Safe Chemicals Act Passes!

Thanks to WVE supporters, we made history this year: The Safe Chemicals Act passed out of Senate Environment and Public Works Committee in July as a result of the first vote on chemical safety in 36 years. Next stop: Senate floor.

The Safe Chemicals Act would protect us from toxic chemicals linked to cancer, fertility problems, hormone disruption, and other serious diseases. This summer’s committee vote was the first step in turning this landmark bill into a law.

Brazilian Blowout Forced to Label Cancer-Causing Chemical

Back in October 2010, WVE exposed the fact that Brazilian Blowout was using dangerous levels of formaldehyde in their popular hair straightening treatments – even though the products were labeled “formaldehyde-free.”

Not anymore. As of January, Brazilian Blowout can no longer mislead stylists or consumers with false safety claims.

In an unprecedented move by the California Attorney General’s office, the manufacturers of Brazilian Blowout and Acai Professional Smoothing Solution were required to cease deceptive advertising practices and put caution stickers on their products advising users that the product releases toxic formaldehyde gas, which is linked to cancer.

This action is the result of a settlement agreement and is the first enforceable action by government authorities to address formaldehyde exposures associated with use of these products.

While we welcome this news, the victory is bittersweet—hair-straightening treatments like Brazilian Blowout are still allowed to contain high levels of formaldehyde. Therefore, WVE will continue to pressure the FDA to ban the use of formaldehyde in cosmetics.

Victory! Cosmetics Giant Johnson & Johnson Removes Cancer-Causing Chemicals

In a historical move this August, the women of WVE convinced one of the largest cosmetic companies in the world, Johnson & Johnson (makers of Aveeno, Neutrogena, ROC, Clean & Clear, Purpose, and Johnson’s Baby Shampoo), to phase out chemicals that can cause cancer and harm our health—from all of its products in 57 countries around the world!

Last November, after the Campaign for Safe Cosmetics released Baby’s Tub is Still Toxic* and thousands of outraged moms contacted the company, J&J committed to remove 1,4-dioxane and formaldehyde from its baby products. In August 2012, the company announced its commitment to phase out those carcinogens and other toxic chemicals linked to birth defects, diabetes, hormone disruption, and breast cancer from their adult products too.

While the company still has a lot to do (for example, these chemicals won’t be completely removed until 2015 and there are still other chemicals of concern in their products), this is a great step forward. We’ll continue working with the company to make sure their products are truly safe!

*WVE is a co-founder and on the steering committee of the Campaign for Safe Cosmetics.

NON-TOXIC TIP

CLEAN & FRESH LAUNDRY DETERGENT

WVE is excited to roll out a new laundry detergent recipe! With all the talk lately about a cancer-causing chemical in Tide®, we’re excited to offer you a safe alternative.

- 1 cup soap flakes
- ½ cup washing soda
- ½ cup baking soda
- 1-2 T powdered oxygen bleach (optional for extra whitening power)

Make soap flakes by grating your favorite pure vegetable soap with a cheese grater. Mix ingredients together and store in a glass container. Use 1 tablespoon per load (2 for heavily soiled laundry), wash in warm or cold water.

Check out our website for more DIY recipes!
At the same time, we noticed that a nitro musk and phthalate Substances of Very High Concern program, the World carcinogens, mutagens or reproductive toxins listed by: the Formaldehyde, Nitro musks, Phthalates, or any known Alkylphenols (APs), Alkylphenol ethoxylates (APEs), “We have also mandated that none of our fragrance ingredients, along with this statement on their website: "use in a particular product yet.  The company posted their ingredient transparency is pushing understand:

Like other companies, this means that they are telling us what ingredients we found Propoxypropanol. Sodium C14-17 Sec-Alkyl Sulfonate. under the meeting with representatives of the FDA, EPA, Federal Trade Commission, and the White House to

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We have also mandated that none of our fragrance suppliers formulate any Simple Green fragrances containing Alkylphenols (AP), Alkylphenol ethoxylates (APE). Formaldehyde, Nitro musks, Phthalates, or any known carcinogens, mutagens or reproductive toxins listed by: the U.S. National Toxicology Program, the European Union’s Substances of Very High Concern program, the World Health Organization’s International Agency for Research on Carcinogens, or the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.”

At the same time, we noticed that a nitro musk and phthalate appeared on these fragrance list.

*TOXIC BEAUTY: Salon Workers Speak Out* Meet Natalia. She’s one of 15 salon workers who traveled to Washington D.C. last week, calling on Congress and the White House to make safer salon says Natalia, “I’ve always had a passion for being a stylist. But now I have a new way to talk about it: I want to empower women to make better product choices for themselves and their families. We met with representatives of the FDA, EPA, OSHA, and White House Cabinet Secretary Christopher Lu. He was here that they promoted more than 60 letters from hair stylists to the FDA to recall toxic hair straighteners that contain formaldehyde. It was hard to find a dry eye in the room after hearing the moving testimonies. Natalia reflects, “I was so grateful to get to go to D.C. to raise my voice for safe salons. And last year’s two of many – whether it’s a stylist, a nail salon worker, or a client who’s been affected by ‘toxic chemicals – it could be any of us. And I think we made a huge impact with our stories. I really feel like we’ve made a difference.”

