

Center for Health Environment and Justice PFAS Webinar 3/19/2019

Shaina Kasper, Toxics Action Center Vermont State Director
802-223-4099 shaina@toxicsaction.org

Toxics Action Center

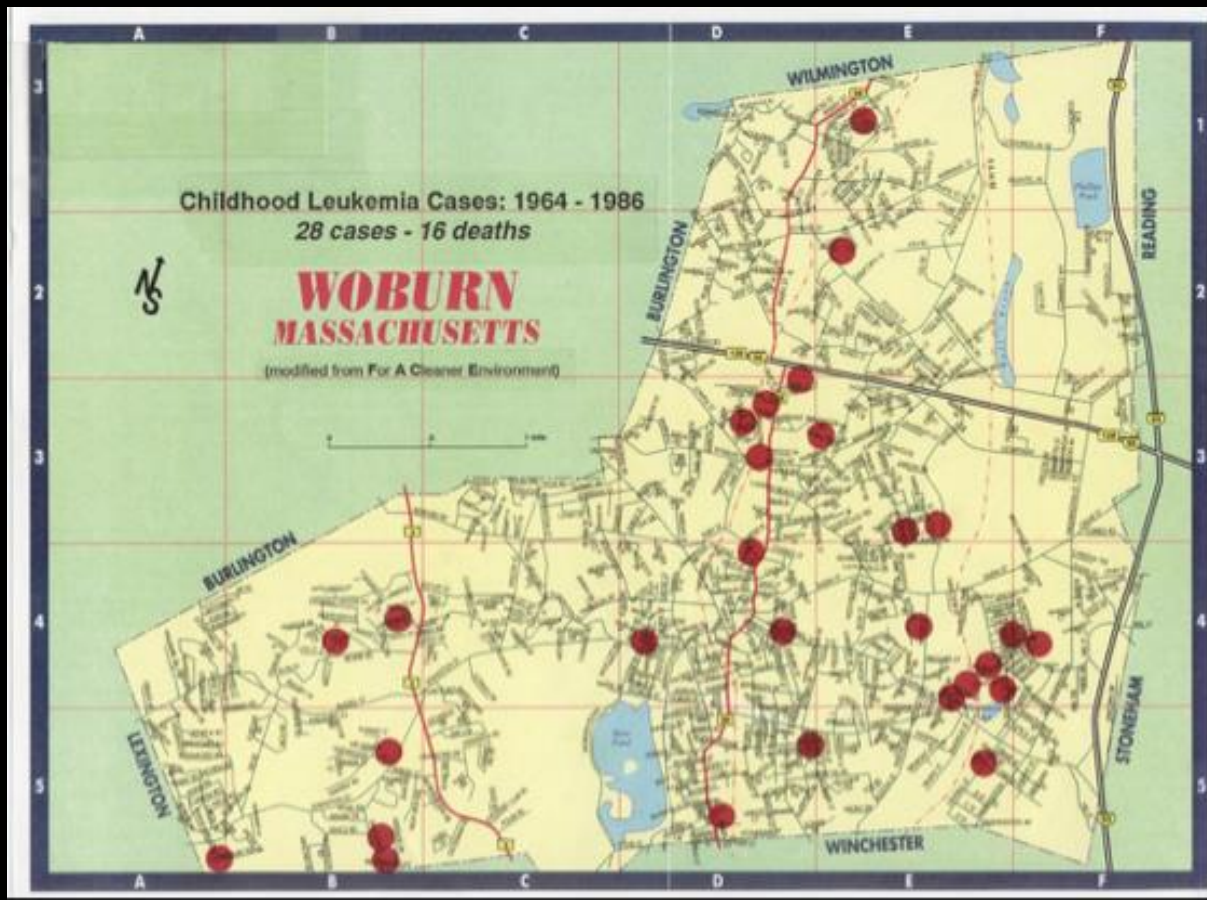


We believe everyone has the right to breathe clean air, the right to access clean water, and the right to live in a healthy, sustainable community with a government that operates responsively and democratically. Our mission is to make those rights a reality by working side-by-side with communities, empowering you with the skills and resources needed to prevent or clean up pollution at the local level.



