DEM Roundtable Joint Meeting
Meeting Summary

Monday, March 10, 2008

Attendees
Business: Jane Austin, Steven Cadorette, Robert Cerio, John Chambers, Molly Clark, Thomas Clupny, Kathy Crawley, Gina DeMarco, Sheila Dormody, Gary Ezovski, John Fornaro, Cynthia Giles, Mark House, Chris Kearns, Ken Kubic, Matthew Lagor, Juan Mariscal, Chris Mabbett, Philip Papoojian, Denise Parillo, Alison Ring, Miriam Ross, Michael Rubin, John Sinnott, Rob Sumner-Mack, Mike Walker, Arthur Yatsko

DEM Staff: Bob Ballou, Terri Bisson, Alicia Good, Bev Migliore, Mickie Musselman (meeting notes), Elizabeth Scott, Elizabeth Stone, Michael Sullivan

1. **Greetings and Introduction –** Director Sullivan welcomed participants and led introductions. John Sinnott welcomed attendees to the Streuver-Brothers Eccles and Rouse American Locomotive (ALCO) complex. He said the building was used for assembly of automobiles when it was new and in the latter part of the nineteenth century was converted for locomotive assembly.

2. **Meeting Minutes -** The meeting minutes for the October 18, 2007 Roundtable meeting were accepted as written.

3. **Presentations/Discussions:**

Budget: Director Sullivan said the budget is bleak and distressing. Economic indicators continue to erode and the legislative leaders have said don't be optimistic. Most union contracts are up for renewal this year and approximately 20% of the DEM workforce meets requirements to retire with both years served and age. Many may decide to leave the Department depending upon changes to the retirement benefits. The Natural Resources Bureau would be most affected because about 80% of the management personnel in that bureau are eligible to retire.

He said the Governor's budget contains a $35M open space, recreation, bay and watershed bond and consolidations that would incorporate CRMC and the Water Resources Board into DEM.

Q: Is the DEM budget cut in proportion to DEM's size? How does it compare with other departments?
A: We are going into budget discussions with 28 open positions and are 48 positions below our funded FTE cap. We may get 2 positions.

Legislation (see handout #1 below):
DEM - Bob Ballou gave a summary of bills and budget articles that relate to DEM.
2 bills with a DEM stamp include:
- S-2841 - IPCRA – establishes a civil penalty for failure to comply with remedial actions required by DEM.
- H-7783 – bans the importation, transportation and sale of non-indigenous invasive aquatic plants.

Additional important bills are:
- S-2745 and H-7743 – strengthens the boating while under the influence act.
- S-2627 and H-7782 – adopts the Interstate Wildlife Violator Compact into the RI General Laws.
- S-2630 and H-7786 – enhances DEM's management of non-native bird populations.
- H-7768 – improves control and management of all-terrain vehicles.
- S-2636 and H-7807 – strengthens enforcement of marine fisheries laws and regs.
- S-2181 – updates the toxics in packaging act

DEM's Regulatory Agenda, the list of regulations that DEM will be revisiting this year, is on the DEM website http://www.dem.ri.gov/pubs/regs/regagn08.pdf.

Q: What is the status of the cesspool phaseout?
A: The regulations are under development now.

ECRI Legislation **(See handout#2 below)** – Denise Parillo said among the legislation that ECRI supports are the following:

- Global warming bill
- Water supply and management
- Marine habitat restoration
- Clean energy – get rid of the cap on net metering
- Electrical waste producer responsibility
- Plastic bag ban
- Clean transportation – several bills
- Support for public transport
- Open space bond
- Adverse possession bill
- Raise fines for environmental violations
- Restrict pesticides on school grounds

Denise said the full list is on the ECIR website – see http://www.environmentcouncilri.org/news.html#agenda08.

