



**Helping
Residents
Fight Pollution
In Our
Communities**



Toxics Action Center 2004 Annual Report



"I can't speak highly enough of Toxic Action Center and the support it has given us, beginning as a fledgling organization and continuing as we developed staff positions and considerable expertise at what we do."

Margaret Connors, Ph.D., member, Neighborhood Pesticide Action Committee, a Boston community group working to end pesticide use in the city's parks.

In 2004, Toxics Action Center provided assistance to more than 70 neighborhood groups across New England. Our work was made possible from contributions by more than 2,000 individuals. The following donors contributed more than \$100.

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August 1, 2005

To Our Supporters:

After 16 years as the Director of Toxics Action Center, I have decided to move on to my next professional challenge. At my current job with the newly formed organization Grassroots Campaigns, I'll be working to elect people who will be better stewards of the environment and public health.

When I started as Toxics Action Center's Director in 1989, we had one staff (me) who was working with a handful of communities in Massachusetts to ensure the timely cleanup of toxic waste sites. Now we have nine staff working in every state in New England with more than 60 communities on a wide array of local concerns such as pesticide use, landfills, incinerators, power plants, recycling, and toxic sludge.

While the situations under which I met many of the local leaders were often stark (contaminated water supplies, sick children, etc.) the professional and personal relationships I developed made my tenure at Toxics Action Center full of hope and progress.

I've seen Judy Fittery of Tewksbury ensure that the hazardous waste that leaked below her house and gave her cancer was cleaned up. I've seen community groups across Connecticut take on one of the largest industries in the state and force the six dirtiest power plants to clean up their act. These are just a few of the hundreds of examples I could point to where ordinary citizens achieved extraordinary success in protecting the environment and our health.

New England has a long legacy of pollution. Fortunately, we have an even longer legacy of democracy and citizen participation.

As I step down from being Director of Toxics Action Center and join the board, I leave with the confidence that our experienced staff, led by Alyssa Schuren, Will Beritt, Jay Rasku, and Lindsey Hodel, are more than capable of continuing the growth of our program and our organization.

Thank you to all of our supporters who provide us with the resources to help neighborhoods across New England. Keep it up! The communities across New England continue to need our help.

Sincerely,



Matthew L. Wilson

Former Director and Current Board Member, Toxics Action Center



Toxics Action Center Expands Across New England

Last year Toxics Action Center opened a new office in Concord, New Hampshire. We also, for the first time, dedicated ourselves to helping residents in Rhode Island clean up and prevent pollution.

The new office in New Hampshire and our work in the Ocean State mean that Toxics Action Center is now working with communities in all six New England states, from Greenwich, Connecticut to Houlton, Maine.

"Toxics Action Center's new office in New Hampshire is beneficial not only to us, but for others working on the various toxic and pollution issues threatening our state," said Jackie Elliot, co-founder of *Citizen's Leading for Environmental Action and Responsibility (CLEAR)*, a group in Claremont working to shut down a polluting incinerator threatening the community.

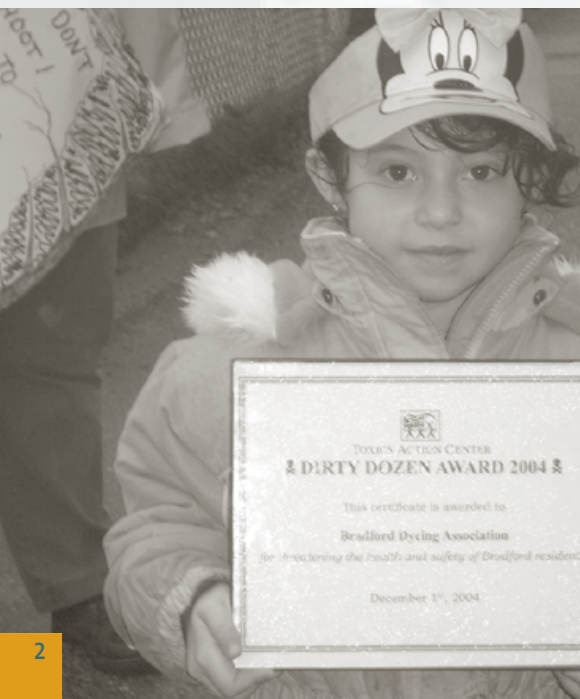
Toxics Action Center is working to clean up New Hampshire's air by forging community groups into a strong coalition working locally and statewide to fight incineration.

