



Helping Residents
Fight Pollution
in Our Communities



Toxics Action Center
Annual Report



“It had been many years since I have truly felt the power of the people. Once again, Toxics Action Center really helped focus us. I mean this when I say, we could not have done it without you. I owe you a fat plate of oysters.”

*Ira Wood, Committee to Protect Wellfleet
which stopped the siting of a regional landfill
proposed for Outer Cape Cod*

In 2002, Toxics Action Center provided assistance to more than 90 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, 2003

To Our Supporters,

The vast majority of Americans support enforcing and strengthening our environmental and public health laws.

Despite popular support for clean water and air protection, state and national rollbacks of our environmental laws and enforcement capabilities are happening at breakneck speed.

Increasingly, the burden of protecting our health and safety is falling on local municipalities and on our neighborhoods themselves to stand up to polluters and force them to act responsibly. The good news is that here in New England, dozens of communities have come to the fore with active and effective campaigns to protect our families and our future from pollution.

■ In May of 2002, Toxics Action Center and the Connecticut Clean Air Coalition won a five-year campaign to pass the strongest clean air protection in the nation by cleaning up the Sooty 6 power plants in that state.

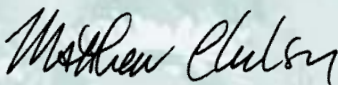
■ In August of 2002, Whitefield, Maine won an unprecedented victory against the sludge industry, forcing them to truck their toxic waste out of town for proper storage.

■ In July of 2002, residents of Stow, Massachusetts successfully stopped toxic pesticides from being dumped in Boon Lake. The victory in Stow slowed the use of aquatic pesticides all across the region.

■ In September of 2002, we opened a new office in Montpelier, Vermont. We have already assisted residents fighting toxic pollution in more than 15 communities in the Green Mountain State.

Thanks to all of our supporters who provide us with the resources to help these communities and dozens like it across New England. While we and others continue to resist further weakening of our environmental laws, it's essential that we also continue to support the neighborhoods who are on the front line protecting the health and safety of our communities.

Sincerely,



Matthew Wilson
Director, Toxics Action Center



Solutions To Air Pollution

Industrial air pollution has been linked to increased asthma in children and higher occurrences of respiratory disease. Toxics Action Center works with communities to implement solutions to clean up existing sources of air pollution and to prevent dangerous new sources from being built.

Victory For Clean Air In Connecticut

Hartford, CT – New Englanders can breathe a little easier. Toxics Action Center and community groups across Connecticut celebrated a major victory in their campaign to clean up the old coal and oil-burning “Sooty Six” power plants to modern pollution standards.

On May 3rd, 2002, Governor John Rowland signed legislation that requires plants to reduce their sulfur dioxide emissions at the stack instead of using pollution trading, making Connecticut a national leader in addressing air pollution.

The five-year Sooty Six Campaign was the largest citizen-led public health and environmental effort in Connecticut’s history, consisting of over 130

statewide and local public health and environmental organizations, and representing over half a million residents.

“The Sooty Six cleanup is not only a tremendous victory for clean air, it is a victory for the thousands of citizens who participated in this battle,” said Alyssa Schuren, Toxics Action Center’s Clean Air Organizer.

Due to a loophole in the Clean Air Act, the Sooty Six, located in Bridgeport, Norwalk, New Haven, Montville, Middletown, and Milford, have been allowed to emit more than 80% of the industrial sulfur dioxide pollution in the state.

This victory ensures the removal of an additional 8,900 tons of sulfur dioxide, which triggers asthma attacks and early death, from the air each year. These precedent-setting standards must be met at each of the six plants beginning January 1, 2005, without the use of pollution credit trading.



February

Connecticut officials order Balf/Ticon asphalt plant in Manchester to cease and desist operations.

March

Over 400 people attend Toxics Action 2002, our 17th annual conference in Boston, Massachusetts.

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health provides Potassium Iodide for residents living near the Pilgrim Nuclear Power Station.

Manchester Polluter Ordered To Shut Down

Manchester, CT – Imagine living in a neighborhood where you have to cover your childrens' heads as you run from your home to your car to keep them from vomiting. For Mike and Eileen Ricci, this is their daily reality. For over forty years residents have suffered noxious smells and sleepless nights due to the Balf/Tilcon asphalt plant operating in the middle of their Manchester neighborhood.

“We were sick and tired of being sick and tired,” said Mike Ricci, so he and his wife jumpstarted a citizens group, Manchester Area Residents Concerned about Health (MARCH) to address the problem.

With the help of Toxics Action Center, MARCH uncovered information that proved the plant was releasing cancer-causing fumes and violating several state laws. MARCH knew it was up for a real fight. They rallied neighbors, met with elected officials, held public meetings and press conferences.

“All of the Toxics Action staff are perhaps the hardest working, dedicated, smart, articulate, and relentless support group I have ever encountered. I am still not sure if they sleep or not.”