Greening Rhode Island Businesses: Ron Gagnon said DEM has been working with the Rhode Island Hospitality Association on the Rhode Island Hospitality Green Certification Program, a voluntary self-certification program for restaurants and hotels. DEM held a training session in February for hotels that covered recycling, waste management, water and energy conservation and locally-grown food. There will be another session for restaurants in early April. The Earthwatch segment on Channel 10 scheduled for Friday, March 14 will feature this program.

Director Sullivan said this is a business group that is advocating for change and DEM is helping with challenges such as food waste that is not suitable for donation. There is a tourism segment that will expand to event planning including increasing recycling rates, green suppliers, and fryolator grease recycling.

Ron said the first phase of the commercial recycling renewal began in January with a new online reporting system. DEM expects to increase its recycling rate with its move to Better Shred. RIRRC and DEM are developing a program to help Rhode Island businesses with the Go Green program that has a target of Earth for roll out.

Director Sullivan said DEM and RIRRC agree on the need to increase commercial recycling and hopes Rhode Islander will think about purchases with recycling in mind.

Gary Ezovski said there are impediments to recycling and John Sinnott said within his company they separate recyclables but the company picking up trash blends the materials.

Director Sullivan said DEM has met with the RI waste haulers association and has discussed DEM incentives such as providing multiple bins. RIRRC offers guaranteed supports such as a percentage of the profit on clean source-separated recyclables.

Gina De Marco said the Northern RI Conservation District has a clean businesses initiative. One action is we have sent landscapers a checklist with bulletins on invasives, water use, etc.

Director Sullivan asked to have the materials sent to him and said he and Larry Mouradjian have discussed the same issues.

Q: The cities and towns are not recycling well, could the League of Cities and towns get involved?
A: DEM has spoken with Dan Beardsley on this issue.

Bev Migliore said DEM has worked with the schools on green cleaning through the Chemical Safe Schools Initiative for about 2 years. They are now working with on greening the State House and with municipalities.

Molly Clark said the State Asthma Coalition is working with EPA on training at schools with Jim Celenza.

Member Requests:
Dams – Arthur Yatsko asked if the state could lease some of the many state-owned dams for hydro-power.

A: The state owns some dams with hydro capacity but we don't now if any are functional. DEM would like to use hydro power, but it is not necessarily feasible. Our dams are relatively low head, low yield. DEM is purchasing a dam in Central Falls that has hydro capacity but it is in need of about $700,000 to $800,000 in repairs to the hydro facility and another $500,000 to $600,000 thousand in repairs to the dam and more for the fish ladder, which DEM needs to maintain. The state has no money for this purpose and will talk to private developers. They can use tax credits that are not available to the state.

The Providence Clean Energy Task Force (changed to the Environmental Sustainability Task Force in December) has tried to get the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) to license the hydro facility at the Scituate Reservoir, but FERC requires that as a condition of licensing that recreation be allowed on the water body. The state does not allow boating on drinking water sources.

Q: Couldn't dams be breached to allow fish passage?
A: There complications such as sediments behind many of Rhode Island's dams are contaminated and breaching would release contaminants into the water. There are 600-plus dams in Rhode Island and about a third of them are high-hazard or significant hazard. DEM and the EMA share jurisdiction and ownership is often murky, so responsibility for cleanup is difficult to determine.

RGGI and Greenhouse Gas Process – Phil Papoojian asked if the GHG process is dead.
A: The GHG Stakeholder process cost about a million dollars and with the budget status cannot be sustained. There are bills in now that would move the money from sales of allowances under RGGI from DEM to the Office of Energy Resources.

Phil said there are many philanthropic organizations willing to fund processes to reduce greenhouse gases. Gary said the loss of the Greenhouse Gas Stakeholder Process was a loss of discussions on both environmental and economic issues.

Director Sullivan said these discussions can continue in this venue if people wish. These meetings do not have to be quarterly and could be thematic.

Cynthia Giles said the global warming solutions act, S-2629 and H-7884, would require carbon dioxide levels to be cut by 80% by 2050 and re-establishes a stakeholder process.