In Rhode Island, we are working in Tiverton to clean up a dangerous hazardous waste site and in Alton and Bradford to stop two dyeing facilities from polluting the communities.

"Toxics Action Center was founded on the belief that everyone has the right to clean air and safe drinking water," said Alyssa Schuren, Director. "It's an honor to work with neighborhood groups across New England that share this belief."

"Through workshops on Campaign Planning, Message and Materials, Fundraising, Building Your Group, Media Events, Public Hearings, and Community Votes, Toxics Action Center not only gives the communities that they work with a fish, but also teaches them to fish."

June Chiaia-Logie, member of ConnFESS and Easton Healthy School Network, two groups working to protect children from indoor air pollutants.



Victories Against Waste

East Bridgewater, MA & Rockingham, VT: Last year, residents groups in Massachusetts and Vermont won major victories against waste industry giants BFI, Inc. and Casella Waste Systems.

The East Bridgewater landfill was closed XX years ago. Since then, residential homes were built around the old dump. *Stop Any Further Expansion (SAFE)* prevented BFI from reopening and expanding the landfill by winning a town-wide vote on the issue. Meanwhile, *Friends and Neighbors of Missing Link Road* in Rockingham blocked Casella from building a landfill in their town next to the Connecticut River.

"BFI told us the landfill was closed and we were going to keep them to their word," said Ginger Hunter, a founder of *SAFE*.

"What a good little grassroots group we were," said Rockingham resident Margaret Perry, after hearing about Casella's decision to scrap its plans in her town. "The landfill did not belong next to the river."

Toxics Action Center helped network the groups with other communities that have successfully stopped dangerous landfill projects and helped develop strategic plans to win their campaigns.

"The success of these community groups isn't only good for their towns, it's key to helping New England solve its solid waste problem," said Jay Rasku, Toxics Action Center's Massachusetts Field Director. "The solution to waste lies in reducing, reusing and recycling, not in burying or burning our trash."



As this map shows, in 2004 Toxics Action Center worked with over 70 communities in New England to address environmental and public health problems. Below are brief descriptions of some of these campaigns.

HAZARDOUS WASTE

While New England is still trying to dig itself out from a century of illegal and haphazard dumping of toxic materials into our ground and water, residents across the region are holding polluters accountable to the laws and making our communities a safer place to live.

1 Scituate, MA: We worked with *Concerned Parents of Wampatuck* to make a dangerous hazardous waste site near an elementary school be cleaned up comprehensively with safeguards in place to protect children and the neighborhood.

TOXIC PESTICIDES

Pesticides are toxic by design and are being increasingly linked to learning disabilities, miscarriages, and cancer. The use of toxic pesticides has come under increased scrutiny by residents across New England.

2 Ashfield, MA: We worked with *Hilltown Anti-Herbicide Coalition* to (once again!) stop MassHighway from spraying toxic herbicides along state roadways.

3 Cherryfield, ME: We worked with *Concerned Residents Opposed to Pesticide Saturation* to convince Cherryfield Foods, Inc. to abandon aerial spraying. See page 6 for more details.

4 Essex, CT: We worked with local residents to convince the town to stop using pesticides in favor of effective non-toxic alternatives.

WASTE/RECYCLING/LANDFILLS

Our nation continues to be the #1 throwaway society in the world, continually finding new ways to create disposable gadgets and unnecessary packaging. Toxics Action Center (and Recycling Action, our waste reduction project in Massachusetts) is dedicated to working with residents across the region to stop dangerous landfill and incinerator projects, reduce waste and increase recycling.

