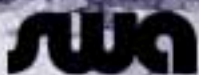


Sustainable Washington Environmental Health Action Guide



SUSTAINABLE WASHINGTON ALLIANCE



Anthony A. Williams,
Mayor
Government of the
District of Columbia



ENVIRONMENTAL DEFENSE

Ivan C.A. Walks, M.D.
Chief Health Officer
for the District of Columbia
Director, Department of Health



D.C. Department of Health, Environmental Health Administration

The Sustainable Washington Environmental Health Action Guide is an environmental health and information tool for Washington, D.C. residents compiled and maintained by the Sustainable Washington Alliance.

The model for this guide was the Sustainable Cleveland Environmental Health Action Guide, a project of the Sustainable Cleveland Partnership. With their permission, we have reprinted some of the information from that guide (see their website: <http://www.nhlink.net/enviro/scp/index.html>). With the Washington guide, however, we have expanded the original concept and updated, replaced, or supplemented much of the information from the original Cleveland model.

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Last updated September 1, 2001

Cover photo: Students participating in The Mountain Institute's Potomac River Odyssey, a course exploring the linkages between upland watersheds and lowland water users. Visit www.mountain.org.


 The published version of this guide has been printed on recycled content paper.

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This fact sheet is also available on the Sustainable Washington Alliance website: <http://www.swampnet.org> and the Environmental Health Administration website: <http://www.environ.state.dc.us/>

For more information contact: Sustainable Washington Alliance c/o Concern, Inc. 1794 Columbia Rd. Washington, D.C. 20009 202.328.8160.

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About the Sustainable Washington Alliance

The Sustainable Washington Alliance (SWA), a non-profit organization, represents a network of individuals, businesses, and organizations working together in public and private sector partnerships to improve the quality of life, build livable communities, and create sustainable futures for the greater Washington, D.C. region—a region that stretches from the Blue Ridge Mountains of West Virginia to the Chesapeake Bay in Maryland and Virginia.

Its supporting members believe that all social, environmental and business issues are interrelated and that it is only through collaboration, commit-

ment to a common vision and crossing boundaries that we can build and maintain healthy communities, economies and ecosystems.

SWA's mission is to identify, link and support the myriad initiatives within the Anacostia and Potomac watersheds that are working towards a sustainable future; and to create projects that demonstrate the benefits of the participatory, inclusive process that sustainability calls for, one that engages multiple stakeholders in designing their common future together.

<http://www.swampnet.org/>

About the Department of Health, Environmental Health Administration

The mission of the Department of Health, Environmental Health Administration is the prevention and control of environmentally related diseases and the protection and preservation of the

ecological system of the District of Columbia.

<http://www.environ.state.dc.us>

About Environmental Defense

Environmental Defense (ED) is dedicated to protecting the environmental rights of all people, including future generations. Among these rights are clean air, clean water, healthy, nourishing food, and a flourishing ecosystem.

ED will be guided by scientific evaluation of environmental problems, and the solutions we advocate will be based on science, even when it leads in unfamiliar directions. ED will work to create solutions that win lasting political, economic, and social support because they are bipartisan, efficient, and fair.

ED believes that a sustainable environment will require economic and social systems that are equitable and just. We affirm our commitment to the environmental rights of the poor and people of color.

As an American organization, ED will always pay special attention to American environmental problems and to America's role in both causing and solving global environmental problems.

<http://www.edf.org/>

Purpose of the Sustainable Washington Environmental Health Action Guide

A healthy city is one that is continually creating and improving those physical and social environments, and expanding those community resources which enable people to support each other in performing all the functions of life and in developing themselves to their maximum potential.

—International Healthy Cities Foundation

Many residents of the District of Columbia live and work in environments that are unhealthy due to pollution, poor community hygiene, and poorly maintained buildings and facilities. Residents of low income communities and communities of color, in particular, have not been made aware of the relationship of environmental degradation and poor health, or of the resources available to them to address such problems. Citizens need access to information to learn about environmental health as well as processes by which they can build and maintain healthy residences and neighborhoods.

The purpose of this guide is to fill that need, as an easy-to-use information resource that will

help citizens of the District understand threats to their health from the environment, and the steps that they can take to mitigate and remove those threats. We hope this guide will serve to empower residents and facilitate collaborative and consensus-based problem-solving among the many stakeholders involved in community environmental health. This guide also provides information to residents about the relationships between their lifestyles and the environment, to help build greater awareness of the daily responsibility that we all share in protecting the nature that surrounds and supports us—whether it is the air we breathe, the water we drink or the earth we till.

Using this Guide

This guide is available in print and on the web at:

<http://www.swampnet.org/>

or at:

<http://www.environ.state.dc.us>

The guide has been divided into three parts: Healthy Communities, Healthy Homes and a Healthy You. You will find relevant fact sheets in these sections. Each fact sheet gives you a sample story, facts and information about the topic, action steps you can take, and resources to turn to for more information or help. The Table of Contents will guide you through those sections; on the inside back cover there is a Subject Index to guide you quickly to a particular topic you seek in the guide. You will also find information about your

elected officials, contacts for the D.C. agencies with responsibility for the health issues discussed in the guide, and a comprehensive resource directory of organizations that can provide more information and assistance.

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Acknowledgments

First and foremost, this guide was inspired by the Sustainable Cleveland Environmental Health Action Guide. We thank the Earth Day Coalition and the Sustainable Cleveland Partnership for their leadership in creating a national model through which citizens and residents can become empowered to improve their health and the health of their homes, neighborhoods, and natural environment. With their permission, parts of their guide have been reproduced within this guide, for which we are extremely grateful.

There are many others whom we also need to thank for supporting this effort. Environmental Defense (ED) and the Environmental Health Administration (EHA) have funded the Action Guide. Special thanks there to Ben Smith and Kevin Bryan at ED and Ted Gordon and Janet Bearden at EHA. This guide owes its existence in large part to the highly capable research and writing of two key people, Ida Rademacher and Tom Dietsche. They performed miraculous work in short order and under terrific pressure to assure the success of this guide, for which we are most grateful. Numerous experts, D.C. agencies, and community leaders have contributed to and/or reviewed this guide. We are immensely grateful for all of their efforts and extend our thanks to: Jim

Bailey, Matt Berres, Bernie Bloom, Bob Boone, Richard Brewster, Charlotte Brody, George Brown, Halley Clem, Brent Coleman, William Easley, Don Edwards, John Friedrich, Annie Goode, Linda Grant, Emma Green, Mark Greenleaf, Larry Hourcle, Marilyn Jones, Dr. M.S. Kahn, Hamid Karimi, Marie Kissick, Libby Lawson, Michael Marcotte, Dr. Nancy Merrick, Julie Moe, Robert Moore, Robert H. Nixon, Bill Page, Brenda Richardson, Norma Stewart, Valerie Ware, and Ella Witherspoon.

We are especially thankful to Stephen Ashkin of Seventh Generation, Inc., who suggested and wrote the Fact Sheet on a Clean and Healthy Home.

Special thanks as well to our friends and colleagues at Sustainable D.C. Last but not least, this Guide could not have been produced without the support of our fiscal agent, CONCERN, Inc., nor without the tremendous volunteer effort by SWA Board Members: Philip Bogdonoff, Annette Osso, and Susan Boyd.