Water - Eugenia Marks said she appreciates the 2008 State of the State's Waters report and 303d List **(See handout #3 below)** being completed on schedule. She asked regarding the septic system impairment found in many places if cleanup could be coordinated with the cesspool initiative and if the budget constraints have hurt monitoring and cleanups.

Director Sullivan said the cesspool phaseout regulations are almost final and their focus is primarily on coastal waters. DEM focuses discretionary funds on a section of the list and the impairments are not always due to septic systems.

The Bays Rivers and Watershed Coordination Team is hoping the septage fee will generate funding for monitoring. We are about $1 or 2 million short of funding needed for monitoring.

Liz Scott said TMDL studies and GIS mapping of known violations and substandard systems identifies problem areas, and ultimately the burden falls on municipalities to clean up problems. The Clean Water Bond helps but many communities do not have the required match.

Stormwater Districts could provide local revenue streams but so far no towns have created them. The Towns of Narragansett and East Providence are trying to do this but have met resistance. The Clean Water Bond funding – DEM is looking at changing the cost share from 1/1 to 75/25 to encourage communities to do projects.

Announcements:

- Toxics Information Project – The Director referred the group to a handout provided by Liberty Goodwin **(see Handout #4 below)**
- DEM is having internal discussion on water withdrawal standards to create a clear reliable process
- On October 28 DEM will host Restore America's Estuaries at the Convention Center - details on the Restore America's Estuaries website

Next Meeting Date

The next meeting will be **Monday, May 12**. Art Yatsko will look into meeting at the RI Assn. of Realtors conference room.

Handout #1

RHODE ISLAND
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL
MANAGEMENT

235 Promenade Street, Providence, RI 02908-5767 TDD 401-222-4462

DEM's 2008 Legislative Agenda

FY '09 Budget Articles (Governor)

- **$35 Million Open Space, Recreation, Bay and Watershed Protection Bond** (Article 5)
  - $5 million for open space, farmland preservation, and recreational development
  - $30 million for anti-pollution projects and/or restoration activities benefiting Narragansett Bay and the State's watersheds

- **WRB & CRMC Agency Transfers** (Article 45)
  - Transfer of powers, functions and resources from the Water Resources Board to DEM
  - Transfer of employees from the CRMC to DEM

Bills (DEM)

1) **Establish a Civil Penalty Provision under the Industrial Property Remediation and Reuse Act** (S-2422 (Breene) & H-7785 (Amaral)) (see also S-~~2422~~, Felag) 5841

   Add a $25,000 maximum civil penalty provision to IPRRA to address failures to comply with remedial actions required by DEM

2) **Strengthen the Alchohol Boating Safety Act** (S-2745, Algiere & H-7743, Ehrhardt)

   Strengthen the so-called BUI statute by addressing a number of gaps and inconsistencies and better aligning it with the DUI statute, after which it was modeled.

3) **Ban the Importation, Possession, Transportation, and Sale of Non-Indigenous Invasive Aquatic Plants** (H- 7783, Gorham) (see also H-7522, Pacheco & S-2369, Fogarty)

   Prohibit the introduction of non-native invasive aquatic plants into RI waterbodies.

4) **Adopt the Interstate Wildlife Violator Compact** (S-2627, Breene & H-7782, Ehrhardt)

   Incorporate the Interstate Wildlife Violator Compact into the General laws, enabling RI to become a party state.

5) **Enhance State Management and Control of Nuisance Bird Populations** (S-2630, Breene & H-7786, Story)

Better enable DEM to manage non-native wild bird populations, consistent with recently amended federal law; and support DEM's continuing efforts to manage resident Canada goose populations.

6) **Improve Control and Management of All-Terrain Vehicles** (H-7768, Gorham)

Increase penalties for illegal use of all-terrain vehicles (ATVs), and consider adoption of additional measures to ensure their safe and proper use.