Since 1987, we have organized over 1000 community groups and trained over 20,000 individuals across New England to put together plans and strategies to effectively solve the problems they face.

Background on Toxics Action Center



First case to causally link health impacts with the environment

Leukemia linked to well water near waste dump

BOSTON (AP) — Drinking water from wells near one of the nation's worst chemical dumps apparently caused childhood leukemia, birth defects and other children's diseases, researchers said Wednesday.

Their discovery of "a consistent pattern of positive associations" in suburban Woburn results from the largest study ever conducted on the effects of industrial poisons in a single geographic area.

They found that the more bad water people drank, the more likely they were to get sick. The wells were closed five years ago.

"The evidence seems pretty compelling to us that the adverse health effects are tied directly to the wells," said Dr. Stephen Lagakos, who directed the research at the Harvard School of Public Health.

The researchers cautioned the absolute increase in sickness attributable to the wells is small, and

many would have occurred anyway. Even when the incidence of an uncommon ailment doubles, that may mean only one extra case each year in a single town.

Environmentalists have long feared effects of toxic waste dumps on neighbors, but actual evidence of harm is scarce since population studies proving a link are expensive and time-consuming.

For instance, the consequences of Love Canal, the much-publicized chemical dump in Niagara Falls, N.Y., have never been clearly set. Initial reports of chromosome damage were later discounted.

This study was done by Harvard researchers for a Woburn citizens group called For A Cleaner Environment, FACE. In 1982, 321 volunteers got data on 3,257 Woburn families — 54 percent of the population.

The study linked the ailments to water drawn from two city wells downstream from the sprawling in-

dustriplex dump. For 130 years it was a dumping ground for wastes from chemical plants and tanneries.

The wells were closed in 1979 after being found to be tainted with an industrial solvent. It is still unclear if it was the dump that actually tainted the water, but Lagakos said, "It is contamination from the dump site that is the obvious suspected culprit."

The study found a link between the amount of well water drunk and the incidence of childhood leukemia, stillbirths, birth defects and childhood disorders of the lungs, kidneys and skin. It did not investigate whether the well water contributed to adult diseases.

The dump was listed by the Environmental Protection Agency as the fourth-worst such site in the nation. Among substances there were

arsenic, lead, chromium, zinc and rotting animal hides.

FACE was formed over of concern for the unusual number of children with leukemia in the suburb Woburn, a city of 37,000 people 12 miles north of Boston, has the highest overall cancer rate in the state.

The study "was much more precise, explicit and uncompromising than we had expected," said the Rev. Bruce Young, a FACE organizer and pastor of Trinity Church in Woburn.

Between 1960 and 1980, cases of childhood leukemia more than doubled in Woburn. Six of the 22 cases of birth defects in the town were linked to water from the wells.



2nd Annual

Neighborhood Assistance Program

- Information and Education
- Organizing Assistance, Community Organizing Trainings and Leadership Development
- Expert and Activist Referrals
- Networking and Movement-building Events