Our heartfelt thanks to all,

Carrie Hunter
Co-Chair, Sustainable Washington Alliance

Sustainable Communities

The Sustainable Washington Environmental Health Action Guide

Picture This

Irene was talking to Wilma, her neighbor, about a flyer she had received inviting her to a meeting to begin a community visioning process. Irene wasn't sure what that meant. Wilma explained that her sister had done this in Chattanooga. Her sister said it means gathering together community residents to picture the future they want. It means thinking about different issues such as affordable housing, jobs, safety, clean water, parks, community centers, playgrounds and environmental justice in a way that meets current and future needs. At the meetings everyone presents their ideas about these issues and their connection to others such as how to improve health, education, job training, and better transportation. All the suggestions are recorded. Then the community members develop their plan to make these ideas come true.

Find out how you can help your community develop a vision for its future and how to implement that vision.

Do You Know?

- ▶ The booming economy and current political climate of the greater Washington Region have created new opportunities to heal the region's economic and social divides. By engaging in dialogue with one another, all those who live and work in this region can build a common vision for a sustainable and prosperous future.
- ▶ Residents in the neighborhoods of Ivy City/Trinidad and Columbia Heights have participated in visioning processes to establish goals and programs for their future.
- ▶ East of the Anacostia River a new green community development corporation has formed, the "far SW/SE cdc," to help residents become homeowners, to bring back grocery stores that provide affordable and nutritious food, and to identify new businesses that are environmentally sound and that will create jobs for local residents.
- ▶ The Shaw EcoVillage Project (SEV) exposes the youth of Washington, D.C. to the techniques of building sustainable communities while training them to become catalysts for positive change in their own neighborhoods. The year-round Recycle-A-Bicycle Program trains youth ages 10–19 in bicycle mechanics to provide the only bike repair services in the Shaw area.
- ▶ In the 1960s Chattanooga, Tennessee was one of the most polluted cities in the country. Tuberculosis rates were three

continued on next page

Elements of Sustainability

- ▶ We recognize that everything and everyone is connected.
- ▶ We need to address our issues together and as a system.
- ▶ We must plan our future for generations to come.
- ▶ We make choices and actions that can have multiple benefits.
- ▶ We engage and enroll diverse populations in creating a collective vision for the future.
- ▶ We create early, visible results to inspire and motivate.

Do You Know? *continued*

times the national average. There was limited affordable housing and job loss was increasing. Citizens came together to form Chattanooga Venture, developed a visioning process and, as a result, created a list of initiatives that have attracted over \$800 million in new investments, thousands of jobs, a cleaner city, new industry and services for 1.4 million people. Their slogan is "It takes all of us and it takes forever."

- **In Alabama Region 2020, over 1800 residents in 12 counties developed a list of 4,727 ideas for improving the quality of life in the area and have created strategies for each of 34 goals for implementation in areas such as economic development, health, education and crime and safety.**

What Is a Sustainable Community?

In its report on Sustainable Communities the President's Council on Sustainable Development defined sustainable communities as those in which people work together to create healthy communities where natural and historic resources are preserved, jobs are available, sprawl is contained, neighborhoods are secure, education is lifelong, transportation and health care are accessible, and all citizens have opportunities to improve the quality of their lives.

In most communities, decisions are made about development, transportation, education, health and many other issues in a piecemeal fashion, in isolation of each other and with limited involvement of the public. The results of this approach are visible in many of our urban areas—economic decay, lack of affordable housing, unemployment, lack of access to medical care and many other debilitating aspects that do not make the best use of our resources.

The sustainability of a community depends on creating and maintaining its economic and environmental health while promoting social equity and fostering broad-based citizen participation in planning and decisionmaking.

Communities that prosper are those that seek improved public health and education and a better quality of life for all by reducing waste, preventing pollution, and developing local resources to revitalize the local economy. Since all community issues are connected

they must be addressed as a system. Job creation, energy use, housing, transportation, youth and senior issues are considered as complementary parts of the whole.

Communities that undertake this process of developing a collective vision and implement projects and programs that support that vision use sustainability as a goal and the elements of sustainability as a framework to plan and evaluate progress toward that goal. They evaluate and report to the community how they are doing, steps in the right direction and make changes accordingly. Sustainability is a process of continuous improvement.

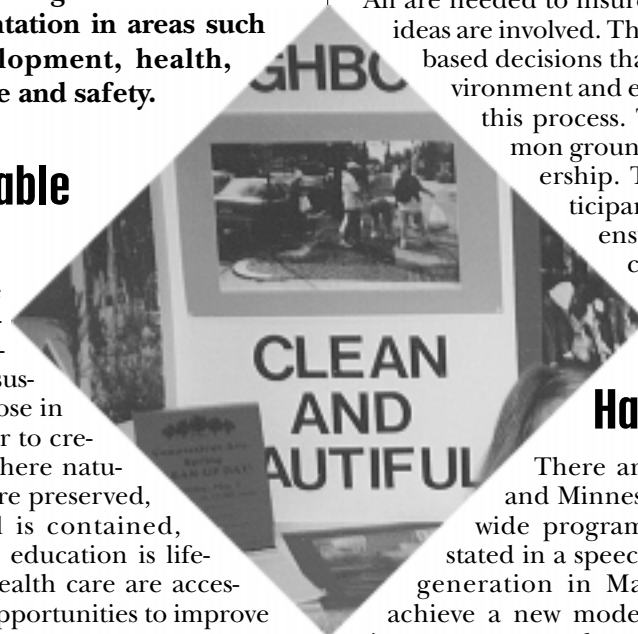
Who Is Involved?

Residents, community organizations and representatives from the business and government communities are all included from the very beginning of the process.

All are needed to insure that diverse viewpoints and ideas are involved. Their engagement in consensus-based decisions that affect the economy, the environment and equity issues is fundamental to this process. Together they can find common ground and develop a sense of ownership. Through this ownership participants are more likely to work to ensure its success. It becomes a combination of bottom-up and top-down planning.

Where Is it Happening?

There are states, such as New Jersey and Minnesota, that have adopted statewide programs. The Governor of Maine stated in a speech in February 1999, "Let this generation in Maine be the one where we achieve a new model for our economy and environment—one that is based on sustainability." Governor Christine Todd Whitman of New Jersey established sustainability as a cornerstone of her administration to address urban revitalization, preservation of open space, transportation and business development. The President of the National Association of Counties, Betty Lou Ward, proclaimed, "I am determined to continue NACo's focus on sustainable communities and our efforts to help counties and cities work together to achieve a livable future." NACo and the U.S. Conference of Mayors in fact developed an historic Joint Center on Sustainable Communities to educate public officials and provide technical assistance to counties and cities to help them become more sustainable. Grassroots efforts in large cities as well as small towns all across the United States, among them Boston, Seattle, San Francisco, Portland, Olympia, Austin, Chattanooga, Sarasota, Burlington . . . that have developed and are implementing sustainability initiatives.



What Are Some of the Desired Outcomes?

- ▶ Affordable housing that is constructed with green building standards and products
- ▶ Energy-efficiency and the use of renewable energy
- ▶ Jobs that provide a livable wage
- ▶ Workforce development and training that has long-term value
- ▶ Development of local businesses that are environmentally sound
- ▶ Access to nutritious and affordable food and safe drinking water
- ▶ Good, lifelong education for all, first rate medical facilities and access to health care, healthy neighborhoods, effective public services
- ▶ Governance that is transparent and accountable
- ▶ Efficient and accessible integrative transportation systems
- ▶ Access to capital
- ▶ After-school programs, child and elder care
- ▶ Recreational facilities—parks and playgrounds that are safe and nearby
- ▶ Art, culture and celebration of history

Take Action!

