide Notification Act. Urge them to make sure that it gets final passage by both houses as soon as possible. Their address is Main Capitol, Harrisburg PA 17120.



All your letters and calls over the years have been critical in getting this far...now let's get this bill passed once and for all!!!

PROTECTING OUR DRINKING WATER!

If anyone ever doubted whether people care about the quality of their drinking water, the response to our recent campaign to strengthen the state's drinking water right to know rules should answer that question.

In response to Clean Water Action's organizing, over 2,000 people sent comments to state officials urging them to expand our right to know. This included over 1,000 emails and another 1,000 handwritten letters.

In addition, 60 public health, church, consumer and environmental groups signed on in support of CWA's comments on the rules, along with another 25 state legislators, public health experts and academic leaders!



DEP is now reviewing the comments and will be responding within the next few months. We'll keep you posted on what they decide and what's next in our fight to protect our drinking water.

By the way...in case you missed it, the Bush Administration recently reversed their decision to suspend the 10 ppb standard for arsenic in drinking water. After receiving tens of thousands of letters and emails from outraged consumers, the EPA changed its mind and will lower the standard from 50 to 10 ppb. Thanks for your letters...they made a difference!

News from Around the State

Philadelphia Area

Protecting The Air We Breathe

Clean Water Fund and the Community Labor Refinery Tracking Committee have received a grant to set up a new community based air monitoring program. This "Bucket Brigade" will monitor air quality in the area around the Sunoco refinery.

The program will kick off with a training in January where community volunteers will learn how to take air samples in response to odor complaints. For more information or to get involved, contact Julia in the Philadelphia office at 215-640-8800.

Meanwhile, Sunoco has requested a permit to expand production at their South Philly refinery. Will this mean more pollution in our neighborhood? Come to a hearing Thursday, January 31 at 6 PM at 321 University Avenue in West Philadelphia to learn more and tell the city what you think.

Making Recycling Work



On November 15, Clean Water Fund and Clean Air Council hosted a Forum to discuss trash and recycling issues in Philadelphia. Approximately 70 people attended the Forum and shared their concerns with the City of Philadelphia Streets Commissioner, William Johnson, and Recycling Coordinator, David Robinson.

Suggestions from participants of ways to improve the City's current collection programs were compiled and sent to the city officials along with the city's Recycling Advisory Committee.

Given the overwhelming response, we will be hosting a follow-up meeting of the Recycling Alliance of Philadelphia on Wednesday, January 16, 2002. For more information on the location and time please contact Julia in Philadelphia at 215-640-8800.

Allentown Area: Protecting a Scenic Treasure

The Pinnacle stands like a sentinel atop Blue Mountain along the Berks/Schuylkill County border. The highest point in Berks County, the peak sits along the Appalachian Trail. This favorite destination for hikers is also home to several trout streams, including one that is being considered for Exceptional Value status. These creeks form part of the source water for the public water supply for the City of Reading.

Approach trails to this beautiful area pass through State Game Land #106. The State Game Commission has proposed to log 94 acres of hardwoods at this site. Unfortunately they have selected areas adjacent to scenic approach trails, streams and the Appalachian Trail. They plan to cut 33% to 45% of the

trees, and in some areas, up to 80%. Along with the logging would be an upgrade of stream crossings from a semi-improved emergency access road to a road that could handle heavy trucks and equipment.

Local citizens are concerned with the logging of these sensitive areas and future plans once the access roads have been improved. Under pressure from citizens, the Game Commission has agreed to hold a public meeting to present its plan and hear comments. **The meeting is scheduled for January 9, 2002, at 6:30 pm at Hamburg Middle School, Berks county.** If you're a hiker, hunter, water drinker or environmentalist, you should attend! Call 610-434-9223 for details.

5th Annual Auction and Party for Clean Water A Rousing Success!

On November 9, the Philadelphia office of Clean Water Fund hosted its 5th Annual Auction and Party at the Moore College of Art and Design. The evening's festivities included a presentation of the 2nd Annual Water Bearer Awards for Environmental Activism. This year's recipients were Maya Van Rossum, the Delaware RiverKeeper and Robert Pierson, a founder of the Philadelphia Partnership Recycling Program. **Thanks to all the Sponsors, Item Donors and Volunteers that made this event a success:**

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A special thank you to:

- John Hardiman, Auctioneer
- The Don Wilkins Band

AK Steel -- No Longer #1?

Residents of Zelenople are starting to see the fruits of our work to end water pollution from AK Steel in Butler. For several years, AK Steel has been our nation's #1 water polluter, making Zelenople's drinking water unsafe. Our work forced AK Steel to install a new drinking water treatment plant for Zelenople, assuring that residents have safe water from their taps, at no extra expense to them. Pollution of Connoquenessing Creek by AK Steel continues, although this year at a much lower level than in 4 or 5 years. CWA and residents are continuing to work to make sure that AK Steel complies with all laws and finishes cleaning up their plant and the Connoquenessing.



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PA Sustaining Newsletter

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Clean Water Action is a national citizen's organization working for clean, safe and affordable water, prevention of health threatening pollution, creation of environmentally safe jobs and businesses, and empowerment of people to make democracy work. Clean Water Action organizes strong grassroots groups, coalitions and campaigns to protect our environment, health, economic well being and community quality of life. This update was prepared for our Pennsylvania members who contribute at the sustaining member level of \$60 or more.

Pittsburgh Area: Save the Pitt Environmental Law Clinic!

Just a year ago, the University of Pittsburgh Law School started an environmental law clinic to provide legal service to groups that couldn't otherwise afford to legally challenge environmentally destructive projects.

The Pitt Law Clinic has represented groups fighting logging of Allegheny National Forest and construction of the Mon-Fayette Toll Road. It also represents Clean Water Action in appealing permits for mining the Allegheny and Ohio Rivers.

Unfortunately, Pitt's Chancellor Nordenberg chose to turn his back on the Law Clinic and the environment. After just one year, the Chancellor declared that the Clinic should be independent of Pitt, and decided to bill the Clinic over \$60,000 a year for administrative services -- a move that would bankrupt the Clinic over the next year

and a half.

Why the sudden change in policy? Apparently, anti-environmental business interests and state legislators have convinced the Chancellor that he should get rid of the Clinic. Even though Pitt is 80% privately funded, Nordenberg gave in to political pressure from Harrisburg instead of standing up for academic freedom. For now, the Clinic is open for business; but if it is to survive we need your help!

WHAT YOU CAN DO:

Write to Chancellor Mark Nordenberg. Tell him that the University should fully support the Environmental Law Clinic and not give in to political pressure from polluters.

***His address: University of Pittsburgh, CL 107, Pittsburgh PA 15260.
Email: norden+@pitt.edu***