



TOXICS ACTION CENTER

2013 Annual Report



**ORGANIZING WITH RESIDENTS
TO CLEAN UP AND PREVENT POLLUTION
IN NEW ENGLAND SINCE 1987**



To Our Members



Sylvia Broude
Executive Director

“I truly believe that the inspiration, knowledge, and skills that Toxics Action Center offers are critical for a successful community campaign.”

— Karen Vale,
Cape Cod Bay Watch

Dear Friends,

2013 was jam-packed with victories. In this report you will read about decades-long struggles finally reaching closure: from the announcement that the dangerous Vermont Yankee nuclear power plant was finally retiring, to news that Brayton Point, the largest coal-fired power plant in New England, plans to close by 2017.

The owners of these facilities cited economic forces as their motivation for retiring. And make no mistake—economics played a big role in these decisions. But it’s no coincidence that these victories were preceded by years of sustained citizen pressure and a steady drumbeat of actions by local activists with support from our community organizers. Together, we gave these companies something else to consider: that there were thousands of dedicated people across New England who were willing to work tirelessly to prevent health threats to their communities. And they’re working to realize their vision for a cleaner world—a world with a solar panel on every roof, responsibly sited wind power, and vibrant community recycling efforts that ensure that nothing of value is wasted.

I’m especially proud of Toxics Action Center’s work to make New England the first coal-free region in the country. Over the past year, we expanded our efforts to include all three New England states where coal plants remain. We’re continuing our long-term work in Somerset, Mass., the site of the Brayton Point plant, assisting the community through their transition to clean energy and healthier economic development. We are supporting the efforts of social justice leaders in Holyoke, Mass., and Bridgeport, Conn. And this year we built strong new citizen groups in Bow and Portsmouth, N.H., where pollution from two coal-burning power plants has comprised more than 80 percent of toxic emissions statewide in recent years.

In all five of these communities, we’re not only working to transition away from dirty coal, but we are also joining residents together around a positive vision for a healthier, coal-free economy. Our organizers are at the center of community visioning efforts focused on transforming old industrial economies, cleaning up polluted coal sites, and bringing in healthier, 21st century businesses.

Our work would not be possible without the generosity of thousands who support Toxics Action Center financially every year—I am grateful for you.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sylvia Broude', with a stylized, flowing script. Below the signature is the printed name 'Sylvia Broude'.

Sylvia Broude

Securing Full Cleanups For Communities

Hazardous waste sites threaten the health of communities and the safety of water supplies across New England. More than 10,000 toxic sites still dot our New England landscape. And too often polluters refuse to take responsibility for their contamination, and government agencies can be slow to protect public health. That's when Toxics Action Center joins with neighborhood groups to urge action.

Neighbors Join To Stop Bad "Cleanup" Plan

Faced with a proposed "cleanup" for an old, unlined dump that would put 2 million tons of toxic soil on top of the likely hazardous waste already there, residents of Dartmouth, Mass., founded SouthCoast Alliance for a Cleaner Tomorrow. The group is calling for a cleanup plan that will protect the community from toxic chemicals seeping through nearby soil. Our staff worked with residents to convince town officials to oppose the plan, and helped secure the group an hour-long meeting with the head of the state's environmental agency.

Preventing New Toxic Dumps

Members of Protect Upton have been working to stop their town from becoming a new toxic waste site. The Grafton &

"While our fight is far from over, it's hard to believe how much we have accomplished in the short time since working with Toxics Action Center. I can't imagine where we would be today without their support, for which we will remain forever grateful!"

— Gloria Bancroft
*SouthCoast Alliance for a
Cleaner Tomorrow*

Upton Railroad transports and stores chemical waste, and it is sited only a half-mile from two schools and abutting wetlands, and less than 400 yards from the town's water supply wells. Residents have been working with Toxics Action's support to insist that the railroad apply for local permits before storing so much waste in such a vulnerable area.

Local Leader Spotlight: Ann Bettinger Advocates For The Safety Of Her Community

Ann Bettinger is a community leader with Alton Community Action in Rhode Island. The group formed in 2003 to force the cleanup of Charbert, a textile mill with football field-sized, open-air, unlined lagoons filled with chemicals from dying fabric. The lagoons polluted groundwater and wafted noxious odors that permeated the community. Twenty drinking water wells in the neighborhood showed high levels of the toxic chemicals MTBE and TCE, dye chemicals, and bacteria. Toxics Action Center has been working with Alton Community Action to clean up these unsafe, unlined lagoons and get a long-term source of clean drinking water for residents.