Additional Bills of Importance

- **Strengthening Enforcement of Laws and Regulations Governing Commercial Marine Fisheries** (S-2636, Sosnowski & H-7807, Malik)
- **Strengthening Monitoring/Assessment of Marine Fisheries – Observer Coverage and Stock Assessment Reports** (S-2623, Sosnowski & H-7808, Malik)
- **Updating the Toxic Packaging Reduction Act** (S- 2181, Blais)

Additional Legislative Issues of Interest

- Water Supply Management
- Recycling
- Diesel Emissions Reduction
- Energy and Greenhouse Gases
- Agricultural Support
- E-waste

Handout #2

Clean Water Action 2008 Legislative Priorities

Curb Global Warming Pollution

(H7884, S2629)

Global warming puts our environment and health at risk through impacts ranging from increased beach erosion and rising temperatures in Narragansett Bay, to more frequent and intense hurricanes, and an increase in the rates of asthma and variety of insect-borne illnesses.

Clean Water Action supports a mandatory program that to reduce global warming pollution to levels scientists say we need to achieve to avert the worst impacts. We support the **Rhode Island Global Warming Solutions Act** that will reduce global warming pollution in Rhode Island 20% by 2020 and 80% by 2050.

Stop Diesel Pollution

(S2633, H7524)

Diesel pollution leads to global warming and other harmful environmental impacts, as well as adverse health risks. The average lifetime cancer risk from diesel soot for Providence County residents is 330 times higher than the acceptable risk level determined by the US Environmental Protection Agency. The General Assembly has already taken action to pass anti-idling legislation and clean up school bus engines.

In 2008, Clean Water Action supports the **Diesel Emissions Reduction Act** which calls for the cleanup of trash trucks and state vehicles. These trucks travel through residential neighborhoods, increasing families' exposure to diesel soot while they are home and their children are at play, and pose an immediate health risk.

Prevent Toxic Electronic Trash

(S2631, H7880)

Computers and televisions contain lead, mercury, cadmium and other toxics. These toxics are known to cause birth defects, damage kidneys, and harm the nervous system. In Rhode Island alone, over 4 million computers, televisions, and monitors will become trash by 2011. In 2006, the General Assembly passed legislation to ban computers and TVs from the landfill.

Now Clean Water Action supports the **Electronic Waste Prevention, Reuse and Recycling Act** to require manufacturers to pay for collecting and safely recycling discarded electronic equipment.

Protect Rhode Island's Water Supply

(H7787, S2637)

Rhode Island's quality of life and a vibrant economic future are inextricably tied to our management of this invaluable natural resource. Our water resources can be an economic and environmental opportunity for our state, if fairly and effectively managed.

Clean Water Action supports the **Rhode Island Shared Water Resources Act** to provide for the fair use of this shared resource, the maintenance of safe and sustainable flows in our rivers and streams, and investment in an efficient and reliable system of supply and distribution.

DRAFT 2008 303(d) LIST
Summary of Waterbody Impairments, TMDL Schedules, Approved TMDLs and De-Listed Impairments
(See note at bottom of table for explanation of notation used in table)