5 Brockton, MA: We worked with *Citizens Against the Smell* to address odor problems at a local landfill and to ensure the neighborhood had safe drinking water.

6 Avon, MA: We worked with *Residents Against the Trash Transfer Station* to defeat a 1,000 ton/day trash transfer station proposal that would have threatened the town's drinking water supply.

7 East Bridgewater, MA: We worked with *Stop Any Further Expansion (SAFE)* to turn out a record number of residents to the polls to resoundingly defeat Browning Ferris Industries' plan to re-open and dramatically expand the town's closed landfill. See page 3 for more details.

8 Littleton, ME: We provided information and guidance to local residents to successfully initiate a moratorium on toxic sludge spreading in the town.

9 Rockingham, VT: We worked with *Friends and Neighbors of Missing Link Road* to successfully pressure Casella Waste Systems to withdraw its application to build a landfill on the bank of the Connecticut River, very close to drinking water wells. See page 3 for more details.

DANGEROUS FACILITIES

Many communities face dangerous industrial and chemical facilities that threaten their health and quality of life. Toxics Action Center works with residents across the region to ensure their neighborhoods are safe from these dangerous facilities.

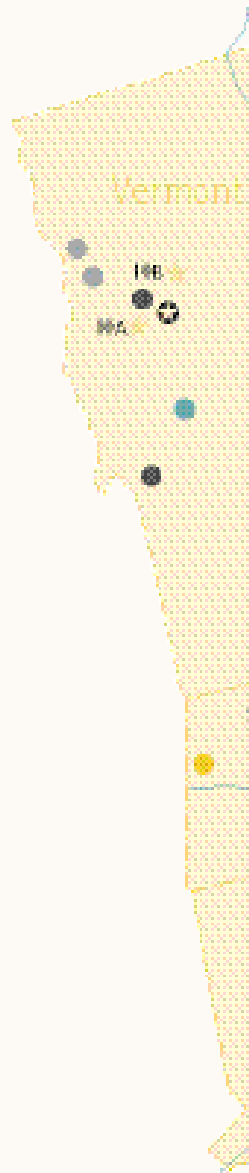
10A & 10B Barre Town & Williamstown, VT: We worked with *Residents Opposed to Quarries in Neighborhoods (ROQIN)* to stop Pike Industry from drilling a 90-acre quarry in a residential neighborhood.

11 Alton, RI: We worked with *Alton Community Action* to convince the state to order Charbert Mill, a sprawling fabric dyeing facility, to clean up all hazardous waste on site and to stop emitting dangerous fumes into the neighborhood.