Unfortunately, with our environmental agencies under-funded, and corporations refusing responsibility for their messes, the worst polluted sites in New England take a long time to clean up. But we are honored to have Ann as a long-time friend and leader in this work.



Though complete toxic waste cleanups can take years, Ann and others in Alton have been unrelenting in their work for a complete cleanup of their community.

Clearing The Way For Clean Energy

Throughout the region, communities have long been engaged in fighting dirty energy projects that threaten our health. We've made progress on many fronts in recent years, securing retirement for three New England coal plants and preventing new incinerators. Last year, our staff worked with fenceline community groups in every New England coal plant host community, with a vision of making New England the first region to go coal-free in the country. We know that in order to clear the way for clean, renewable energy, we need to decrease reliance on dirty fossil fuels and dangerous nuclear power.

Vermont Yankee Announces Retirement

In 2013, years of dedication from local activists like Deb Katz of the Citizens Awareness Network finally bore fruit. The day Entergy announced plans to retire Vermont Yankee nuclear power plant was one of celebration for those working for a safe and reliable energy future for Vermont.

The fight against the goliath Vermont Yankee was a great example of partnerships across the environmental community. Safe Power Vermont, a coalition facilitated for years by Toxics Action Center staff, worked to hold Yankee accountable for its atrocious safety record, which included a collapsed cooling tower and radioactive tritium leaks into groundwater. Our staff re-activated citizens with whom we had worked in years past on backyard pollution issues to be part of the statewide movement calling for Yankee's retirement. Our work with the coalition continues, as the plant's decommissioning begins.

"None of us have ever tried to retire a coal plant owned by a multi-national corporation before, but Toxics Action Center helped us plan a winning campaign to get us closer to that reality."

— Lena Entin,
Holyoke Neighbor to Neighbor

Together, we want to ensure that the radioactive waste is handled carefully for the safety of future generations.

Stopping New Fossil Fuel Pipelines

From the nationally recognized Keystone XL pipeline, to the ExxonMobil and Vermont Gas Systems pipelines here in New England, this past year saw a slew of pipeline projects that would lock us into a long future of dirty energy.

Toxics Action Center partnered with Protect South Portland to build support at the local level to stop plans to pipe Canadian tar sands oil through Maine and New England, and with Vermont Citizens for the Public Good to prevent a new pipeline that would bring fracked gas in from Canada. Our work together will ensure that political leaders are held accountable for their energy policies.



Our staff and partners celebrate Vermont Yankee Nuclear Plant's retirement announcement at the Vermont Environmental Summit.

Local Leader Spotlight: Neighbors Take On Coal



◀ Elaine Thompson-Ward, Bridgeport Station

Elaine is a grandmother born and raised in Bridgeport, Conn. Her city is designated by the federal government an “Environmental Justice Showcase Community” for its excessive amounts of pollution. With support from Toxics Action Center, Elaine organized a trip to the New Jersey headquarters of Bridgeport’s coal plant where she delivered 1,000 petitions and led a press conference right outside its corporate office. Right now, the community group Elaine helped form, the Healthy CT Alliance, is learning through Toxics Action Center about planning ahead for site redevelopment.

Jim Splaine, Schiller Station ▶

Jim has terrible asthma, and for years has been able to tell when the coal-burning power plant in Portsmouth, N.H. is running because it’s harder to breathe on those days. Jim first served on the City Council when he was 22 old, was in the New Hampshire Legislature for three decades, and was recently elected as Portsmouth’s deputy mayor. This year, Jim helped found Citizens for Clean & Fair Power to work to finally retire his city’s coal plant. He helped build a coalition of 101 businesses in New Hampshire that supported the retirement of the state’s two coal-fired power plants.



◀ Carlos Rodriguez, Mt. Tom Coal Plant

Carlos has been an active leader in Holyoke, Mass., for years as a member of Neighbor to Neighbor Massachusetts. Recently, he became involved with iAction for a Healthy Holyoke! when he learned about the coal plant near his home. Carlos’ wife suffers from asthma, which also affects one in four children in Holyoke. This year, Carlos participated in a weekend leadership training led by Toxics Action Center staff. He later traveled to Boston with his neighbors to testify before the Legislature about the need for a smooth transition beyond coal in Massachusetts communities that host these polluting plants.