Image: staff

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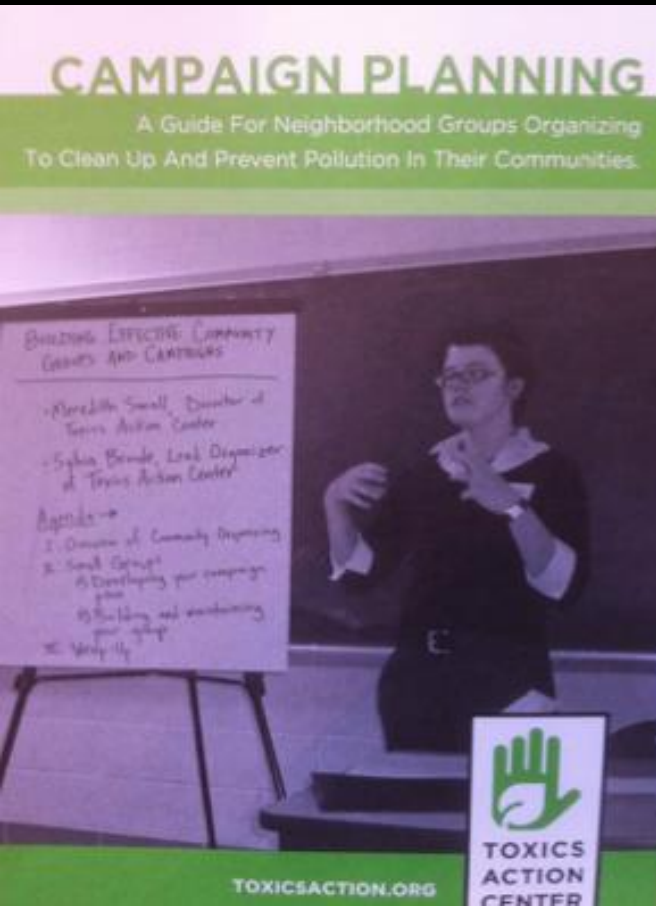
The HEAR database aims to increase and diversify the legal, scientific, medical and technical expertise available to community groups with environmental and public health concerns.

HEAR-DB

The HEAR database is a collaborative project of Alternatives for Community & Environment (ACE), Boston University School of Public Health (BUSPH) and Toxics Action Center. Every day, members of community groups across New England call our organizations seeking advice on their work confronting environmental hazards. Sometimes we can handle the questions ourselves, but often we have to look outside our own networks for help. When groups need a lawyer to review siting documents or a doctor to weigh in on the effects of air pollution on health, we turn to the network of HEAR experts to match communities with volunteers. This kind of assistance, and in some cases partnership, is absolutely essential to our work and the services we provide community groups.

Do you have expertise you can share? Sign up today and join a network of scientists, lawyers and other environmental experts committed to assisting residents in building a cleaner, healthier environment.

Community Organizing Trainings



We work side by side local groups to develop strategic plans and tactics needed to tackle environmental problems.

We provide consultations on:

- Campaign Planning
- Messaging & Materials Development
- Group Building & Recruitment
- Fundraising
- Planning for Public Hearings
- Winning Community-wide Votes
- Planning Media Events
- Interpreting Test Results

We also provide ongoing assistance and leadership development through phone

The issues we work on:

Energy

Pesticides

Waste

Toxics



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Images: staff and Neighbor to Neighbor

The PFAS Story



Photo: Peter Crabtree

Highly fluorinated chemicals

Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFASs)

Perfluorinated chemicals (PFCs)

What makes this family of chemicals unique?

- **Persistence**
- **Complexity**
- **Versatility**



Note: Fluorinated chemicals are not the same as fluorided water.

