



POLLUTION PREVENTION VIEW

VOLUME 10, ISSUE 2 NEWSLETTER FROM THE CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION SPRING 2010

Earth Day is Every Day

It's difficult to imagine not being able to fish because of sewage and toxic waste dumped into the rivers, or getting soot in your eyes from smokestacks or open burning — but at the time of the first Earth Day in 1970, these were everyday occurrences.



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Earth Day was the brainchild of Wisconsin Senator Gaylord Nelson who was troubled that the environment was a non-issue in the politics of our country. In September 1969, he announced that there would be a nationwide grassroots demonstration to show support for the environment and he invited everyone to participate. On April 22, 1970, 20 million people held protests, teach-ins, and organized clean-ups and tree plantings — including many events throughout Connecticut. At the time, Earth Day was the largest public demonstration on any issue in our nation's history.

Connecticut has a long history of active conservation efforts, some of which go back to the 1880s. But it was the widespread pollution problems of the 1960s that motivated more people to get involved, ultimately making the state a leader in environmental policy. John Dempsey, the governor at the time, responded to the public's concern about the environment. He created a task force, and in 1970, they issued a report that called for improvements in the management of Connecticut's air, land, water and wildlife.

The people of Connecticut, energized by Earth Day, acted on the issues raised in Governor Dempsey's report. They advocated for groundbreaking environmental legislation, including the creation of

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Earth Day is Every Day

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the Department of Environmental Protection. Many of Connecticut's environmental laws and policies became models for other states and federal programs.

This year more than one billion people around the world took part in the 40th anniversary of Earth Day. One of the ways we marked this event in Connecticut was to premiere the **Earth Day 40** movie at the State Capitol. Governor M. Jodi Rell said, "Here in Connecticut we have much to celebrate — our rivers and streams run clearer, our lakes and ponds are brighter, our once-blighted brownfields are being reclaimed and reused and far more stringent regulation safeguards our environment. Perhaps most importantly, the Long Island Sound is once again rightly considered an environmental treasure worth protecting and enhancing. Yet we know there are critical tasks ahead of us, ranging from reducing pollution from auto emissions and industrial sources to finding alternative and renewable energy sources. Earth Day is a reminder that the job of protecting the environment is only begun, never completed."



Connecticut's Environment:
Past Present and Future
April 22, 2010
18 Minute DVD
www.ct.gov/dep

To get a look at Connecticut's environment at the time of the first Earth Day and the progress we have made, visit www.ct.gov/dep/earthday and view the video **Earth Day 40: Connecticut's Environment Past, Present and Future**.

Chemical Jeopardy – What is Triclosan?

It seems like it's in everything — from personal care products like toothpaste, to fabrics and plastics, to mechanical equipment like HVAC coils — because of its anti-microbial properties. In liquid hand soaps, it is advertised as a non-alcohol-based way to reduce or prevent bacterial contamination.



It's triclosan — a chemical regulated by both U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as a pesticide and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) as an additive in drugs and cosmetics.

Despite triclosan's widespread use, there are emerging health and environmental concerns about the chemical. Triclosan enters our water from residential and industrial sources, and the

U.S. Geological Survey detected it in 58% of 85 rivers and streams in 30 states. It can degrade and result in the formation of the toxic chemical, dioxin. Studies are looking at whether the widespread use of triclosan and similar biocides alters antibiotic resistance to bacteria. EPA is also requiring pesticide registrants to add labeling that states that triclosan is toxic to fish and other aquatic organisms.

People are exposed to triclosan primarily through skin or oral contact with products containing it and studies show it can be absorbed across the skin into the bloodstream. National health studies show that 75% of a sample of the U.S. population have traces of it in their bodies, although it is not known if these measureable amounts mean that it can cause adverse health effects. EPA concluded a health risk assessment of triclosan as recently as 2008 but has reported that it is updating that assessment with newly-released national health monitoring results and will see if the science supports a change in its 2008 pesticide re-registration decision. The agency plans another comprehensive review in 2013.

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In response to concerns raised by the American Medical Association, an FDA press release in April of 2010 stated “there is no benefit of using triclosan-based soaps over regular hand washing with soap and water.” And yet the Environmental Working Group (EWG) found it in 112 of 259 liquid hand soaps (43%). FDA is continuing its review of triclosan in consumer products and plans to share its findings with the public next spring.

Stay tuned. Meanwhile, to access more information about this ubiquitous chemical, check out: EPA’s Triclosan Facts — www.epa.gov; FDA’s Triclosan Consumer Update — www.fda.gov EWG’s Triclosan Guide — www.ewg.org/triclosanguide.