Engage members of your community and others in community organizations, faith communities, government agencies and businesses to work together to build a broad a diverse coalition of community members to:

- ▶ **Learn** about ways to make your community healthier, greener, safer, more livable and more prosperous;
- ▶ **Identify** existing community assets that add value to your quality of life, as well as those assets you would like to bring in to your community;
- ▶ **Develop** principles of sustainability to guide planning for your community's future;
- ▶ **Select** indicators that will help evaluate progress towards becoming more sustainable;
- ▶ **Create** a vision for our shared future**;

- ▶ **Evaluate and communicate** progress to the rest of the community; and
- ▶ **Celebrate** your accomplishments!

**Participate in the Citizen Summits and Neighborhood Forums to help shape the future of Washington. For more information on participating, contact Neighborhood Action, 202/727.0882, or e-mail neighborhoodaction@dcgov.org.

Resources

D.C. Environmental Network
202/783-7400 ext. 183

Sustainable DC
202/442-4019

Sustainable Washington Alliance
c/o CONCERN, Inc.
202/328-8160

Internet

Center of Excellence for Sustainable Development
www.sustainable.doe.gov

Environmental Defense
www.environmentaldefense.org

Environmental Health Administration
www.environ.state.dc.us/eha

Livable Communities
www.livablecommunities.gov

Sustainable Communities Network
www.sustainable.org

Smart Growth Network
www.smartgrowth.org

Sustainable Washington Alliance
www.swampnet.org

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
www.epa.gov/ecocommunity

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Environmental Justice

The Sustainable Washington Environmental Health Action Guide

Picture This

The Smith family just found out that the giant Zena Corporation is planning to set up a large factory on Detroit Street in the small town of Bartville, two blocks from where they live. The promise of new jobs is attractive to the Smiths as well as the other residents of Bartville where poverty rates run upwards of 45%. However, the Smiths and their neighbors are concerned because their predominantly minority community is already home to ten other factories, including four toxic waste handling facilities.

It was perceived that respiratory and reproductive disorders, premature deaths and cancer rates were problems for the Bartville community. Also, residents were not aware of procedures for dealing with chemical emergencies and accidents. Should the economically vulnerable Bartville residents have to choose between low-paying and potentially unsafe jobs with the Zena Corporation on the one hand, and no jobs on the other?

Learn about the environmental justice movement and what your community, when faced with such a situation, can do.

Do You Know?

What Is Environmental Justice?

“The fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, natural origin, or income with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies. Fair treatment means that no groups of people, including racial, ethnic, or socioeconomic groups should bear a disproportionate share of the negative environmental consequences resulting from industrial, municipal, and commercial operations or the execution of Federal, state, local, and tribal programs and policies.”

— *Environmental Justice as defined by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency*

Launch of the Environmental Justice Movement

In 1982, Dr. Benjamin Chavis, Jr., of the United Church of Christ Commission (UCC) for Racial Justice, lead a series of protests in North Carolina’s predominantly low-income and African-American Warren County, against a landfill for PCB-contaminated soils. Opponents to the landfill contended that it made only political and no environmental sense and perceived the decision to site the landfill as an extension of institutional racism they had been experiencing in housing, education, employment, municipal services, and law enforcement for years. During the course of the protests, in which 500 people were arrested, the term “environmental racism” was coined. Although the landfill was constructed, this incident sparked the national environmental justice movement.

Grass roots and national social, civil rights, and environmental organizations are leading the national environmental justice movement. These groups are working to stop the disproportionate burden of environmental pollution and resulting health and quality of life problems facing the low income and minority communities in the United States. African-American, Latino, Asian, Pacific Islander, and Native American communities from Maine to Louisiana and

continued on next page

Launch of the Environmental Justice Movement

continued

Alaska are steering the goals and activities of this multi-issue, multiracial and multi-regional movement. Diverse community-based groups have become the core of the movement, linking their struggles to racial and social justice, cultural survival, civil and human rights, land rights, sovereignty, and sustainable development.

Above all, the movement asserts that issues of economic and environmental justice need to be addressed simultaneously so that poor and economically vulnerable communities are not forced to make a false choice between "no jobs and no development" versus "low paying, risky jobs and pollution," remarks Robert Bullard, director of the Environmental Justice Resource Center at Clark Atlanta University.

Environmental Justice— Defining Events

► In 1987, The UCC Commission on Racial Justice published *"Toxic Waste and Race,"* a groundbreaking study revealing that people of color bear a disproportionate burden of environmental pollution across the United States. This study confirmed a 1983 General Accounting Office (GAO) report that looked at the racial and economic makeup of communities where landfills, incinerators, and deep-well injections were situated. The GAO report found that in the Southeast U.S., African-Americans comprised a majority of the population in 3 of 4 areas studied.

► On October 27th, 1991, attendees of the People of Color Environmental Leadership Summit in Washington, D.C. established the **Principles of Environmental Justice**. These principles have guided environmental justice thinking and policy since their inception.

► In 1993, a Federal advisory committee called the **National Environmental Justice Advisory Council (NEJAC)** was established to provide independent recommendations to the Administrator of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) on environmental justice issues. Members of the Council are a mix of experts from the academia, community groups, environmental groups, industry, nongovernmental organizations, state and local government, and tribal groups.

► In 1994, the Center for Policy Alternatives, UCC Commission for Racial Justice, and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) jointly published *"Toxic Waste and Race Revisited,"* an update of the 1987 UCC report. The report concluded that minority communities continued to dominate and grow in neighborhoods with commercial toxic waste sites.

► In 1994, President Clinton issued **Executive Order 12898 on Environmental Justice**, which called for all Federal agencies to make achieving environmental justice in low income and minority communities a priority.

► In February 1998, the U.S. EPA issued interim guidelines under **Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964** to

help resolve environmental justice complaints against development projects that unfairly cause pollution problems in communities of color. Under Title VI, if a state agency issues a permit for projects found to harm minority communities, U.S. EPA can withhold Federal funds from that agency. Industry groups and many state governments vigorously oppose this policy claiming it will prevent economic development in urban areas. However, Title VI is one of the Federal government's most effective tools in the struggle for environmental justice and resolution of hundreds of environmental justice cases pending around the country. U.S. EPA is currently reviewing the guidelines.

Community Organizing and Community Empowerment

Grassroots groups have played an important role in the struggle for environmental justice. They have demanded that environmental injustices in low income and minority neighborhoods be assessed on the basis of impacts of environmental degradation and not intent. These groups have also asserted that **pollution prevention** should be emphasized in all government and private sector initiatives along with clean up efforts.

It is now commonly accepted that lack of representation and participation in the key decision making processes as well as a near absence of easy-access information and technical assistance have contributed, at least in part, to environmental injustices against minority and low-income communities.

Take Action!

Use the Sustainable Washington Environmental Health Action Guide to get information on important environment and health problems in Washington, D.C. and take action.

Contact Your Local Government Officials. Encourage them to support strong policies and laws for environmental justice. Talk with your Advisory Neighborhood Commissioner about this issue. *Check the back of this Guide for addresses and phone numbers of local elected officials serving Washington, D.C.*

Resources

Local Contacts

D.C. Environmental Health Administration, Office of Environmental Justice: 202/535-2500.

Friends of the Earth: 202/783-7400 ext. 183. For a copy of *Our Unfair Share II: Pollution in Washington, D.C.* (\$20/copy). Website: www.foe.org.

continued on page B-4

Principles of Environmental Justice

Adopted October 27, 1991, by the People of Color Environmental Leadership Summit

1. Environmental justice affirms the sacredness of Mother Earth, ecological unity and the interdependence of all species, and the right to be free from ecological destruction.