Image: Silent Spring



FOOD MATTERS

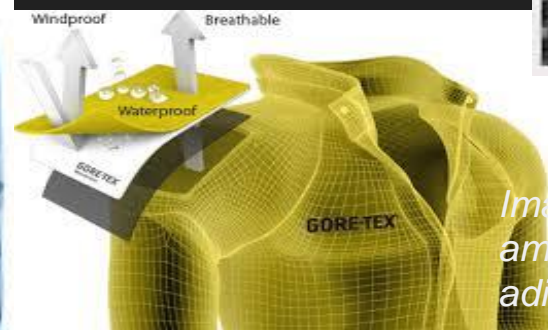
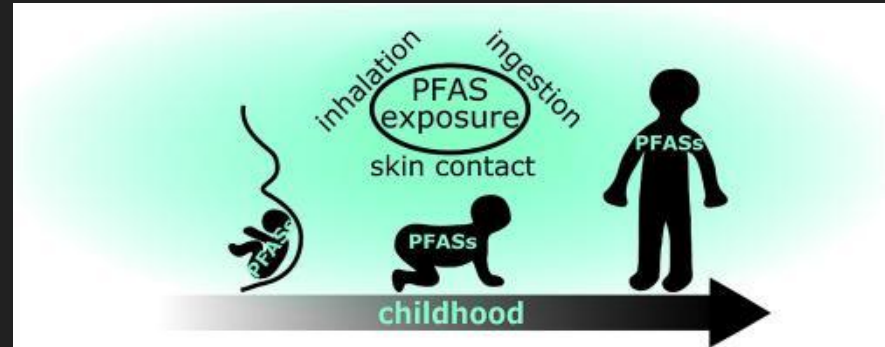
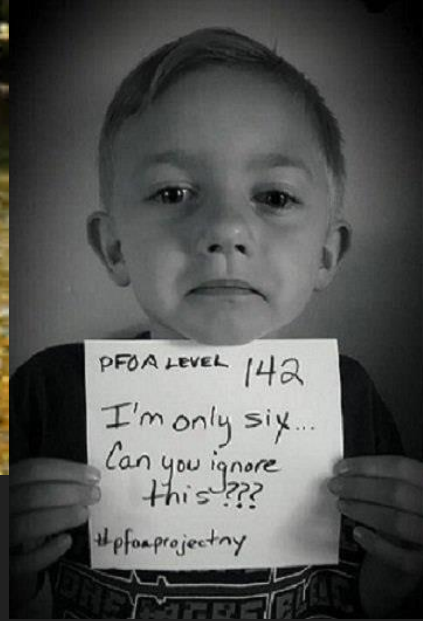


Image: inside.batelle.com, mass.gov, amazon.com, detail.experts, wiggles.co.uk, adidas.com, ultralightoutdoorgear.co.uk, acsh.org





Images: Michigan Radio, science direct, the devil we know, the Intercept, #PFOAProjectNY