WATERSHED/ BASIN	CATEGORY 5					CATEGORY 4A (TMDL Approved)	DE-LISTED
	2008	2010	2012	2016	2022		
Blackstone River	Blackstone River - Cu; pathogens; TP; DO; BI Valley Falls Pond – BI; Pb; DO/ TP; pathogens Mill River - Pb Peters River – Cu; Pb; pathogens Scott Pond -DO/ TP		Abbott Run Bk North- BI; Pb; Cu; Cd Abbott Run Bk South – BI; Pb; Cd Branch River – BI; Pb; pathogens Clear River- BI; Pb; Cu; Cd Slatersville Reservoir – Cu, Pb Tarkiln Bk – BI	Ash Swamp Brook – pathogens East Sneech Brook – pathogens Long Brook – pathogens	Blackstone R (Segment 1B) - pathogens		Blackstone R. – ammonia, Pb Robin Hollow Pond – Total Coliform
Coastal Waters	Green Hill Pond - DO Saugatucket River (estuary) – pathogens. Pt Judith Pond (all segments) - pathogens Indian Run Brook - Cu, Pb, Zn Sands Pond - excess algae/ turbidity/ taste & odor/ phosphorus			Lily Pond - TP Round Pond -TP Saugatucket Pond – BI; TP Saugatucket River – BI; Fe Mitchell Brook – BI; Fe; Great Salt Pond - pathogens		Sakonnet River - pathogens The Cove-Island Park - pathogens Green Hill Pond - pathogens Ninigret Pond - pathogens Factory Pond Stream -pathogens Teal Pond Stream -pathogens Saugatucket River –pathogens Mitchell Brook –pathogens Rocky Brook -pathogens Indian Run – pathogens Indian Lake - Hg Pettaquamscutt River - pathogens Crooked Brook – pathogens Mumford Brook - pathogens Almy Pond - phosphorus	Great Salt Pond – pathogens Gilbert Stuart Stream - pathogens
Moshassuck River				Barney Pond – TP West River (Segment 3B) - pathogens	Moshassuck River - pathogens West River (Segment 3C) – pathogens		
Narragansett Bay waters	Belleville Pond - TP Buckeye Bk- pathogens Parsonage Brook - pathogen NEW Warner Bk – pathogen Lockwood Bk – pathogen Old Mill Ck -pathogens	Buckeye Bk - BI Mount Hope Bay – pathogens Kickemuit R (estuarine) - pathogens	Runnins River – BI; Pb; DO Upper Kickemuit River -BI Mount Hope Bay (all segments) – DOTN Hardig Brook - BI; Pb Maskerchugg River-Cu; Pb; Cd Wickford Harbor – DO Bailey Brook-BI; Pb; pathogen NEW Paradise Brook - pathogens Lawton Brook- BI Maidford River - pathogens; BI; Pb; Jamestown Bk – BI; Fe; Pb; Cu; pathogens Bissel Cove –pathogens Silver Creek - BI Allen's Harbor - BI East Passage (McAlister Pt) – BI	Upper Narragansett Bay – DO/TN Potter Cove – DO West Passage – DO NEW East Passage – DO NEW Apponaug Cove –DO/TN Brushneck Cove –DO/TN Buttonwoods C- DO/TN Greenwich Bay -DO/TN Greenwich Cove - DO/TN Warwick Cove – DO/TN Seekonk River- DO/TN Providence R –DO/TN Palmer River – DO/TN Frenchtown Brook- pathogens Pierce Brook- pathogens Sandhill Brook- pathogens Sandy Pond – pathogens Prince's Pond –DO/TP	Seekonk R- pathogens Providence R –pathogens Upper Narragansett Bay - pathogens	Greenwich Bay -pathogens Greenwich Cove - pathogens Warwick Cove – pathogen Apponaug Cove –pathogens Brushneck Cove –pathogens Buttonwoods C-pathogens Hardig Brook – pathogens Tuskatucket Brook - pathogens Baker Creek - pathogens Maskerchugg River -pathogens Dark Entry Brook - pathogens Southern Creek - pathogens Saddle Brook - pathogens Mill Brook - pathogens Gorton Pond tributary - pathogens Greenwood Creek - pathogens Brickyard Pond -DO/TP Gorton Pond – DO/ TP Warwick Pond – DO/TP Barrington River - pathogens Runnins River - pathogens Palmer River - pathogens	Mt Hope Bay (all segments) - BI/thermal mod (Category 4B)