2. Environmental justice demands that public policy be based on mutual respect and justice for all peoples, free from any form of discrimination or bias.

3. Environmental justice mandates the right to ethical, balanced and responsible uses of land and renewable resources in the interest of a sustainable planet for humans and other living things.

4. Environmental justice calls for universal protection from nuclear testing and the extraction, production and disposal of toxic/hazardous wastes and poisons that threaten the fundamental right to clean air, land, water, and food.

5. Environmental justice affirms the fundamental right to political, economic, cultural, and environmental self-determination of all peoples.

6. Environmental justice demands the cessation of the production of all toxins, hazardous wastes, and radioactive materials, and that all past and current producers be held strictly accountable to the people for detoxification and the containment at the points of production.

7. Environmental justice demands the right to participate as equal partners at every level of decision-making including needs assessment, planning, implementation, enforcement and evaluation.

8. Environmental justice affirms the right of all workers to a safe and healthy work environment, without being forced to choose between an unsafe livelihood and unemployment. It also affirms the right of those who work at home to be free from environmental hazards.

9. Environmental justice protects the right of victims of environmental injustice to receive full compensation and reparations for damages as well as quality health care.

10. Environmental justice considers governmental acts of environmental injustice a violation of international law, the Universal Declaration On Human Rights, and the United Nations Convention on Genocide.

11. Environmental justice must recognize a special legal and natural relationship of Native Peoples to the U.S. government through treaties, agreements, compacts, and covenants affirming sovereignty and self-determination.

12. Environmental justice affirms the need for urban and rural ecological policies to clean up and rebuild our cities and rural areas in balance with nature, honoring the cultural integrity of all our communities, and providing fair access for all to the full range of resources.

13. Environmental justice calls for the strict enforcement of principles of informed consent, and a halt to the testing of experimental reproductive and medical procedures and vaccinations on people of color.

14. Environmental justice opposes the destructive operations of multi-national corporations.

15. Environmental justice opposes military occupation, repression and exploitation of lands, peoples and cultures, and other life forms.

16. Environmental justice calls for the education of present and future generations which emphasizes social and environmental issues, based on our experience and an appreciation of our diverse cultural perspectives.

17. Environmental justice requires that we, as individuals, make personal and consumer choices to consume as little of Mother Earth's resources and to produce as little waste as possible; and make the conscious decision to challenge and reprioritize our lifestyles to insure the health of the natural world for present and future generations.

Resources *continued*

D.C. Environmental Network: 202/783-7400. For a copy of "An Environmental Agenda for the District of Columbia, 1999."

National Contacts

U.S. EPA Interagency Task Force on Environmental Justice: 202/564-2515 or <http://www.es.epa.gov/oeca/ore/med>. For information on Federal environmental justice programs. EPA's Environmental Justice Homepage is <http://www.epa.gov/swerosps/ej/index.html>.

Full mailing addresses and contact information is available in the Directory of Organizations at the back of this booklet for each organization listed in the Environmental Justice fact sheet.

For Further Reading on Environmental Justice

Bullard, Robert D., ed. *Confronting Environmental Racism: Voices from The Grassroots*. Boston: South End Press, 1993.

Bullard, Robert D., ed. *People of Color Environmental Groups: 1994-95 Directory*. Environmental Justice Resource Center, Clark Atlanta University. Atlanta, 1994.

Bullard, Robert D., ed. *Unequal Protection: Environmental Justice and Communities of Color*. San Francisco: Sierra Club Books, 1994.

Lee, Charles. *Toxic Wastes and Race In The United States: A National Report on the Racial and Socio-Economic Characteristics of Communities with Hazardous Waste Sites*. United Church of Christ, Commission for Racial Justice, 1987.

Goldman, Benjamin A., and Laura Fitton. *Toxic Wastes and Race Revisited: An Update of the 1987 Report on the Racial and Socio-Economic Characteristics of Communities with Hazardous Waste Sites*. Center for Policy Alternatives, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, and United Church of Christ Commission for Racial Justice, 1994.

Goldman, Benjamin A. *The Truth About Where You Live: An Atlas for Action on Toxics and Mortality*. New York: Times Books, 1991.

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Healthy Rivers & You

The Anacostia & Potomac

The Sustainable Washington Environmental Health Action Guide

Picture This

Larry woke up early Saturday to work on his lawn and change the oil in his car. Larry saved the old oil in a used oil container and put it back in the garage. He knew it was not a good idea to dump it in the yard or sewer, but didn't know where he could take it. Of course the chores took longer than expected, but with them out of the way he was able to spend the rest of the day with his wife and children at Anacostia Park. It was a hot day, and the kids brought their bathing suits, but signs warned that swimming is prohibited. Turning to their trusty fishing poles, they had a few exciting catches. It was all for sport, of course, so they put the fish back in the river. Larry had learned of the government's fish consumption advisory when he got their fishing licenses. The children weren't too happy about that, since they love eating fish and would especially like to eat some that they caught themselves.

Learn how your actions have an impact on the health of our rivers and streams, and what you can do to help restore these waterways and preserve them as vital natural resources for wildlife habitat and recreational enjoyment.

Do You Know?

Our local rivers not only provide drinking water (see the "Safe Drinking Water" section of this guide) and wildlife habitat, but are used by thousands of residents for fishing, boating, kayaking, wading, swimming, hiking, bicycling, birding, relaxing and viewing. Yet, most of the metropolitan area's five million residents are unaware of how their actions affect their streams and rivers. Water that runs off lawns and streets into storm drains and streams picks up chemicals, excess fertilizers, pesticides and other nutrients that can make water unhealthy for humans and wildlife. This form of pollution, called non point-source pollution, is considered to be the most serious threat to our waterways. Preventing such pollution is much more effective than cleaning a river after it is polluted—an operation which is prohibitively expensive.

Key Facts About Our Major Rivers

- ▶ **The Anacostia and Potomac Rivers both suffer from poor water quality. Swimming and wading is prohibited in the 5.9 square miles of river assessed within the District. Fish consumption is not recommended. Less than two-thirds of the rivers' water qualifies as healthy habitat for aquatic life, which is key to maintaining the health of the rivers.**
- ▶ **Two centuries ago, the Anacostia River was 40 feet deep at its headwaters and had 10,000 square miles of wetlands surrounding it. Now it is ankle deep at the headwaters and wetlands have been reduced to 65 square miles, all due to human impact. In colonial times, Bladensburg was an international seaport.**
- ▶ **The Anacostia has been identified as one of the ten most polluted urban rivers in the country and has been cited**

continued

Key Facts About Our Major Rivers *continued*

nationally as exemplifying urban watershed problems, such as: the conversion of natural drainage networks into man-made channels; loss of aquatic habitat from changes in land use; polluted runoff from the city's large amount of impervious surfaces such as roads, parking lots and roof tops; polluted runoff from land containing pesticides, fertilizers and animal waste; and thousands of tons of trash and debris.

- Approximately 60 percent of the Anacostia watershed within the District drains into the river via the combined sanitary and stormwater sewer system dating back as early as the late 1800s.

Heavy rainfall causes the system to overflow roughly 40 to 50 times per year and dump an average of 1.3 billion gallons of untreated sewage directly into the river. No wonder swimming is prohibited!

- The current condition of the Anacostia reflects over 300 years of environmental degradation. Official efforts to restore and protect the Anacostia watershed began in 1987. Evidence of positive environmental change includes the reappearance of submerged aquatic vegetation, which has supported a growing fish population and the arrival of four new species of fish within the last five years. Larger fish population has brought more waterfowl to the river.