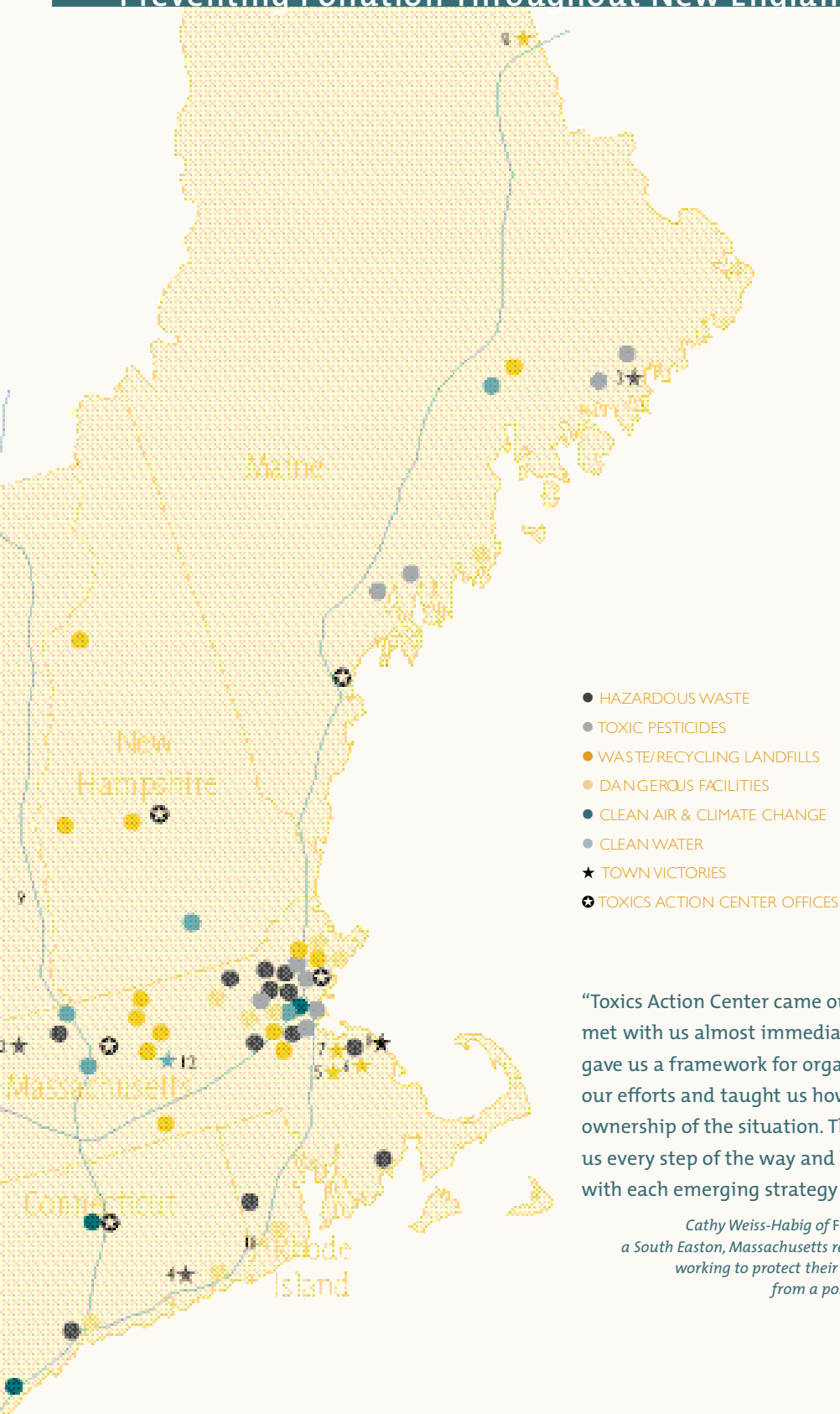
CLEAN WATER

Everyone deserves clean water as a basic human right. Toxics Action Center is working with residents across New England to reduce the pollution in our rivers and streams and to ensure that communities have safe water to drink.

12 Rutland, MA: We helped local residents ensure that Northern Estates, a large developer, provided the community with clean drinking water.



Preventing Pollution Throughout New England



“Toxics Action Center came out and met with us almost immediately. They gave us a framework for organizing our efforts and taught us how to take ownership of the situation. They guided us every step of the way and helped with each emerging strategy change.”

Cathy Weiss-Habig of Foundry Watch, a South Easton, Massachusetts residents group working to protect their neighborhood from a polluting facility.

Precedent Setting Wins Against Pesticides

Downeast, Maine: Toxics Action Center, local residents, and a coalition of other environmental groups won a precedent-setting victory when two of Maine's largest blueberry growers agreed they would give up aerially spraying toxic pesticides.

When most people think of Downeast, Maine, they think of Acadia National Park and the beautiful rocky coast. Unfortunately the beauty of the area hides the fact that a handful of large agri-corporations use helicopters and airplanes to spray pesticides on blueberries which threatens the public health of the region.