Natalia and all the other salon workers who raised their voices travel to Washington, D.C. during this Week of Action are an inspiration to us. They took a stand for their health and their livelihoods, and there’s no question that they made a difference.

The National Healthy Nail and Beauty Salon Coalition is a joint effort between California Healthy Nail Salon Collaborative, National Asian Pacific American Women’s Forum, and Women’s Voices of the Earth.

When asked about this, Simple Green told us the list was wrong because they have reformulated to take those ingredients out. This confirmed our suspicion. They were using these hazardous ingredients, as reformulated, and then disclosed their ingredients to avoid public scrutiny.

Similarly, after having their Ajas, Dynaht and Fab laundry detergent featured in the Environmental Working Group Hall of Shame list, Phoenix Brands says they will remove formaldehyde from their products. In an email to WVE’s director of Science and Research, William Bortz stated: “While we are not among the companies that currently contain formaldehyde, we will accept that of the 20 top-name cleaning products, we discovered secret toxic ingredients in all of the products tested, including cancer-causing chemicals, reproductive toxins, hormone disruptors, and allergens.

Here’s the dirt:

• Tide Free & Gentle® and Bounce Free & Sensitive® contained a 1,4-dioxane, a known cancer-causing chemical.
• Simple Green Naturals® also contained 1,4-dioxane as well as phthalates, a chemical linked to reproductive harm. Simple Green All-Purpose Cleaner® contained toluene, linked to pregnancy complications.
• Glade Tough Odor Solutions® contained phthalates and galaxolide, a chemical linked to hormone disruption.
• Clorox Clean-Up® contained chloroform and carbon tetrachloride, both linked to cancer.
• High levels of allergens appeared in fragranced air fresheners, yet there were no warning labels. Allergens were also found in products marketed as fragrance-free.
• None of these chemicals were listed on the product label.

These are just a few of our findings—you’ll be shocked by what else we found. A copy of the report is available for download on our website. Read it to find out what’s hiding in your cleaning products!

How is WVE moving this forward? Here is some good news: The Cleaning Product Right to Know Act was just introduced in both houses. Join us in demanding that this industry is held to a higher standard – one that puts public health over profit.

The Tide website says: “Safety: The Most Important Ingredient in Tide®.” If that’s true, then 1,4-dioxane should never have been in the product in the first place. 

Join us in demanding that Procter & Gamble, makers of Tide, strip this harmful cancer-causing chemical out of Tide® and Tide Free & Gentle®! Visit www.womensvoices.org to take action today.

Dirty Secrets Report: WVE Finds Hidden Carcinogens & More in Brand-Name Cleaners

Cleaning product companies are not required to tell you the chemicals they use in their products, and what they’re hiding could be hazardous to your health.

In November 2011, WVE released a new report, Dirty Secrets, which revealed the presence of hidden toxic chemicals in 20 top-name cleaning products. We discovered secret toxic ingredients in all of the products tested, including cancer-causing chemicals, reproductive toxins, hormone disruptors, and allergens.

Green Momma Partners Empower Women & Make Detoxing Fun

Who doesn’t like parties? Especially a party with a purpose – yes, please! Women’s Voices for the Earth’s new Green Momma Parties are the latest DIY party that makes detoxing fun, (we said “fun”). With a room-by-room guide for eliminating harmful chemicals, do-it-yourself recipes with how-to videos, and easy ways to raise your voices together for safer products, Green Momma Parties empower women with knowledge, solutions, and action.

The Green Momma Party Guide is free to download on our website.

WHAT’S IN THE GREEN MOMMA PARTY GUIDE:

• Room-By-Room Guide of hidden hazards and practical solutions
• Do-it-yourself recipes how-to videos for each recipe
• Non-Toxic Shopping Guide
• Five Take Action Tips for Green Mommas
• How to Host a Green Momma Party
• Suggested agenda
• Discussion Guide for the host to keep the conversation flowing

Want to host a Green Momma Party? Sign up to host one at www.womensvoices.org!
FISCAL YEAR 2011 OPERATING REVENUE

87% of all gifts and donations to WVE go directly to our key campaigns & programs – exactly where you want your support to go.

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 2011.

WVE is proud to be the recipient of a Women's Empowerment Award in 2012, an award through Great Nonprofits and Guidestar.

BODY & SOUL TALKS

Women’s Voices for the Earth is excited to roll out our newest way for WVE members to connect with each other. Introducing… Body & Soul Talks!

Body & Soul Talks are hour-long phone calls and webinars on different women’s health issues with a savvy guest expert. They’re a great way to get tips for avoiding toxic chemicals, and to “meet” and chat with other WVE women about issues you care about. Keep your eyes out for our fall Body & Soul Talk with guest expert Diane MacEachern of Big Green Purse.

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