- Since 1994, the District of Columbia has had a fish consumption advisory recommending that no bottom dwelling fish (such as catfish, eel and carp) be consumed and no more than half a pound of gamefish (such as largemouth bass and sunfish) be consumed by an adult per week.

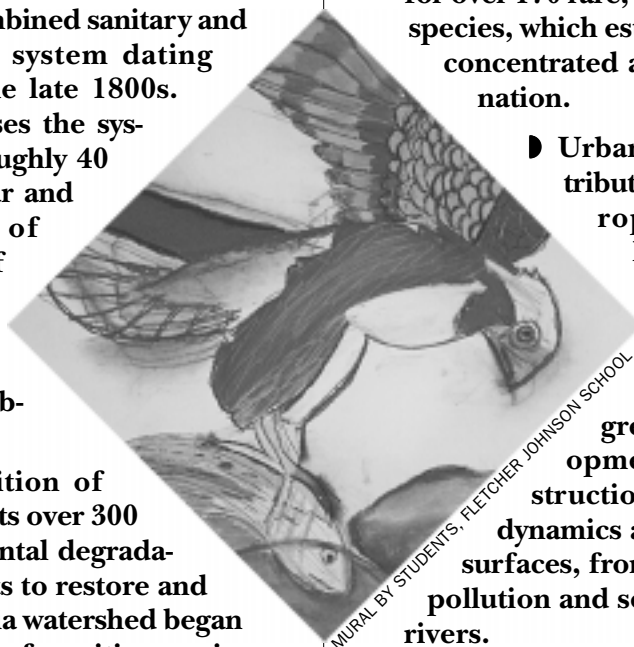
- The Potomac River, which is the District's only source of drinking water, was rated the

12th most endangered waterway in the country by American Rivers, a national non-profit organization, in 1998.

- Major environmental restoration of the Potomac has been under way since the 1960s, when President Lyndon Johnson declared the Potomac "a national disgrace." Treatment plant construction has led to a 90 percent reduction in polluted wastewater entering the lower reaches of the river.
- The Capital region is a nationally significant wildlife migratory corridor. More than one-third of bird species that inhabit North America can regularly be seen. It is home for over 170 rare, threatened or endangered species, which establishes it as one of most concentrated areas of such birds in the nation.

- Urban sprawl is a major contributor to river pollution. Metropolitan D.C. has been listed by the Sierra Club as the third most sprawl-threatened urban center in the nation. Twenty-four acres of green space is lost to development each day. New construction changes rain drainage dynamics and increases impervious surfaces, from which rainwater washes pollution and sediment into streams and rivers.

- Recycling the motor oil from one oil change protects a million gallons of drinking water, which is a year's supply for 50 people.



Take Action!

The government can't be everywhere. Since the rivers belong to us all, we all need to be responsible for their care. The Chesapeake Bay Program says "stewardship of the land and water by ordinary citizens is our most effective tool for [river] restoration."

Choose Low- or Non-Toxic Products Whenever Possible. Use toxic household products, pesticides and fertilizers sparingly, and only after considering more natural methods. See the Pest Control and Clean Home sections of this guide.

Dispose of Household Hazardous Wastes (HHW) Properly. Don't pour toxic cleaners or car liquids down your drains, into sewers or a corner of your backyard. For information on household hazardous wastes collection dates and locations, contact the D.C. Department of Public Works' (DPW) Sanitation Information Line at 202/727-4600. For illegal dumping of such waste, call Solid Waste Education & Enforcement Program (SWEEP) at 202/645-9600. Ask your local gas station if they will accept your used motor oil and antifreeze (note: pets love antifreeze, which is deadly) or bring your oil to the Fort Totten Transfer Station at 4900 Bates Road NE (202/576-6803). Carefully follow each HHW product's instructions for use and disposal. Learn about disposal methods for HHW products from the "HHW: What You Should and Shouldn't Do" pamphlet available from the Water Environment Federation, 703/684-2400.

Don't Throw Trash in the Street. It will eventually wash into a river.

Avoid Automobile Use. Walk, bike or use the mass transit system.

If You Are Illegally Dumping Your Trash . . . DON'T! You will receive a \$5,000 to \$25,000 fine and/or 60 days in jail, pay three times the cost of cleaning the dumpsite and forfeit the vehicle you used. This is a major problem in our city. Besides spoiling our public and private spaces, much of the trash ends up in our streams and rivers.

Report Illegal Dumping. Call the MPD Environmental Crimes Unit at 202/645-7196. Report day and time of the incident, location, vehicle color/make/model and license plate number. There is a \$500 reward for information that leads to a conviction.

Minimize Your Garbage Disposal Use. Much of the ground-up food makes it past treatment plants and into the rivers where it promotes algae and bacteria growth, in turn reducing the oxygen available for fish.* Scrape your plate into the trash. Composting food waste is not recommended in the District because it attracts rats.

Landscape Your Yard Wisely. A holistic method called "BayScaping" can be used to produce a beautiful yard which requires less maintenance time and products, controls runoff and enhances wildlife habitat. Some highlights are listed below. For more information, contact the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay at 410/377-6270 or www.acb-online.org.

- ▶ Achieve fertile, loose soil and prevent erosion with vegetative cover or mulch.
- ▶ Consider ground cover alternatives to grass.
- ▶ Use grass seed that is tailored to local climate and

soil conditions. Cut, water and fertilize your lawn correctly, not excessively. A healthy lawn is the best defense against weeds.

- ▶ Use native, beneficial plants that resist disease and harmful insects. Biodiversity is threatened by invasive imported plants.
- ▶ Apply integrated pest management techniques to avoid pesticide use.

Take Care of the Stream in Your Backyard. Maintain tree and ground cover along streambeds and riverfronts. Call the River Network at 202/364-2550 and ask for the Stream Care Guide for Residents and Businesses, or view it on the Internet at www.rivernetwork.org/strcare.htm.

Learn About Your Rivers, Restoration Volunteering and Recreational Opportunities. Contact the organizations listed in the "Resources" section.

Demand Action to End Combined Sewer Overflows. Call the General Manager of the D.C. Water and Sewer Authority at 202/787-2609.

Support "Smart Growth" Policies such as infill development and urban revitalization. Contact your local elected officials.

Resources

Also see the "Safe Drinking Water," "Toxic Substances," and "Recycling" Fact Sheets included in this Environmental Health Action Guide.

Local Contacts

District of Columbia Department of Health Environmental Health Administration (EHA), Watershed Protection Division: For General information, call 202/535-2240. For educational programs for teachers and students, call Gilda Allen at 202/535-2239. Website: www.envIRON.state.dc.us/watershed

UDC Cooperative Extension Service: 202/274-6900. Information on household chemical alternatives, pest control, pesticide precautions and landscaping.

D.C. DPW, Office of Solid Waste Management: 202/727-4600, or call the District's general information number. Information on household hazardous waste collection is available at the following Website: www.publicworks.ci.washington.dc.us/

D.C. EHA Pesticide Program: 202/535-2299. Call to find out if a company is licensed to use pesticides in D.C., and for information on prevention of pesticide poisoning.

D.C. EHA, Fisheries and Wildlife Division: 202/535-2260 for information about fishing licenses, fish consumption and group programs at the **Aquatic Education Center** in Anacostia Park. The center maintains

*Source: D.C. Water and Sewer Authority.

an aquarium of local fish, gives fishing lessons and provides educational programs on fish biology and the local river environment. Website: www.environ.state.dc.us

U.S. Park Services (for recreational and educational opportunities). Website: www.nps.gov

► **National Capitol Parks East** includes Anacostia Park (which has the only public boat ramp in D.C.), Fort Dupont and Kenilworth Aquatic Gardens, among others. 202/690-5185.