Photo: Staff

PFAS Contamination Nationwide

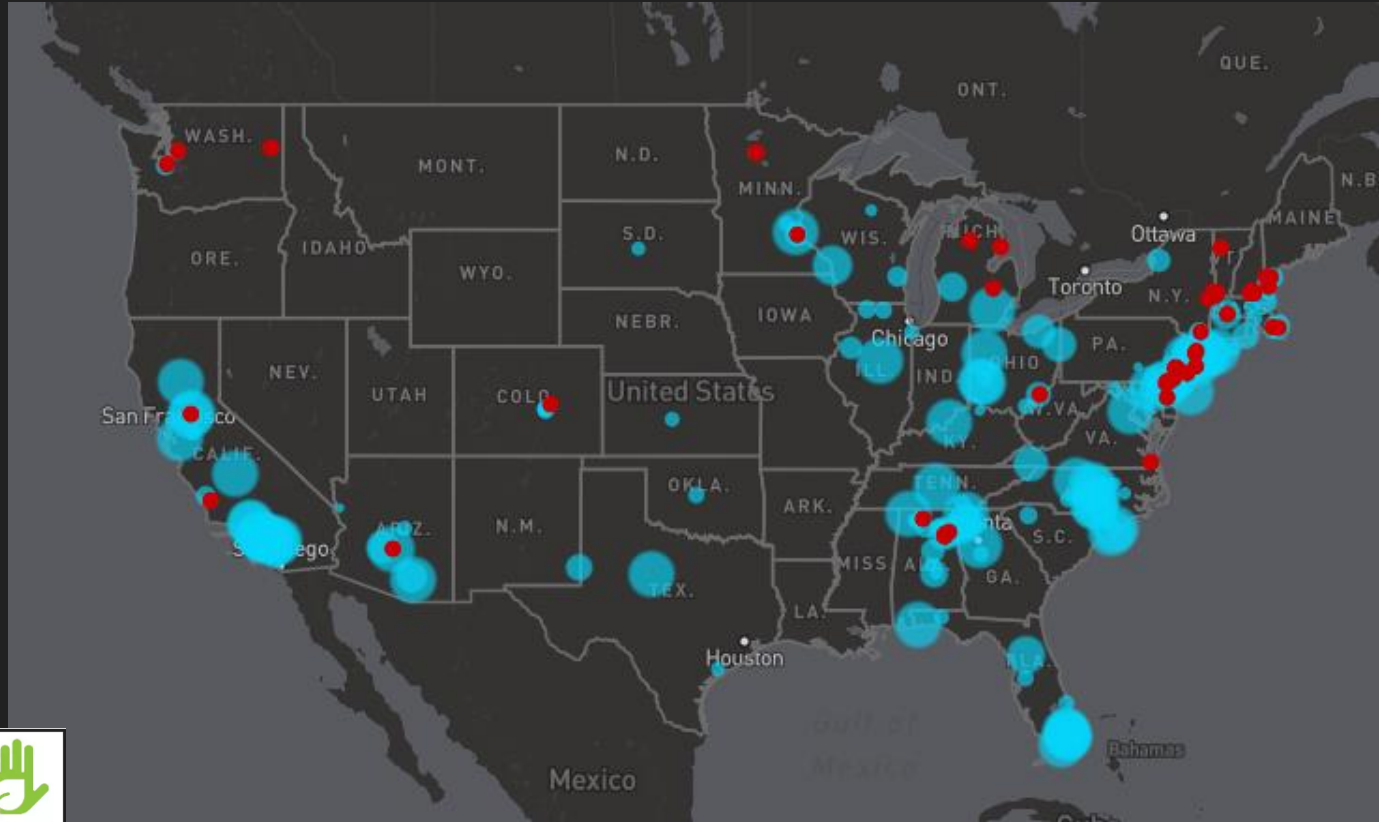


Image: Northeastern University and EWG

Highly Fluorinated Compounds – Social & Scientific Discovery

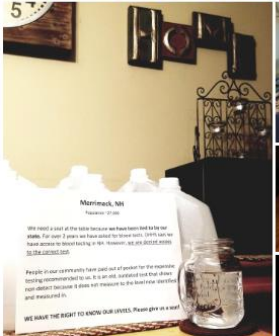
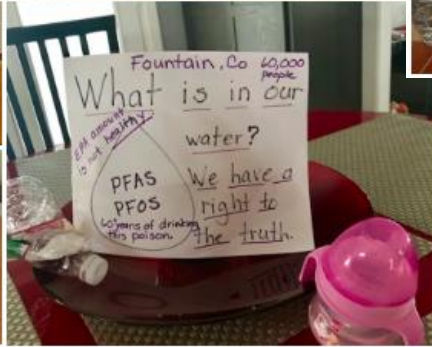
June 14-15, 2017 Northeastern University, Boston





The National PFAS Contamination Coalition envisions a PFAS-free world where people are not exposed to any PFAS, where poisoned people's health is protected, where there is justice for harms and deaths from past exposures, and where regulations change so that nothing like this can ever happen again.





PFAS Conference

JOIN US FOR THE

2ND PFAS CONFERENCE

JUNE 10-11, 2019 ■ BOSTON, MA



Speakers include Rob Bilott, Ken Cook, Linda Birnbaum, and more!

Hosted by Testing for Pease, Toxics Action Center, the Social Science Environmental Health Research Institute at Northeastern University, Michigan State University, Whitman College, Silent Spring Institute, and the US EPA

Thank You!

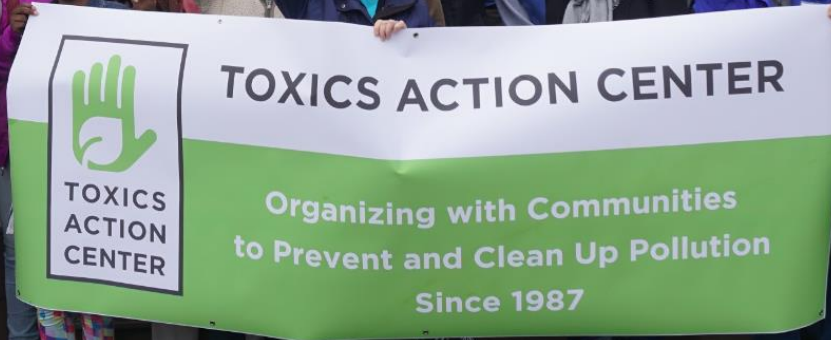


Image: Staff