Andy Bauer, Steering Committee Member, Connecticut Coalition for Clean Air

April

Maine Toxic Ten Awards announced, highlighting toxic problems in the state that are threatening public health and the environment.

Upton (MA) residents defeat a plan to build a medical waste facility in their town.

200 people attend 3rd Annual Connecticut Toxics Action 2002, the state's only conference for residents fighting pollution in their communities.

Most importantly, they are winning.

In a huge victory, the state responded to MARCH's work by ordering the asphalt plant to be closed down. Although the company is appealing the decision, residents expect the state to uphold its order. And once they do, the plant will be unable to reopen due to a current moratorium on the construction of any new asphalt plants in the state, which Toxics Action Center worked to pass with citizens groups in 1997.



Preventing Toxic Pesticide Use

Recent scientific studies have linked pesticide exposure to miscarriages, respiratory ailments, and cancer. Pesticide residue is found in our air, in our soil, and on our food. Toxics Action Center is working with residents on preemptive campaigns to reduce and phase out toxic pesticide use.

Protecting Massachusetts Ponds From Toxic Pesticides

Stow, MA – Toxics Action Center and local residents won a major victory stopping Lycott Environmental, Inc., a pesticide application company, from dumping pesticides into Lake Boon in Massachusetts.

This victory has paved the way to prevent pesticide use in lakes across the Commonwealth.

“Aquatic pesticides not only pose a threat to public health, and the environment, but they are also ineffective for long-term control of weeds,” said Matthew Wilson, Director of Toxics Action Center.

Toxics Action Center joined local residents and the National Environmental Law Center in sending a notice of intent to sue under the federal Clean Water Act to stop the spraying. In response to the notice, the pesticide use was stopped.

“We hoped that legal action would not only halt the use of toxic pesticide on Lake Boon, but also force people to come up with ways of controlling weeds that was safe for people and the environment,” said Barbara Ernst of the Stow Pesticide Awareness Collaborative.



“Without the knowledge we gained from Toxics Action Center’s resources, we might not have ever known if what we thought was right, really was. It is, and we are empowered by knowing it.

Cathy Willauer, Concerned Citizens for Safe MSAD51 (Cumberland, ME) which stopped the construction of a middle school next to an old dumpsite.

May

Toxics Action Center wins precedent-setting legislation to clean up Connecticut’s Sooty Six power plants.

Toxics Action Center publishes a guide to reduce toxic pesticide use in Massachusetts’ schools.

June

Twenty community leaders from across New England attend Toxics Action Center’s 2nd Annual Leadership Retreat.

Stopping Toxic Sludge

Sewage sludge is the waste left over from wastewater treatment plants. Sludge, therefore, contains measurable levels of dioxin, heavy metals, pesticides, viruses, bacteria, and other toxins. The waste industry markets this chemically laden waste as fertilizer. Toxics Action Center is working with residents across New England to stop toxic sludge from being dumped in communities across the region.

Unprecedented Victory Against Toxic Sludge In Maine

Whitefield, ME – Residents of Whitefield woke up this past summer to find that something smelled in their town. New England Organics, the largest toxic sludge spreader in Maine, had dumped over 600 tons of composted sludge on fields in the town without obtaining the required permits.

Working with Toxics Action Center, residents acted quickly to form Concerned Citizens of Whitefield (CCW) and began working to convince town officials to uphold the town's ordinance.

Initially, town officials were going to let the sludge spreader get away with ignoring the law. After continued citizen pressure, the town selectmen levied fines against the sludge broker and several landowners for their violations of the town's laws. To avoid the fines, New England Organics sent trucks to Whitefield to haul away the stockpiled sludge, which was the first time a Maine industry was forced to clean up sludge it had already dumped.

"The health of our families was at stake, so we organized our neighbors and simply refused to go away," commented Jane Russo, one of the founders of CCW.

Buoyed by their victory, CCW is working with Toxics Action Center to coordinate a statewide effort to fight sludge spreading.



July

Residents are victorious in stopping toxic pesticides from being dumped in Stow Lake (MA).

Carver and Plympton (MA) residents prevent a dump from being built above their drinking water.

August

Whitefield, ME residents force New England Organics to clean up their sludge dumping.

Taking On Dangerous Industries

Dangerous and polluting industries make bad neighbors and threaten our health. Toxics Action Center works proactively to prevent pollution by preventing such industries from being located in our communities and by ensuring our laws are being enforced to clean up already existing facilities.

Saving A Vermont Town From The Mining Industry

Florence, VT – With the help of Toxics Action Center, Residents Concerned About OMYA, began their battle against OMYA's (a large Swedish based mining corporation) proposed 32-acre mine tailings dumpsite. The mine tailings, which contain toxic chemicals, threaten drinking water supplies.