Renee Driscoll, Brayton Point ▶

Renee works as a health teacher at two Somerset, Mass., elementary schools. She first got involved as a leader for the Coalition for Clean Air South Coast after meeting Toxics Action Center’s Executive Director Sylvia Broude at a public forum in Somerset. Throughout 2013, Renee worked with Sylvia and members of the local group to survey Somerset residents about the future of the Brayton Point coal plant, the biggest fossil fuel power plant in New England. Results of the survey demonstrated support for retirement and made the case for a transition toward a cleaner, healthier economy. With our help, Renee has also played a leadership role in advocating for state resources to help her town shift away from coal.



2013 Campaigns: Cleaning Up And Preventing

8 Orono, Maine: Protecting our treasured places

Every summer, locals and visitors alike enjoy the Caribou Bog and the popular Orono Bog Boardwalk—a registered national landmark. Unfortunately, this beautiful area is now under threat as a nearby construction company applied to reopen a decades-old gravel quarry. Gravel mining threatens air and water quality, while creating serious noise pollution. Orono neighbors have banded together to launch a campaign to protect the Caribou Bog.

10 Scarborough, Maine: Leading the way for safe school grounds

Last year, Scarborough activists led the way in reducing pesticide use in Maine by passing a town policy that barred the use of toxic pesticides on town-owned land, including schools. Science shows us that, without a doubt, children are more vulnerable to the health effects associated with exposure to pesticides. This summer, the group prevented an attempted rollback of their organic pest management policy, upholding the pesticide ban.

15 Claremont, N.H.: Dedicated activism won incinerator closure

In the late 1990s, residents near the Wheelabrator trash incinerator banded together to make the call for its closure. The incinerator served as the dumping grounds for wealthier communities, burning 200 tons of waste per day, releasing chemicals into the valley's air and leaving behind concentrated toxic ash. A proposed expansion of the incinerator's ash landfill, which threatened Claremont's drinking water, prompted residents to form Citizens Leading for Environmental Action and Responsibility. After the group won a limit on the plant's air pollution, the incinerator was unable to renew trash-hauling contracts and announced that it would finally close this year.

25 North Springfield, Vt.: Defending our right to clean air

Knowing that clean energy doesn't come out of a smoke-stack, the North Springfield Action Group continued their work last year to stop the construction of a massive proposed wood-burning power plant that would significantly impact the region's air quality. Recently, the Vermont Public Service Board hearing officer recommended denying the power plant a key permit required for construction, demonstrating the impressive work done by this group.

35 Williston, Vt.: Cleaning up water pollution

Lead-Free Williston is bravely standing up to a shooting range that has polluted nearby farms' brooks and drinking well-water with lead for many years. We helped the group secure test results that show hazardous, ongoing water pollution caused by lead shot from the North Country Sportsman's Club. The owners are not only dragging their feet on the state-mandated cleanup, but are also breaking town and state laws in the process. Toxics Action Center staff continue to work with the community group toward a responsible cleanup that will protect all neighbors.

43 Framingham, Mass.: Stopping illegal polluters

Residents in Framingham knew something was wrong when an asphalt crushing facility opened right in the middle of their neighborhood, surrounded by homes. Crushing asphalt can lead to serious air pollution. Concerned Citizens for Continued Cleanup formed to force the illegally sited, asphalt crushing operation to close. This year the town finally issued a cease and desist order.

49 Mattapan, Mass.: Neighbors work for a complete cleanup

The Fairmont Indigo Planning Initiative, has worked to ensure equitable access to a commuter rail line that has been in existence for many years, yet has not been providing service to the neighborhood it passes through. Now, neighbors are concerned and organizing, with assistance from Toxics Action Center, to determine the environmental condition of a contaminated old brownfield site that is being developed. This effort is vital to the health and wellbeing of the neighborhood. It is in its early stages, yet holds promise for the sustainability and environmental equity of any development that may be considered in this area.

60 Springfield, Mass.: Local activism expanded to take on climate change

A handful of years ago, with help from Toxics Action Center, community leaders banded together to prevent a proposed wood waste incinerator in Springfield, and won. Through that experience the group came to be concerned about the impacts of global warming on communities, especially after heat waves, cold snaps, and a tornado came through their city. Now, Toxics Action Center is supporting the call by Arise for Social Justice for a climate action plan for the city.