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	2008	2010	2012	2016	2022		
Narragansett Bay waters (cont'd)				Newport Harbor/ Coddington Cove - BI	Melville Ponds - TP NEW	Allen's Harbor - BI Fry Brook - pathogens Hunt River - pathogens Scrabbletown Bk - pathogens Kickemuit Reservoir -TP/ algae/turbidity/ taste & odor; pathogens Upper Kickemuit River - pathogens Stafford Pond – excess algae/DO/TP North Easton Pond - excess algae/TP	
Pawcatuck River		Pawcatuck River (tidal) - pathogens, DO Little Narragansett Bay - pathogens Wood River -BI		Chipuxet River -Cu; Pb; Cd; BI Pawcatuck River - BI; pathogen NEW Canonchet Brook - Cu; Pb; Fe; Cd; BI; pathogens Hundred Acre Pond - DO Deep Pond – DO/TP Chapman Pond – Pb; Ashaway River – Pb; Cd; Cu Meadow Brook-pathogen Tomaquag Brook-pathogens Brushy Brook-pathogens Coney Brook - Cu Baker Brook - pathogens White Brook Pond - TP NEW Mud Brook - pathogens NEW Chickasheen Bk - pathogen NEW	Canob Brook – Fe NEW	Yawgoo Pond - TP/ DO/ excess algae; Hg Barber Pond - DO Chickasheen Brook – TP/ nox aq plants Meadowbrook Pond - Hg Wincheck Pond - Hg Yawgoog Pond - Hg Watchaug Pond - Hg Tucker Pond - Hg Larkin Pond - Hg Hundred Acre Pond- Hg Alton Pond - Hg Ashville Pond - Hg Locustville Pond - Hg Wyoming Pond - Hg Browning Mill Pond - Hg Boone Lake - Hg Eisenhower Lake -Hg	
Pawtuxet River			Pawtuxet River South Branch - Pb Pawtuxet River North Branch – Pb, Hg Pawtuxet River (main stem) – BI; Cd; TP, Hg, pathogens Three Ponds Brook -Pb Three Ponds -Cu; Pb; DO/TP Fenner Pond – TP Cedar Swamp Bk- Fe; DO; pathogens Pocasset River –Pb; pathogens Print Works Pd - Pb; pathogens; Cl, TSS Simmons Res –TP; turbidity Simmons Brook – pathogens Moswansicut St – pathogens Roger Williams Park Ponds- pathogens	Mashapaug Pond -PCB s, pathogens Blackamore Pond - TP NEW		Quidneck Reservoir – Hg Tiogue Lake -Hg J.L. Curran Reservoir -Hg Spectacle Pond – TP/excess algae Roger Williams Park Ponds – TP/DO/ excess algae Mashapaug Pond - TP/DO / excess algae Sand Pond – DO/phosphorus Upper Dam Pond - phosphorus	Pawtuxet River - DO

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	2008	2010	2012	2016	2022		
Ten Mile River		Ten Mile River – Cu; Cd; Pb; BI, Turner Reservoir – Cu; Pb; DO; TP; pathogens Slater Park Pond- pathogens; TP Omega Pond – Cu; Pb; TP					
Thames River			Keach Brook - BI; Pb; Cd	Lake Washington - TP NEW			
Woonasquatucket River			Latham Bk - BI; Cd; Pb	Lower Sprague Res – TP Woonasquatucket River (Segments 10B, 10C, 10D) – Hg Woonasquatucket River (Segments 10C, 10D) - PCBs, dioxin; DO Woonasquatucket River (Segment 10D) – BI Nine Foot Brook – BI Unnamed Trib to Slack Reservoir - pathogens NEW	Woonasquatucket River (Segment 10D) - pathogens	Woonasquatucket River (Segments 10A, 10C, 10D) - Zn; Woonasquatucket River (Segments 10B, 10C) - pathogen Woonasquatucket River (Segment D) -Cu; Pb Assapumpset Brook - pathogens	

NOTES:

NEW **indicates a new waterbody impairment listing from the 2006 303(d) list**

Parameters: Cu = copper; Cd = Cadmium; DO = dissolved oxygen; Fe = Iron; Hg = mercury; Pb = lead; DO = dissolved oxygen; TP = total phosphorus; TN = total nitrogen
TSS = Total Suspended Solids; Cl = Chlorides; BI= Biodiversity Impairment (includes Benthic Macroinvertebrate Bioassessments, Aquatic Macroinvertebrate Bioassessments, Total Toxics, Whole Effluent Toxicity, Ambient Bioassays – Chronic Aquatic Toxicity, Sediment Bioassays for Estuarine and Marine Waters);

Handout #4

TOXICS INFORMATION PROJECT (TIP)
LIBERTY GOODWIN, DIRECTOR
P.O. Box 40441, Providence, RI 02940
Tel. 401-351-9193, E-Mail: TIP@toxicsinfo.org
WEBSITE: WWW.TOXICSINFO.ORG
(Lighting the Way to Less Toxic Living)

KIDS & TOXICS INFORMATION EXCHANGE (KTIE)

2008 CONCERNS & ACTIONS

I. CONCERNS ABOUT PHTHALATES & BISPHENOL-A IN CHILDREN'S PRODUCTS & TOYS

PHALATES/PVC: When children play with and chew on their toys, they can be exposed to potentially dangerous levels of these harmful chemicals. This is unacceptable in our country! The European Union and 14 other countries, including Japan, Argentina and Mexico, have already banned these toxic chemicals from their children's toys. In October 2007, California became the first state in the nation to enact a statewide ban on the manufacture, sale or distribution in commerce of children's toys and child-care articles that contain phthalates. In addition, about a dozen states, including Rhode Island, have introduced - or are considering introducing similar legislation. Phthalates have been linked to birth defects in baby boys, testicular cancer, liver problems and early onset of puberty in girls-a risk factor for later-life breast cancer.

BISPHENOL-A/BPA: Dozens of state and national environmental health organizations in the U.S. and Canada are calling for an immediate moratorium on the use of bisphenol A (BPA) in baby bottles and other food and beverage containers, based on the results of a new study that demonstrates the toxic chemical BPA leaches from plastic baby bottles when heated. BPA, a synthetic chemical that mimics estrogen, is used to make hard polycarbonate plastic. Ninety-five percent of all baby bottles on the market are made with BPA. The results of the U.S. study show that, when new bottles are heated, those manufactured by Avent, Evenflo, Dr. Brown's and Disney/First Years leached between 4.7 – 8.3 parts per billion of BPA. Recent animal studies show that BPA can be harmful by disrupting development at doses below these levels.

For more about these endocrine-disrupting chemicals, see: www.toxicsinfo.org/TIPS_kids.htm and www.besafenet.com/pvc/action.htm, www.pvcfree.org, www.uspirg.org/issues/toy-safety www.uspirg.org/issues/product-safety, www.breastcancerfund.org, www.iehn.org/home.php

II. CONCERNS ABOUT TOXIC CLEANING CHEMICALS USED IN SCHOOLS

One out of every three cleaning chemicals used to clean school buildings in the United States is known to cause human health or other environmental problems. Traditional cleaning products can contain harmful chemicals that can cause cancer, reproductive disorders, major organ damage, and permanent eye damage. Other common health problems associated with cleaning chemicals include asthma and other respiratory ailments, headaches, dizziness, and fatigue. According to a study of New York schools, 71 percent of school nurses indicated that they knew students whose learning or health were affected by indoor environmental pollutants, including cleaning products, while 70 percent indicated that they knew staff who were affected. Luckily, safer "green" cleaning products are highly effective, widely available, affordable, and easy to find. Schools across the country are switching to green cleaners to improve student health, increase student performance, lessen adverse environmental impacts, reduce potential liabilities, and even save money. SEE: www.newdream.org/cleanschools/overview_1.php

III. CONCERNS ABOUT LAWN PESTICIDES APPLIED ON SCHOOL GROUNDS.

A 2005 study in the Journal of the American Medical Association concluded that: "Pesticide exposure at schools produces acute illnesses among school employees and students. To prevent pesticide-related illnesses at schools, implementation of integrated pest management programs in schools, and pesticide spray buffer zones around schools are recommended." See: http://jama.ama-assn.org/cgi/content/short/294/4/455 and www.toxicsinfo.org/kids/Children&Pesticides.htm.

