This has been an incredible year for Women’s Voices for the Earth. We have a fabulous new logo. A visionary strategic plan that prioritizes sound science, corporate accountability, policy advocacy, women’s leadership and movement building, and provides a potent roadmap for our work towards a toxic free future. A smart, savvy staff, engaged members from across the country, and an expanded board bringing diverse expertise and wisdom to our work. We are also preparing to launch a dynamic new campaign focused on toxics in feminine care products that will blow the lid off the industry’s denial regarding its impact on women’s health.

By achieving GuideStar’s Seal for our commitment to transparency and our 5-star rating, WVE is recognized as a good investment choice for Fiscal Year 2012.

81% of all gifts and donations to WVE go directly to our key campaigns & programs—exactly where you want your support to go.

A NOTE FROM OUR BOARD CHAIR: Anuja Mendiratta

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Our small but mighty organization is getting mightier. And we invite you to raise your voice even louder and to join us in the growing movement towards a healthy and toxic free future.

Warmly,
Anuja

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Jean Duncan, Director of Finance & Administration
Jamie McConnell, Director of Programs & Policy
Cassidy Randoll, Director of Outreach & Engagement
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WWE SPOOFs SC JOHNSON:
Delivers 52,000 signatures to CEO

SC Johnson (maker of Glade©, Windex©, Pledge©) says they’re committed to “honesty” and “transparency”—but keep their fragrance ingredients a secret. This is a serious problem, because their fragrances contain harmful chemicals like synthetic musks, allergens, terpenes, and petroleum.

That’s why in March we launched the campaign SC Johnson: Stop Keeping Secrets, starring the Non-Toxic Avenger Babies, Emma and Maggie. Thousands of people shared the campaign image on social media and sent it to the company, demanding transparency. With no response, we took it up a notch.

On July 9th, SCJ CEO Fisk Johnson heard from 52,000 concerned women and men like you, demanding he uphold the “honesty” and “transparency” he describes in a commercial. Delivered in the form of a petition alongside a spoof commercial highlighting the SCJ’s misleading claims, the action is designed to motivate Johnson to uphold his values.

WWE delivers 52,000 signatures to SC Johnson demanding transparency. Delivered in the form of a petition alongside a spoof commercial highlighting the SCJ’s misleading claims, the action is designed to motivate Johnson to uphold his values.

We know that with your help, we can convince SC Johnson to end their secrecy. They’ve said it themselves: “As a family company, listening and responding to consumers is [our] top priority.” Help us keep the pressure on until SC Johnson stops keeping secrets!

REPORT: Secret Scents reveals millions are affected by hidden fragrance allergens

In February, WWE released Secret Scents: How Hidden Fragrance Ingredients Harm Public Health. Reporting that millions (literally!) of people are harmed by skin allergies caused by chemicals in fragrance. The frustrating part? It’s nearly impossible for us to avoid specific fragrance allergens because companies keep fragrance ingredients a secret.

What stinks about fragrance:
• Allergic reactions to fragrance are common and increasing significantly among children in the past few decades.
• Women are 2–3 times more impacted by fragrance, as they use more perfumed products in general.
• Fragrance is hard to avoid. For example, fragrance is found in 96 percent of shampoo, 91 percent of antiperspirants, and 95 percent of shaving products.
• Women workers specifically, massage therapists, cosmetologists, or domestic workers are significantly more likely to experience fragrance allergies.

In the European Union, cleaning products and cosmetics manufacturers are required to disclose 26 common fragrance allergens on product labels. Many of these companies make the same products in the U.S.; they don’t disclose anything here because it’s not required by U.S. law.

If you agree that this double standard stinks, join WWE in advocating for full disclosure of fragrance ingredients in products so we can avoid chemicals that may harm our health.

Learn more at www.womensvoices.org/secret-scents.
Additionally, the California Superior Court ordered Brazilian Blowout to remove its toxic hair-straightening product from the California marketplace, sparing salon workers and consumers alike from harmful formaldehyde. And there is more to come! I’m particularly excited to unveil our latest research on toxic chemicals in feminine care products. Yes, they are in there — and no one is talking about it! We’ll also continue calling for fragrance transparency. Thanks to you, SC Johnson’s commercial has had more than 10,000 views already, prompting negotiations with the company.

Only 8 months ago, we unveiled our three-year strategic plan, our Radv, Map to a Tox-Free Future. With your support, the voices of thousands of women far and wide are inspiring us to do this work. We have some amazing milestones on this long road. Look forward to more victories in the near future!

Erin Switalski, Executive Director

A STRAIGHT-UP BLOWOUT: California Court orders Brazilian Blowout off the market

In December, the California Superior Court ordered the makers of the Brazilian Blowout hair-straightening product to remove its toxic formula from the market. The formula, deceitfully labeled “formaldehyde-free,” contained levels of formaldehyde as high as 10 percent. It was also found to violate California’s air quality laws for volatile organic compounds (VOCs).

“As a hairstylist who has been seriously affected by Brazilian Blowout, I know firsthand just how dangerous this product is,” says Jennifer Carter Arce, a salon worker who experienced the severe health effects from the product. Jennifer’s passion led her to travel to Washington, D.C. last year with WVE to meet the FDA and join the National Healthy Nail and Beauty Salon Alliance in advocating for the Safe Cosmetics Act. She’s even started her own blog, Pretty Toxic.

“Getting the original Brazilian Blowout formula off the shelves will be a big win for salon workers who have suffered irreparable health problems due to exposure to this product,” says Jennifer.

This is a major victory that was two years in the making. Thank you for helping us blow the whistle on Brazilian Blowout!

For more breaking news, be sure to sign up for the Women’s Voices for the Earth Action Network!

SAFE COSMETICS AND PERSONAL CARE PRODUCTS ACT INTRODUCED: New law would ensure products we put on our bodies are safe

What products did you put on your body this morning? Take a moment to think back — did you use toothpaste, deodorant, moisturizer, sunscreen, shampoo, conditioner, body wash, or cosmetics? If you’re like most women, you probably use an average of 12 personal care products a day. So before you even walk out the door, you’ve already been exposed to upwards of 126 different chemicals from just those products alone!

Unfortunately, right now it’s perfectly legal for cosmetic companies to use chemicals linked to cancer, birth defects, fertility problems, and hormone disruption in products we put on our body everyday. This is unacceptable.

Thanks to your calls for change, Congressional leaders reintroduced the federal Safe Cosmetics & Personal Care Products Act (H.R. 1383). If passed, this bill would keep personal care and salon products free of harmful chemicals like formaldehyde, 1,4-dioxane, lead, and mercury. The bill would also close labeling loopholes by requiring full ingredient disclosure directly on product labels and company websites, including ingredients in salon products and fragrance.

Please show your support for this bill by taking a moment to urge your representative to stand-up for safe cosmetics by co-sponsoring the Safe Cosmetics & Personal Care Products Act of 2013.