Pollution Throughout New England

67 70 73 **Coventry, North Providence, and Westerly, R.I.:** **Coalition forms to take on asphalt pollution**

In North Providence, residents are trapped inside their homes during much of the summer due to severe odors and pollution from a nearby asphalt plant. Coventry families suffer from the fumes of two plants located within close proximity to homes and schools. But now, Rhode Island communities are banding together to fight back. Last year, Westerly residents passed a town ban on asphalt plants and together the towns are sharing strategies and tactics to keep asphalt plants from being sited near residential areas to protect public health.

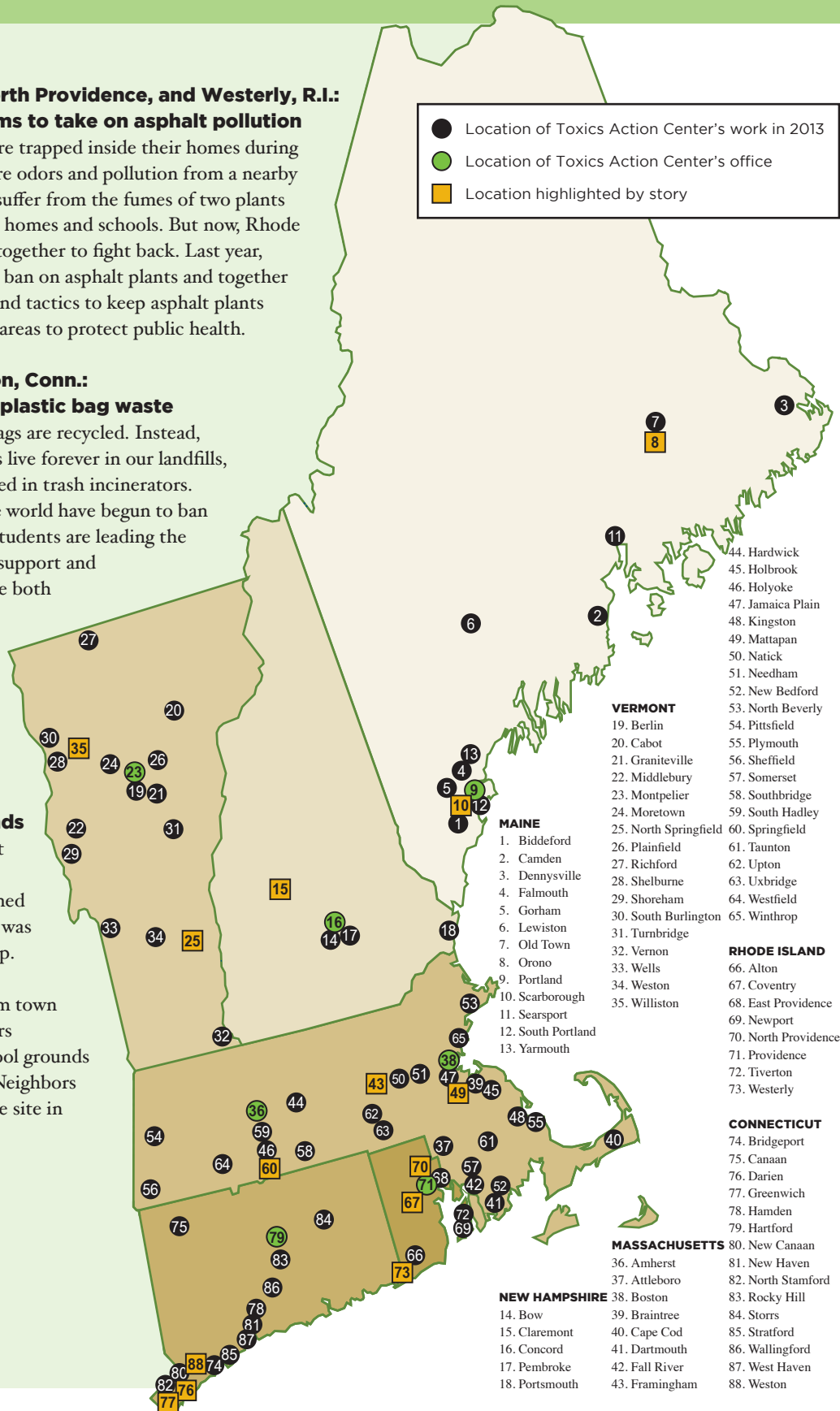
76 88 **Darien and Weston, Conn.:** **Students took on plastic bag waste**

Fewer than 1 percent of plastic bags are recycled. Instead, these single-use, throw-away bags live forever in our landfills, drift into our oceans, or are burned in trash incinerators. Recently, communities across the world have begun to ban the bag. In Darien and Weston, students are leading the way, building broad coalitions of support and speaking at town meetings. While both towns narrowly defeated ban the bag proposals last year, these community activists are working hard this year to come back in 2014 to win.