(FOR CURRENT TIP ACTIONS VS. THESE THREATS TO CHILDREN'S HEALTH, SEE NEXT PAGE.)

2008 LEGISLATIVE ACTION

NATIONAL

S2663, CONSUMER PRODUCT SAFETY COMMISSION REFORM ACT: On March 6, the Senate passed this bill, including Sen. Diane Feinstein's amendment banning phthalates from toys, based on the California Toxic Toys Act of 2007 A conference committee will reconcile it with a weaker House bill passed earlier.

ACTION: Tell your legislators that it is critical that the phthalate ban be included in the final version.

RHODE ISLAND

S-2685 AN ACT RELATING TO HEALTH AND SAFETY - CHILDREN'S PRODUCT SAFETY ACT (H7812 & 7813) Prohibit the manufacturing, sale or distribution of certain toys or child care articles containing bisphenol-A or certain phthalates; requiring a person to use the least toxic alternative and prohibiting a person from using certain carcinogens or certain reproductive toxicants in child care articles and/or toys.

H-7205 AN A C T RELATING TO HEALTH AND SAFETY OF PUPILS. Require all elementary and secondary schools whether public, private, parochial or charter to use environmentally-sensitive cleaning and maintenance products. Require the commissioner of education to establish guidelines, specifications and a sample list of such environmentally-sensitive cleaning products.

H-7098 AN ACT RELATING TO HEALTH AND SAFETY -- TOXIC CHEMICALS IN CHILDREN'S PRODUCTS Require manufacturers of children's products that contain chemicals of high concern to disclose information to the department of health on their chemical use if the department designates the chemical as a priority chemical based on potential exposure of a child or fetus to that chemical. Authorize the department to require replacement of a priority chemical in children's products with a safer alternative whenever it determines that a safer alternative is available for a specified use.

ACTION: Contact members of the Health & Human Services Committees in both State Senate & House to urge support of S2685 and H7812 or 7813 (same bill); also passage of H7205. In the case of H7098, we feel that as written it asks for more than agency resources allow. Our suggestion is to amend it to require the DOH to consider action on any chemical banned by another state or country.

PARENT PRESSURE, COMMUNITY & CONSUMER ACTIONS

1. Help get PTAs, schools, other parent or community groups educated about and involved with these concerns.

ACTION: Ask local schools to develop Integrated Pest Management programs in cooperation with the RI Dept. of Environmental Management - emphasizing organic, least toxic land care. Tell them they can help children's health and learning and save money as well by moving as quickly as possible to environment and health friendly cleaning in their facilities.

2. Work to see that safer, healthier products are available in Rhode Island and elsewhere in the U.S.

ACTION: Tell local retailers & national manufacturers of toys &children's products that you demand children everywhere receive the same protection. Insist that they reveal what's in their products & use the healthiest available options. Especially, ask Rhode-Island based Hasbro Toys if they are selling the same phthalate-free toys here that are required of them in Europe. Stay tuned on this: If good answers are not received, further actions may be planned.

3. Watch for the upcoming TIP Less Toxic Living Guide to household, children's and personal care products.

ACTION: Help us find the local sources for buying healthier cosmetics, toys, paints, cleaning products, in addition to organic and chemical-free produce, meat and dairy, and services like environmentally friendly dry cleaning, remodeling, house cleaning and pest control.

CONTACT: Liberty Goodwin, TIP Director, 401-351-9193, liberty@toxicsinfo.org for more on how to help!