Airing your Dirty... Umm, Clean Laundry

Along with the warmer weather in Connecticut, come the sights of the season — like kids rushing to the ice cream truck as it drives through the neighborhood, barbecues, block parties, and freshly-washed laundry hanging on backyard clotheslines. Well, it turns out that not everyone has the right to air their clean laundry. Many condominium and home owner associations in Connecticut and across the country have by-laws that forbid air-drying clothes. Some town ordinances prohibit outside clotheslines, poles and other devices for drying or hanging laundry. It’s estimated that the ban on clotheslines affects one out of six homeowners.

Many believe that everyone should have the “right to dry” and over the past few years there’s been a movement by that name unfolding. Connecticut lawmakers held hearings on a proposed bill back in 2008 that would have outlawed ordinances or other restrictions prohibiting drying clothes using direct solar energy through the use of clotheslines, drying racks, or other devices in any residential setting. The issue was revisited in 2009 but has yet to produce a final law.

Those in favor of the “right to dry” cite environmental, economic and health reasons for air drying. Clothes dryers are typically the second highest electricity-using appliance in your home after the refrigerator. In Connecticut, they can cost close to \$38 a month to operate. Using a clothesline or drying rack saves electricity and helps to reduce pollution, greenhouse gas emissions and climate change; sunlight naturally bleaches, disinfects, and provides a fresh scent to fabric, so you can avoid using chemical products. And, line drying helps clothes last longer since it is gentler on the fibers (the lint that collects in the dryer comes from your clothing and linens and signals that they are wearing out).

However, not everyone agrees. Some say line drying is unsightly and aesthetically displeasing and that communities and homeowner associations should have local control over land use decisions. Many condo developments have limited common space for lines and since neighbors live in close proximity to each other, hanging clothes on balconies would be unacceptable. Some have argued that people could be injured if they walked into a clothesline when it was dark outside.

Whether you prefer to toss your clothes in the dryer or pin them on the line, this issue is getting national attention. Even the popular TV show, *The Colbert Report*, recently provided some comic relief on the “enemy in the backyard.” Project Laundry List (www.laundrylist.org) is a grassroots organization that provides education on this issue, maintains a registry of places that ban clothesline use and works with communities to change local policies. They also have a variety of air drying devices ranging from retractable lines, drying racks and wire racks that can be installed indoors or out. So, you decide — clothing with the fresh clean scent of a summer day? Or the fragrance of dryer sheets? Air it out, or spend money using the dryer?



This “umbrella” clothesline folds up and can be put away when you are finished drying.

Loomis Chaffee, A Class Act

Do you worry about who will step up to be the next generation of environmental stewards? You can take heart that there are young people who care deeply about the earth and are working to ensure that our world will be clean and green. And some of them are right here in Connecticut.



Students from Jeff Dyreson's environmental science classes at the Loomis Chaffee School in Windsor made a trip to the Windsor-Bloomfield Landfill, Connecticut's only municipal solid waste landfill, on a cold Saturday this winter. It made such an impression on them that they worked with Jeff; Enita Jubrey, assistant to the Town Manager; and Mark Goossen, landfill manager to learn about recycling practices and to raise awareness about waste reduction and recycling at their school and in Windsor.

The students created a survey to gauge what residents and the Loomis Chaffee community knew about Windsor's recycling program. Over 500 people responded to an on-line survey which was accessed from the Town's website. When they analyzed the responses, the students found that people recycled glass, plastic and cans more than paper and residents were not aware that they could recycle items like aerosol cans and aluminum pans.

The students' next step was to use the survey information to create two public service announcements (PSAs) entitled "Neighbors Helping Neighbors" and "Windsor Recycles" starring fellow students and Windsor residents like Mayor Donald Trinkins and Dr. Sheila Culbert, head of the school. The PSAs are practical, fun and informative; they show the viewer what can and can't be recycled in Windsor, how to get a bin, and why recycling is important.

The students' hard work was highlighted at a red carpet affair called "Lights, Camera, Recycle" at Loomis Chaffee in February. At the event, the students shared their results with other students from the school, faculty and town officials. The quality of their work, their depth of knowledge about recycling and presentation belied their young age.

The survey and the PSAs are important to Windsor for a couple of reasons: first, most town recycling programs don't have the staff or the money to conduct a survey or produce videos. Secondly, like many town recycling programs, Windsor has added materials over the years, but some residents were not aware of the changes. The survey results pointed out that residents aren't recycling all the paper they can and they don't know new items

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have been added to the program, like aluminum pans. That tells the town where they need to focus their educational efforts.