77 **Greenwich, Conn.:** **Neighbors watchful of contaminated school grounds**

Greenwich may be one of the last places you'd expect a toxic waste site, but local residents have learned that the Greenwich High School was built on top of a toxic waste dump. As early as 1974, the town found hazardous waste bubbling up from town wetlands, and recently, contractors discovered Greenwich High School grounds contaminated with toxic PCBs. Neighbors are calling for a full cleanup of the site in order to keep kids' health safe.

- Location of Toxics Action Center's work in 2013
- Location of Toxics Action Center's office
- Location highlighted by story



Ensuring Clean Water For Our Communities

Last year, groups across New England came together to reduce the use of toxic pesticides near our waterways. From organizing with community leaders in Cape Cod, to successfully working to reduce aerial spraying near Vermont lakes and neighborhoods, the movement to protect water resources from harmful pesticide spraying was alive and well.

Efforts Continued To Protect The Cape's Drinking Water

All the Cape's drinking water comes from a sole-source aquifer left particularly vulnerable to contamination because of sandy soil and high water tables. For the past several years, the electric utility NSTAR has proposed to forgo mowing under their power lines and in its place spray a mixture of toxic herbicides, some of which have been linked to cancer, across 150 miles of land on the Cape. While our grassroots effort with GreenCAPE halted spraying for three years, last year NSTAR began a limited spray. In 2014, we will continue work with the community to convince NSTAR to stop risking the Cape's water.

"Toxics Action Center is a remarkable organization to work with because they demonstrate that citizens working on grassroots issues is the essence of democracy."

— Susan Abbott,
Needham League of Women Voters

Groups Advocated For Better Alternatives To Protect Vermont's Lakes

Over a year ago the citizens' group, Chemical Free Lakes, contacted Toxics Action Center to help end town use of toxic herbicides in Lake St. Catherine. They worked throughout the summer to promote alternative methods, and continue their fight with the town Selectboard for safer local policies. On the northern end of Lake St. Catherine, a new group is now working to challenge state plans for aerial mosquito spraying.

Local Leader Spotlight: Sue Phelan Takes On Goliath Energy Utility

Sue helped form GreenCAPE to protect the Cape's aquifer. One of their first major victories was winning an effective phase out of chemically-treated wood on playgrounds across the Cape. With help from Toxics Action Center and many other groups, GreenCAPE was also instrumental in passing the Children and Families Protection Act, reducing pesticide use on school grounds across the Commonwealth. To encourage homeowners, landscapers and towns to go pesticide-free, they have held organic lawn-care programs for the past 15 years. Now, for the past five years, Toxics Action Center's Sylvia Broude and Claire Miller have been working with GreenCAPE to prevent NSTAR from spraying toxic pesticides across 150 miles of power lines on the Cape.

Sue and other leaders of GreenCAPE are tireless citizen watchdogs for the Cape's environment and their recent work to protect Cape Cod's only source of drinking water from toxic pesticide spraying is only one example of a long history of activism that has won real results for the environment and human health.



Sue Phelan has led GreenCAPE for the past five years in their effort to stop herbicide sprays under power lines.

Moving Toward Zero Waste

According to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), all landfills eventually leak toxics, and numerous studies have shown that children living near landfills suffer higher rates of birth defects and adults have higher risk of cancers. Last year, Toxics Action Center worked with communities to tackle health and environmental threats from landfills and incinerators and move toward zero waste solutions.

Communities Win Closure Of Illegally Polluting Landfills

This year, South Hadley residents are celebrating the beginning of the end for a dangerous dump. Landfill operator Advanced Disposal had been pushing for an expansion of the 405-foot dump into conservation land. For members of the neighborhood group Heal Our Planet Earth (HOPE), expansion was out of the question.