► **Rock Creek Park Nature Center:** 202/426-6828.

► **C&O Canal National Historical Park:** 202/653-5190.

► **George Washington Memorial Parkway** includes Turkey Run and Great Falls Park, among others. 703/289-2500.

Anacostia Watershed Society: 301/699-6204.

Sponsors paddle sport events to promote river awareness and environmental justice. Environmentally educational canoe tours and volunteer opportunities for river restoration.

Website: www.anacostiaws.org.

Contact the **Anacostia River Business Coalition** for business volunteerism and education.

Or Call **Washington Gas** at 703/750-1000 or the **Interstate Commission on the Potomac River Basin** at 301/984-1908 extension 120. Website: www.potomacriver.org

Earth Conservation Corps: 202/554-1960. Year-long vocational programs which help disadvantaged youths (age 18 to 25) develop personally and professionally. Website: www.earthconcorps.org

Potomac Conservancy: 703/276-2777. Volunteer for restoration and monitoring activities, learn about the river ecology (student program) and recreational opportunities on the Potomac. Website: www.potomac.org.

Contact the **Friends of the Potomac** at 202/467-4000 or info@potomacfriends.org if you are a non-profit group, business or local government looking for

assistance on projects concerning river revitalization and river-friendly business development. Website: www.potomacfriends.org

Regional Contacts

Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay: 410/377-6270, or visit www.acb-online.org for publications about BayScaping and other related topics.

Chesapeake Bay Program: 800/YOUR-BAY. A state and federal, public and private partnership effort to clean and protect the Chesapeake Bay Watershed. Website: www.chesapeakebay.net.

Pesticides in Surface Water of the Mid-Atlantic Region: Web site: <http://md.water.usgs.gov/publications/wrir-97-4280/>

WETA Public Broadcasting: Read the "Potomac Adventure" documentary on the Internet at www.weta.org/potomac to learn about this river's region, history and ecology. Includes lesson plans for teachers.

National Contacts

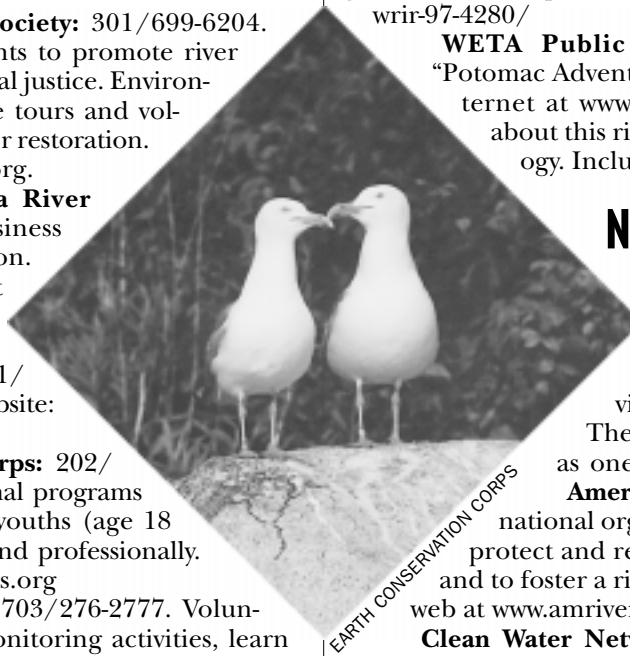
American Heritage Rivers: www.epa.gov/rivers. Presidential initiative to help communities restore and revitalize rivers and waterfronts. The Potomac River was selected as one of fourteen.

American Rivers: 202/347-7550. A national organization whose mission is to protect and restore America's river systems and to foster a river stewardship ethic. On the web at www.amrivers.org.

Clean Water Network: 202/289-2395. A coalition of networks. Website: www.cwn.org.

River Network: 503/241-3506. Citizen activism assistance. Website: www.rivernet.org.

Water Environment Federation: 703/684-2452 or 800/666-0206. "HHW: What You Should and Shouldn't Do" pamphlet. Website: www.wef.org.



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This fact sheet is also available on the Sustainable Washington Alliance website: <http://www.swampnet.org> and the Environmental Health Administration website: <http://www.environ.state.dc.us/eha>

For more information contact: Sustainable Washington Alliance c/o Concern, Inc. 1794 Columbia Rd. Washington, D.C. 20009 202.328.8160

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Vacant Lots & Brownfields

The Sustainable Washington Environmental Health Action Guide

Picture This

Almost every day, Tim and Dave walk their dog through an open city lot next to their apartment building. A long time ago, a small manufacturing plant had been here but now all that remained were a few pipes sticking out of the ground, metal scrap and rubble all overgrown with wild daisies and weeds. Lots of other kids walk through this lot as a short cut to the elementary school or bus stop. On some days, the lot becomes a baseball diamond, when Tim and Dave join dozens of other kids in the neighborhood for evening baseball games.

Properties like this underutilized and abandoned city lot, with their past history, may be slightly or significantly contaminated and are known as brownfields. Should Tim and Dave be walking their dog or playing baseball on this vacant lot? What can their parents do to get informed about the potential hazards and get the lot cleaned?

Find out about the city's brownfield and vacant lot programs.

Do You Know?

Many areas across the country that were once used for industrial and commercial purposes have been abandoned—some are contaminated. Because lenders, investors, and developers fear that involvement with these sites may make them liable for cleaning up contamination they did not create, they are more attracted to developing sites in undeveloped areas, called 'greenfields.' The result can be blighted areas that create safety and health risks for residents, drive up unemployment, and foster a sense of hopelessness. These areas are called 'brownfields.'

— From the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's web page on the Brownfields Economic Redevelopment Initiative

Brownfield Key Facts

- ▶ A brownfield is an abandoned or underutilized building or lot where redevelopment or expansion is slowed or complicated by concerns that the site is contaminated. While D.C. doesn't have the industrial history of many urban areas, it does have some brownfields.
- ▶ Brownfields are a problem because they rob communities of much needed economic development and pose a threat to the health, safety, and welfare of residents who live near them. They can also be an eyesore, spoiling the beauty and quality of life in neighborhoods.
- ▶ Development of brownfields for productive uses are delayed because developers fear becoming responsible for environmental cleanup.
- ▶ It is important to redevelop brownfields and put them to productive economic use because this will help beautify neighborhoods, bring jobs back to communities, increase tax revenues to local government, and remove contaminants and unsightly and unsafe buildings.

Take Action!

Brownfields

Contact Your Local Elected Officials. Encourage them to support strong local, state, and Federal policies that encourage the redevelopment of brownfields.

Contact the Federal Brownfields Programs—The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Brownfields Economic Redevelopment Initiative. This program works to promote redevelopment of brownfields and offers grants to local and state government programs. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) has coordinated over 300 brownfields pilot projects in cities across the country, including the District. For more information on the EPA's Brownfields work in the region, contact U.S. EPA Region 3's Brownfield Office at 800/438-2474 or visit their Internet site at www.epa.gov/reg3hwmd/brownfld/hmpage1.htm.

Contact the District of Columbia's Clean Land Program. A new program as of Fall 1999, the Department of Health's Clean Land Program is working with D.C. Government offices, the U.S. EPA, businesses and citizens to identify and clean up brownfields while fostering economic development in these long abandoned areas.