In the past, towns used mass mailings to educate residents about recycling. But mailings are expensive and use paper and probably get thrown away before they're even opened. Using the videos to promote recycling can have more impact because they can be viewed in a way most people get their information now — on the internet. These videos have been shown on Windsor community TV and have had more than 1,000 hits on the town's website. Enita Jubrey also pointed out that the students' videos get your attention because they convey basic information about recycling and waste reduction in a fun and engaging way, from a teenager's unique style and point of view.

Both Loomis Chaffee and the Town of Windsor are pleased with the results and plan to continue the project during next school year. For more information contact Enita Jubrey, Jubrey@townofwindsorct.com or 860-285-1835 or Jeff Dyreson, jeff_dyreson@loomis.org or 860-687-6329. The videos can be accessed from the Town of Windsor's website: www.townofwindsorct.com/documents/frontpage/recycling_psa.php

Spring into Cleaning Out

It's spring and for many of us, that means cleaning up and clearing out all those things taking up valuable space in our homes. But wait! Don't reach for a trash bag! There are ways to get rid of that mess in an environmentally responsible way, especially when it comes to electronics and toxic house and yard products.



Do you have old computer equipment and other electronics hogging space in the basement or garage? You may first want to check with your town's recycling coordinator to see if your town sponsors its own collection. If not, you have many more options:

- The CT Resources Recovery Authority, www.crra.org/pages/schedule_electronics.htm has electronic collections scheduled for member towns spring through the fall. Besides those old computers, bring along your stacks of paper (canceled checks, bills, records) for free and safe paper shredding, too!
- Another option that is convenient, supports job training programs for disabled people and gets you a tax benefit is to donate your old electronics and entertainment products like Xboxes, to Goodwill through their Reconnect program, www.reconnectpartnership.com. Not all Goodwill stores accept electronics, so check their website for locations and donation guidelines. You might also consider other charities such as the Salvation Army (www.satruck.org) or the Cristina Foundation (www.cristina.org).
- Stores like Staples and Best Buy will also take back a variety of electronic equipment for a nominal fee; www.staples.com/sbd/content/about/soul/recycling.html and www.bestbuy.com/recycling.
- The U.S. EPA also has a list of other manufacturer and retailer programs for recycling electronics on their website, www.epa.gov/wastes/conservation/materials/recycling/donate.htm#mfr.

Okay, so now you can actually move around in the basement! But what's on that workbench — oil-based paints, a mercury thermostat, rechargeable batteries, insecticides...yikes! Almost every Connecticut municipality has access to special collections for these and other items around the house that are considered household hazardous waste, such as nail polish remover, compact fluorescent bulbs (CFLs), oven cleaner and ammonia. Check DEP's website for a date and location in your area — www.ct.gov/dep/recycle (go to the **Household Hazardous Waste** link).

Check out DEP's webpage "What do I do with?" for ideas on how to find new homes for those hard to dispose of items, www.ct.gov/dep/whatdoidowith. Now, if only washing the windows was that easy!

Green Lodging Update

What's
NEW
in P2?

The Connecticut Green Lodging program is almost one year old! Now there are 14 lodging businesses, from large hotel chains to small bed and breakfasts that have earned the certification since the program began last summer. This represents more than 1,700 lodging rooms in Connecticut!

DEP's Office of Pollution Prevention has recently helped organize three training sessions on how to green your hotel. An advanced training session is being scheduled for October 2010. For more information, visit www.ct.gov/dep/greenlodging or e-mail Kim Trella at kim.trella@ct.gov.



Biofuels News

The University of Connecticut Center for Environmental Sciences and Engineering (CESE) just opened a new Biofuels Testing Laboratory. Fuel quality is an important factor in the biofuel industry. The lab can test and certify biofuel for commercial use in Connecticut and the Northeast, using ASTM protocols, at a fraction of the price of private labs. In the past, only private labs, many of which are out-of-state, could provide this data. UCONN's efforts help put Connecticut in a good position when it comes to biofuels. More at: www.cese.uconn.edu/biofuels_index.html.

UCONN also held its annual Biofuels Symposium at CESE in April, bringing together people from throughout the industry. The National Biodiesel Board presented on federal requirements to reduce greenhouse gas emission through the use of the Renewable Fuel Standard (RFS), and the Connecticut Clean Cities program provided details about a \$13 million grant from U.S. Recovery Act funds to develop new sites in the state for five alternative fuels. Over the next four years, facilities will be developed in Bridgeport, Bloomfield, Fairfield, Glastonbury, Hartford, Meriden, Norwich, Windsor Locks and West Haven. The fuels include liquid and compressed natural gas, hydrogen, electric charging stations and B20 (a 20% biodiesel blend). For details go to www.ct-futurefuels.com/.

Ask Eartha

I have two cats and a dog. I'm concerned about the environmental and health effects of flea and tick products, especially the "spot-on" products. Are there any alternatives to these potentially toxic products? Help!