With pressure from local residents and help from Toxics Action Center, the town's Board of Health stood up to Advanced Disposal, citing noise, dust and odor problems. In the face of community protest and disciplinary action from the state, Advanced Disposal finally relented. In March, the company declared it would close the landfill by next year.

Members of community group Citizens for Landfill Accountability & Responsibility (C.L.E.A.R.) in Moretown, Vt., experienced a similar victory this spring. This past year, the Moretown Landfill, operated by the very same company, Advanced Disposal, applied for a 20-acre expansion. The landfill has caused significant pollution problems for the community, including awful off-site odors and groundwater contamination.

Finally responding to citizen pressure highlighting the landfill's 13-year history of environmental violations, the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources announced its decision to require the landfill to close spring of 2013.

Massachusetts Advances Zero Waste Policies

In Boston, Toxics Action Center and other members of the Boston Recycling Coalition are hard at work to increase the city's abysmal recycling rates to 50 percent by 2020 and 75 percent by 2030, while at the same time creating good, green jobs for Boston residents. Last year, we launched a multi-stakeholder Zero Waste Task Force to work with the new Boston mayor on a set of policies to move Boston toward zero waste. We also continued to watchdog state policies for waste reduction, as Massachusetts implements their Solid Waste Master Plan, "Pathway to Zero Waste."

Local Leader Spotlight: Rick Blake Works For Zero Waste

Rick Blake has always kept busy with managing a local business and plowing roads in the winter. But when, after years of dealing with pollution from the landfill near his home, the same landfill wanted to more than double its size, Rick dedicated himself to fighting for his neighborhood. With the support from Toxics Action Center, Rick and his neighbors formed C.L.E.A.R., which soon became a force to be reckoned with.

A year and hundreds of petitions, almost 100 business supporters, and many news conferences later, C.L.E.A.R. and Rick are celebrating the closure of the illegally polluting Moretown Landfill. But Rick isn't done, because even though the Agency of Natural Resources shut down the landfill for years of environmental violations, the fight continues as the landfill owners have come back with a new application to expand. Protecting his neighborhood keeps Rick busy, but with C.L.E.A.R. and their supporters, Toxics Action Center will help them cross the finish line.

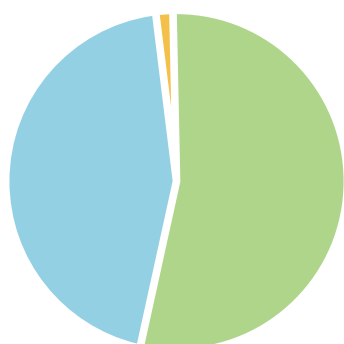


Rick's work in Moretown has pushed Vermont to move forward with zero waste principles as a solution to trash in the state.

2013 Financial Information & Supporters

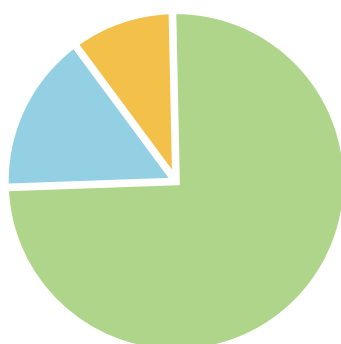
At Toxics Action Center, Inc., we pride ourselves on our ability to get an incredible amount done with limited resources. We are able to maximize our impact by focusing on building the capacity of neighborhood groups for the long run. We are so thankful for your contribution. Together, we are moving toward a New England where everyone can drink clean water, breathe clean air and live in a healthy community.

2013 Income



Members & Donors ...	53%
Grants	46%
Other	1%

2013 Expenditures



Program	74%
Fundraising	17%
Overhead	9%

We are sincerely grateful to the following organizations for their financial support during 2013.

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- Barr Foundation
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Ensuring clean air, clean water, and healthy New England communities for future generations



Toxics Action Center, Inc. and Toxics Action Center Campaigns, Inc. gratefully accept bequests, beneficiary designations of IRAs and life insurance, and gifts of securities, to help keep New England neighborhoods healthy far into the future.

For information, call (617) 747-4407, or email plannedgiving@toxicsaction.org

Thank You!

All our supporters' gifts are greatly appreciated. We would like to especially thank the following individual citizen contributors.

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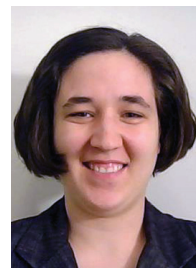
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