"We were shocked when OMYA offered to provide water for any drinking water wells they might contaminate," said Bev Peterson, one of the leaders of Concerned About OMYA. "When we complained that they were essentially admitting that they will be polluting our water, OMYA said not to worry, they'd just buy our land."

Refusing to be bought out by the polluter, residents began shining the public spotlight on this dangerous plan. At public meetings, local and state hearings, residents and OMYA officials have squared off on the threat these chemicals pose to residents' water supplies.

Over the past several years, OMYA's mining operations have aggravated respiratory conditions, coated window sills with dust, and have caused chemical spills.

Alyssa Schuren, Toxics Action Center's Vermont Field Director, worked with Florence residents helping them develop their campaign, build their group, fundraise and secure media attention.

Residents are calling on their Zoning Board and Vermont's environmental regulators to halt the proposal and save their drinking water.



September

Toxics Action Center opens newest office in Montpelier, Vermont.

October

Residents force Cambridge Plating in Belmont, MA to clean up their act.

November

Toxics Action Center announces Dirty Dozen awards highlighting Massachusetts' worst toxic threats.

Stopping Waste

Hundreds of landfills across New England threaten our drinking water because, according to the federal government, all landfills will eventually leak. Dozens of waste incinerators across the region are polluting our air with mercury, dioxin, and other toxins. The solution to our waste problems lies in reducing the amount and the toxicity of what we throw away, not in burying or burning our waste. Toxics Action Center is working with dozens of communities to address waste in an environmentally sustainable manner.

Winning Against The Waste Industry

Carver & Plympton, MA – The town of Carver knows about waste. Carver, the unfortunate home of seven solid waste facilities, has become a dumping ground for much of Massachusetts' garbage.

Working with Toxics Action Center, residents formed the community group, Residents Against Waste (RAW), and were victorious in stopping a new landfill from being built in their town.

"When I first got involved in this fight I was unsure of myself and of our small group's ability to fight the powerful garbage industry," said Donella Maimone, a founding member of RAW. "Now, after this experience, polluters will have to think twice before they try dumping on us again."

"Toxics Action Center helped us from the very beginning in terms of giving us direction on where to focus our efforts as well as emotional support that kept us going when things got tough," said Maimone. "We couldn't have stopped this landfill without Toxics Action Center's help."

After more than two years of battling the waste industry, Maimone and her neighbors celebrated as the developer officially dumped the plan for the landfill.



Residents Against Waste say Carver has had enough.

"We all left with clear action items, and a new sense of purpose knowing we are part of a community of determined, clear thinking, like minded individuals whose efforts will make their communities, and our world, safer for all."

Sarah Little, Wellesley Pesticide Awareness Coordinator after Toxics Action Center's Annual Leadership Retreat, 2002.

December

Hinsdale, MA residents win a victory for clean air by stopping an asphalt plant from being built in their neighborhood.

Newhall Coalition (Hamden, CT) initiates community public health survey for residents living on toxic dump.

Lynnfield, MA residents prevent diesel pollution in their neighborhood.

Toxics Action Center Financial Statements

For The Year Ending June 30, 2002

BALANCE SHEET

Assets


Total Current Assets	\$	455,417
Net Property & Equipment	\$	3,739
Total Assets	\$	459,156

Liabilities & Group Equity

Total Liabilities	\$	70,239
Total Fund Balance	\$	388,917
Total Liabilities & Fund Balance	\$	459,156

INCOME STATEMENT

Support & Revenue



Grants	\$	372,003
Conference Income	\$	20,701
Consulting	\$	43,853
Interest Income	\$	11,428
Membership	\$	50,893
Total Support & Revenue	\$	498,878

Expenses



Program Services ¹	\$	330,317
Operating ²	\$	15,261
Fundraising Expense	\$	65,976
Total Expenses	\$	411,554

Net Income FY01	\$	87,324
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These figures represent combined financial information for Toxics Action Center Inc., a 501(c)(3) organization, and Toxics Action Center Campaigns, Inc., a 501(c)(4) organization.

¹ Program services include the funds used to help residents clean up and prevent pollution in more than 90 communities throughout New England.

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

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“Since that very first phone call, Toxics Action Center has been essential in our group’s mobilization. Our group realized we were undertaking a huge project and we had no idea where to start. At our very first meeting, Toxics Action Center helped us define the problem and showed us how to go about finding a solution.”

*Jackie Fenner, Spokeswoman, Clarendon FIRST
(Families Interested in Researching Sickness Together)
a Vermont community group investigating
a cancer cluster in their town.*

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"Toxics Action Center gave us the tools and encouragement to find the most effective advocates to protect our neighborhood – ourselves. By uniting our neighbors, having a plan, and using the political process available to us, we were able to protect the health of our family and our community."

Carl Lagrega, chair of Citizens for Lynnfield (MA), which stopped a trucking terminal from being built in their neighborhood.