Anita E., Southington, CT



Fleas and ticks not only make your pet uncomfortable, but they carry diseases that can impact your pets and humans, so it's important to deal with them. However, flea and tick products are not medications; they are powerful pesticides that contain ingredients like permethrin, which also is used to control pests on agricultural crops and in the yard. These chemicals can pollute our water and harm aquatic life.

(Note: Permethrin is especially toxic to cats.)

Other chemicals in flea and tick products are known carcinogens or can affect the brain and nervous system. You should be especially careful with these products if you have young children in your home. If they pet or cuddle with an animal treated with these products, they will also be ingesting some of the products when they put their hands in their mouth.

Recently the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced that it will require new instructions and labeling for spot-on products.

(Spot-on products are liquid pesticide products sold in vials and are applied monthly to the animal's back for the purpose of killing ticks and fleas.) EPA began investigating these products after a rise in the number of reported incidents to animals rose by 53% from 2007 to 2008. Most incidents were minor, but some reported major side effects or pet deaths. The most common side effects were dermal, gastrointestinal and neurological problems. Dogs weighing between 10 and 20 pounds are most susceptible to the problems. For more information on the study, go to www.epa.gov/pesticides/health/petproductseval.html.

EPA also found that part of the problem with spot-on products is that consumers were not using them properly: not reading the labels; using the products for the wrong species (e.g., dog products for cats) and using the product incorrectly for the size of the animal. So, if you are going to use spot-on products, or any other kind of flea or tick product, please read the labels carefully and follow directions. For more tips on how to use these products safely, go to www.epa.gov/pesticides/factsheets/flea-tick.htm#safety. You can also consult the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) Green Paws Flea and Tick Products Directory for the toxicity rating for



For more tips on how to green your pet care, visit www.ct.gov/dep/p2 (go to the link for Individual and Families).

many flea and tick products — www.simplesteps.org/greenpaws-products.

Don't want to deal with the pesticides? You could try a natural approach. This can include bathing your dog more often in a non-toxic soap, combing and brushing more frequently, washing pet bedding (or your bedding if the animals sleep on your bed) and vacuuming daily. You can also keep the population of fleas down in your yard by using nematodes, available at garden supply stores (www.simplesteps.org/health/pets/how-control-fleas-without-chemicals).

Check with your vet before you try any alternative treatment such as using essential oils or supplements. Pets can have allergic reactions to essential oils and they are especially toxic to cats. Garlic and brewer's yeast have also been used to control fleas, but raw garlic can be toxic to cats.



Eartha answers selected environmental questions. Email your question to judith.prill@ct.gov and watch future issues for your answer.

P 2 C A L E N D A R

A SELECTION OF ENVIRONMENTAL EVENTS

Spring – Fall 2010

Connecticut Farmers' Markets

Various locations throughout the state

Did you know that Connecticut has over 100 Farmers' Markets? Support local farmers, eat fresh food and prevent pollution. For locations and schedules, visit www.ct.gov/doag (type **Farmers Markets** in search box).



June 12, 2010

Reduce, Reuse and Recycle

Smart Living Center, Orange

Free event with entertainment by "Bash The Trash" featuring instruments built from recycled and reused materials and exhibits on energy efficiency. There will be games, prizes, giveaways and refreshments for all. Bring a bag of clean plastic and aluminum waste and create a recycle bin to take home. Call 203-799-0460 for more information and to reserve your child's spot for one of the "Where Does Garbage Go?" workshops.

June 15, 2010

What is the Sound For?

Kellogg Environmental Center, Derby

Tom Andersen answers the question "What would Connecticut be like without the Sound?" Tom has won numerous awards for covering environmental issues in a number of newspapers including the *NY Times*. His book, *This Fine Piece of Water: An Environmental History of Long Island Sound*, was published by Yale and has received great reviews. For more information, visit www.ct.gov/dep (go to *DEP Calendar of Events*) or call 203-734-2513.

June 16, 2010

CBIA's Sustainability Conference

The Hartford Club, Hartford

Connecticut Business & Industry Association's conference will showcase what some of the leading companies are doing to lower costs, eliminate waste and increase value — including green initiatives within their workforce, supply chains and operations. To register, visit www.cbia.com/gov/sustainability.htm.

August 7, 2010

CT NOFA City Farm and Garden Tour

Various locations in New Haven

Explore many of New Haven's private, community and school gardens, with a particular emphasis on vegetable gardens, edibles in the landscape, city poultry, and other aspects of agriculture found in the city. To register, visit www.ctnofa.org or call 203-888-5146.

Get Outdoors! Visit www.ct.gov/dep/nochildleftinside to find fun events.



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Amey Marrella, Commissioner

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