The Mayor has a **Brown-field Redevelopment Action Team** that is working hard to bring interested partners together to redevelop D.C.'s brownfields. And he appointed a special interagency coordinator to work with this team and with all the agencies concerned with brownfields.

If you have a brownfield in your community that you would like investigated for redevelopment, contact the **Clean Land Program** at 202/535-1747.

Vacant Lots

There are many vacant lots in the District. Vacant lots can be a problem for some communities because they represent lost economic opportunities and can spoil the beauty of neighborhoods and attract illegal dumpers, trash, and rodents. Some may also be brownfields. Cleaned up vacant lots can also benefit a community by providing open space for children or community gardens.

If There's a Vacant Lot Next to You That Is Not Being Maintained, Ask the Owner to Do So. It is the owner's legal responsibility to keep it clean. If that doesn't work, report the lot to the D.C. Government Information Line: 202/727-1000.

Organize Neighborhood Litter Cleanups. Talk to your neighbors, neighborhood association, church

group, or school about organizing formal or informal litter pickups. Take advantage of SWEEP's "Helping Hand Program," which lends tools and provides bags and trash pickup if given at least two weeks notice.

Report Illegal Dumping. Call the DPW/MPD Environmental Crimes Unit at 202/645-7196 or 202/645-7198 to report day and time of the incident, location, vehicle color/make/model and license plate number. There is a \$500 reward for information that leads to a conviction. Fines for this crime range from \$5,000 to \$25,000. See the Illegal Dumping and Hazardous Waste Fact Sheets for more information.

Report Rats. Litter and illegal dumpsites can attract rats and other pests to our yards, parks, or vacant lots. Call the EHA Rodent Control Program at 535-1954.

Transform a Vacant Lot Into a Community Garden. Community gardens are public gardens set up in vacant lots, city parks, or empty fields. Community gardens work to improve the quality of life in urban communities by beautifying neighborhoods, providing recreational opportunities and open space, and providing opportunities for residents to grow

their own food. There are a growing number of community gardens in the District.

To find out about starting community gardens in your neighborhood, contact Garden Resources of Washington (GROW) at 234-0591 or grow19@aol.com and ask about their urban gardening program.

Resources

Also see the Fact Sheets: "Litter, Illegal Dumping and Recycling" and "Toxic Substances and Hazardous Waste."

Local Contacts

D.C. Department of Health, Environmental Health Administration Clean Land Program: 202/535-1746. For information on the District's brownfield program. Website: www.environ.state.dc.us.

D.C. Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs, Neighborhood Stabilization Program: 202/442-4610. One-stop access to city services. Neighborhood officers coordinate action on problems such as vacant lots, vandalism, rodents, fire hazards and other causes of community deterioration.

Metropolitan Police Department Environmental Crimes Unit: 202/645-7196 or 202/645-7198. Illegal dumping investigation and citation.

Environmental Finance Center—University of Maryland: 301/405-6383. Researches innovative brownfields funding mechanisms. Call for information on financing brownfields and other environmental projects. Website: www.mdsg.umd.edu/EFC/Info.





EARTH CONSERVATION CORPS

GROW (Garden Resources of Washington): 202/234-0591. Works with community gardens and schools to revitalize communities, foster leadership, and encourage learning.

Regional Contacts

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Region 3 Brownfields Program: 800/438-2474 and www.epa.gov/reg3hwmd/brownfld/hmpage1.htm.

National Contacts

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's brownfields website: www.epa.gov/brownfields. Extensive information on Federal brownfields programs, tools, partners and resources.

Complete contact information for organizations listed on this factsheet are available in the directory at the end of this guide.

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Recycling Litter & Illegal Dumping

The Sustainable Washington Environmental Health Action Guide

Picture This



Barbara looks out of her living room window to a usual sight every Sunday morning: growing mounds of smelly trash, tire scraps, and cardboard boxes on a vacant lot near her house. Could this be an explanation for the rats and bugs infesting her home? She has stopped sitting on her porch because of the unpleasant view and odor. What can Barbara do to stop this pattern of illegal dumping? Who can she call to get the problem solved? Isn't there ample opportunity to recycle or dispose of these items for free?

Find out what you can do to reduce trash problems and get your neighborhood cleaned up.

Do You Know?

The District produces more than 1.6 *billion* pounds of garbage each year, and growing! That's enough trash to fill the Washington Monument one and a half times and equals almost 4.4 million pounds, or 2200 tons, per day. America has been called "the disposable society" because of statistics like these. Each one of the District's citizens and businesses creates part of this pile, and each one can help alleviate the management challenge that trash presents. The three R's—"Reduce, Reuse and Recycle"—are essential elements of the District's solid waste (trash) management program. To reduce the amount of material we throw away (and remember, there really is no "away"—it still has to go somewhere) we can first rethink what we buy, how we buy it and how we use it. Once trash is generated, we can make a huge impact through recycling. It recovers valuable resources, reduces pollution and decreases the District's reliance on landfills and resource recovery plants. It conserves energy and natural resources because it reduces the need for raw materials to be taken from the Earth and processed.

Key Recycling Facts

- ▶ Every 118 pounds of newspapers you recycle saves a tree.
- ▶ The energy saved from one recycled aluminum can is enough to operate a television set for three hours.
- ▶ Every glass bottle recycled saves enough energy to light a 100 watt bulb for four hours.
- ▶ 30% to 40% of landfilled material in the U.S. is construction waste, much of which is reusable and recyclable.

continued

Key Recycling Facts *continued*

- ▶ **Recycling one gallon of oil saves enough electricity to run the average household for almost 24 hours.**
- ▶ **Our only source of tin in the U.S. is recycled tin.**
- ▶ **Recycling only takes a few minutes per day.**

Trash in the District of Columbia

The average Washington household creates seven pounds of waste per day.

For many years, most of our waste went to the D.C. landfill. In 1995 the landfill closed. Since then, the District pays to have the waste brought to the Fairfax County incinerator where it is burned for energy.

What our city's garbage looks like:

- ▶ Paper: 42%
- ▶ Miscellaneous: 20%
- ▶ Food waste: 11%
- ▶ Glass: 10%
- ▶ Plastics: 8%
- ▶ Yard waste: 5%
- ▶ Metals: 3%
- ▶ Aluminum: 1%

Take Action! Reduce, Reuse, & Recycle

There are many ways you can help solve our garbage problem:

REDUCE the amount of trash we create.

- ▶ Ask yourself, "Do I really need this?"
- ▶ Buy goods in bulk: less packaging is used. Avoid individually wrapped servings. Buy concentrates and dilute the product yourself.
- ▶ Avoid buying products that have more than one layer of wrapping.
- ▶ Choose products that have recyclable packaging.
- ▶ Use rechargeable batteries—you'll save money, too.
- ▶ Avoid using disposable products. Use long-lasting cloth napkins, silverware, glass and ceramic mugs, plates, and glasses instead of disposable or plastic ones.
- ▶ Reduce junk mail! Write to Mail Preference Service, Direct Marketing Association, P.O. Box 9008, Farmingdale, NY, 11735-9008. Tell them to take your name off junk mail lists.
- ▶ Look for the recycling bin at your local post office for mail that has been read.

REUSE items over and over again. Choose products that are designed for reuse.

- ▶ Reuse plastic containers and plastic bags whenever possible for storing food or other household items.
- ▶ Use replaceable razor blades, cloth diapers, and rechargeable batteries.
- ▶ Use durable cloth grocery bags or reuse the grocery bags they gave you last time you shopped.