"For years we've been complaining about how aerial pesticides have gotten into our waterways and our drinking water. Spray has even hit our homes," said Joan McMurray, a local resident and member of *Concerned Residents Opposed to Pesticide Saturation (CROPS)*, a community group working to reduce pesticide exposure.

Toxics Action Center, National Environmental Law Center, the Sierra Club, Beyond Pesticides and CROPS members like Joan used the lawsuit provisions in the Clean Water Act as leverage in convincing Cherry field Foods and Jasper Wyman and Sons to abandon the dangerous practice.

"This is a tremendous victory," said Will Everitt, Toxics Action Center's Associate Director. "These companies are changing the way blueberries are grown and reducing our exposure to toxic pesticides."



Toxics Action Center Joins Health Study Collaborative

Over the past two years Toxics Action Center has been working closely with the Boston University School of Health to develop a handbook and guide to assist residents in developing health studies in their communities.

Since the release of the popular movies *A Civil Action* and *Erin Brockovich*, residents are becoming more aware of disease clusters and are looking for causes of these high incidences of disease. More and more communities are starting to raise questions about the health of their neighborhoods and the link to environmental pollution.

Why are we sick? Are the pollution sources in our communities impacting the health of our families? Will we get sick? Will the proposal to build an industrial facility in our community impact our health? Are we worse off than other communities? Is our community more burdened than others because of local pollution sources?

Health studies are a major tool of epidemiologists to answer these questions.

The Boston University School of Public Health's Community Environmental Health Research-Finding Meaning Project is developing a handbook and guide by bringing together academics, environmental professionals and residents concerned about health studies to analyze the current process of how health studies are conducted.

The handbook will give residents the background of health studies, what they can do and what they cannot do. The guide provides residents with a workbook to ensure that if they want to undertake a health study in their community, that it is set up and implemented to answer the questions that are important to them.

It is our hope that these tools will go a long way to help residents discover the truth about toxic chemicals in their communities.

"Toxics Action Center has helped us with every aspect of this situation, and they are a true life saver in my mind."

Ann Birmingham, founder, Griffin Park Citizens Against Toxic Streams, a Bangor, Maine community group working to investigate environmental illnesses in their neighborhoods.



Toxics Action Center Financial Statements

For The Year Ending June 30, 2004

BALANCE SHEET

Current Assets

Cash, Receivables & Prepaid Expenses	\$ 269,831
Office Equipment	\$ 3,680
Total Assets	\$ 273,511

Liabilities & Net Assets

Current Liabilities	\$ 27,279
Net Assets	\$ 246,232
Total Liabilities & Net Assets	\$ 273,511

INCOME STATEMENT

Support & Revenue

Grants	\$ 195,971
Conference Income	\$ 46,167
Interest Income	\$ 1,796
Membership Contributions	\$ 89,867
Total Support & Revenue	\$ 333,801

Expenses

Program Services ¹	\$ 300,520
Operating ²	\$ 21,138
Fundraising Expenses	\$ 59,283
Total Expenses	\$ 380,941

These figures represent combined financial information from Toxics Action Center, Inc., a 501(C)(3) organization and Toxics Action Center Campaigns, a 501(C)(4) organization.

¹Program services include the funds used to help residents clean up and prevent pollution in more than 70 communities throughout the six New England states.

²Operating expenses include rent and overhead costs incurred in support of our neighborhood assistance work.

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“The presence of Toxics Action Center’s knowledgeable staff at many of our meetings during the past ten months has been key to the success of our organization to date.”

Robert McMullin, member, Mad River Neighborhood Association, a community group in Moretown, Vermont that successfully stopped a dangerous mining project in their community.

www.toxicsaction.org
info@toxicsaction.org



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44 Winter Street
Boston, MA 02108

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T 603-229-1331

Maine

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Suite 301
Portland, ME 04101
T 207-871-1810
F 207-253-1966

Vermont

148 Main Street
Suite 6
Montpelier, VT 05602
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F 802-223-6855

Massachusetts

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F 617-292-8057

233 N. Pleasant Street

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