RECYCLE: Much of the garbage that we produce everyday is recyclable. Recycling takes materials that would normally be thrown away and makes them into new products. Recycling trash instead of throwing it away is important because:

- ▶ It saves landfill space. Recycling can help keep garbage out of landfills and save money too.
- ▶ It creates jobs for people who separate, process, and transport recycled materials, and who make new products from your recycled materials.
- ▶ It saves natural resources. Fewer raw materials need to be taken from the Earth.
- ▶ It reduces pollution. Making products from recycled materials uses less energy and produces less pollution than making products from raw materials.

The
District
produces more
than 1.6 *billion* pounds
of garbage each
year—and
growing!

Buy Recycled!

Help Close the Loop: Purchase Goods Made from Recycled Materials!

Purchasing goods made from recycled materials saves natural resources and supports the market for recyclable materials. Some items to start with are plastic bags, paper products, office supplies, notecards and product packaging. When shopping, look for the symbol indicating the item is made from recycled-content and choose the brand which has the highest percentage of "post-consumer" recycled content. Encourage stores to sell goods made from recycled materials.

Compost. Backyard composting of grass and yard trimmings reduces the amount of waste that the city needs to handle and creates an excellent fertilizer and soil builder for around your gardens. Food waste should not be composted in the District, as it attracts rats. Learn how to compost successfully by calling the D.C. Department of Public Works' (DPW) Sanitation Information Line, 202/727-4600.

D.C. Recycles!

Commercial Recycling. It is mandatory for businesses and residential buildings with at least four dwelling units to hire a recycling contractor.

Curbside Recycling. All District residences with three or fewer dwelling units are serviced by the curbside recycling program. Put these materials in your recycling bin:

- ▶ **Newspapers:** Put in paper bags or tie in bundles. Include all inserts.
- ▶ **Office paper:** Put in paper bags or tie in bundles. No junk mail.
- ▶ **Magazines, catalogs and phone books:** Put in paper bags or tie in bundles. No junk mail or paperback books.
- ▶ **Corrugated cardboard boxes:** This cardboard has a wavy layer in between the outer layers. Break down (flatten) and tie in bundles that are no more than 42 inches in any direction. No paperboard (cereal box) material is accepted.
- ▶ **Glass bottles and jars:** Discard lids and rinse clean before recycling. No light bulbs, drinking glasses, cookware, mirrors, or other types of non-container glass are recycled. Container glass is 100% recyclable.
- ▶ **Metal cans:** Rinse food and beverage cans clean. Americans use about 100 million steel cans every day.
- ▶ **Plastic bottles (with necks that are noticeably smaller than the body) marked as “#1” or “#2” plastic:** Discard caps and rings, rinse clean, and crush flat. DO NOT include motor oil and household chemical containers—these should ONLY be discarded on a household hazardous waste collection day. See the “Hazardous Waste” fact sheet for more information.

Recycling Drop-off Locations

Several drop-off locations accept large amounts of materials or materials that are not collected in the curbside program (such as odd metal items and scrap paper/junk mail). Contact the Sanitation Information Line at 202/727-4600 for a complete listing.

Motor Oil and Antifreeze. Drain oil into a clean container with a sealable lid and do not mix with other fluids. Bring them to a “Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) Collection Day” event (call 727-1000 for dates). Oil may also be recycled at the Fort Totten Transfer Station, 4900 Bates Road NE (576-6803). You can also ask your local gas and service stations if they will recycle your oil and antifreeze (note: pets love antifreeze, which is deadly). Oil and other hazardous wastes that are dumped in a yard or sewer do substantial damage to the community’s lands and rivers.

Household Chemicals. We use many chemicals and other materials around the home that may be hazardous if thrown away improperly. These include paints, thinners, pesticides, household cleaners, photographic chemicals, NiCad batteries, etc. Bring them to a HHW Collection Day event.

Car Batteries. Take them to any Trak Auto store or a HHW Collection Day event.

Scrap Tires. Fort Totten Transfer Station will take small numbers of tires for free. Tires are not recyclable in D.C., so they will be burned for their energy value. Tire stores and service station will also accept them for a small fee (a dollar or two).

Special Collections

Large Usable Household Items. Call Goodwill, the Salvation Army or Value Village to schedule a donation collection for clothes, electronics, furniture and other large household items.

Old Appliances and Other Large (Unusable) Household Items. Many appliances, such as stoves, refrigerators, washers and dryers, can be reused or recycled. Call 727-1000 to schedule a bulk collection.



Litter and Illegal Dumping

Litter and illegal dumping of garbage is a serious problem in many urban communities. It can spoil the beauty of neighborhoods, attract rodents and other pests, and pollute our streams and rivers.

Don’t Litter. Always put your trash in a proper trash receptacle.

Keep Your Trash Cans Covered. Much of the litter on the streets is from garbage blown from uncovered street corner trash cans or uncovered trash cans put out by residents for trash pickup. Keeping your trash can lid on tight can help prevent this from happening.

If You Are Illegally Dumping Your Trash . . .

DON’T! You will receive a \$5,000 to \$25,000 fine and/or 60 days in jail, pay three times the cost of cleaning the dumpsite and forfeit the vehicle you used. This is a major problem in our city. Besides spoiling our public and private spaces, much of the trash ends up in our streams and rivers.

Report Illegal Dumping. Call the MPD Environmental Crimes Unit at 645-7196. Report day and time of the incident, location, vehicle color/make/model and license plate number. There is a \$500 reward for information that leads to a conviction.

Report Rats. Litter and illegal dumpsites can attract rats and other pests to our homes, parks, or vacant lots. Call the D.C. Environmental Health Administration (EHA) Rodent Control Program at 535-1954.

Organize Neighborhood Litter Cleanups: Talk to your neighbors, neighborhood association, church group, or school about organizing formal or informal litter pickups.

Resources

Read the fact sheets: "Healthy Rivers and You" and "Toxic Substances and Hazardous Waste"

Local Contacts

D.C. DPW Sanitation Information Line: 202/727-4600. Information on what to recycle and how to prepare recyclables. Information on recycling drop-off centers and household hazardous waste collection days. Website: www.publicworks.ci.washington.dc.us.

D.C. DPW's Solid Waste Education and Enforcement Program (SWEEP): 202/645-9600. Illegal dumping investigation and citation. Citizen cleanup toolkits.

D.C. EHA Rodent Control Program: 535-1954.

Fort Totten Transfer Station: 202/576-6803. Bring residential oil, tires and trash to 4900 Bates Road NE (corner of McCormick Dr.). Call for directions.

Metropolitan Police Department Environmental Crimes Unit: 645-7196. Illegal dumping investigation and citation.

Regional Contacts

MACREDO (Mid-Atlantic Consortium of Recycling and Economic Development Officials): www.libertynet.org/



EARTH CONSERVATION CORPS

macredo. Contact this organization if you are considering a recycling business venture in the Mid-Atlantic Region or if you need government contacts on recycling policies, programs and regulations.

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Region 3: 800/438-2474; website: www.epa.gov/region03.

National Contacts

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Office of Solid Waste: www.epa.gov/osw. Homepage for publications and information on recycling.

Complete contact information for organizations listed on this factsheet are available in the directory at the end of the Environmental Health Action Guide.

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Toxic Substances & Hazardous Waste

The Sustainable Washington Environmental Health Action Guide

Picture This

Dina, Mark, Dave, Teresa, and Patricia from Mr. Park's chemistry class at Hill Crest High School used environmental databases from the Internet to develop information on businesses generating and using hazardous chemicals their community. They came up with a list of five companies that are the biggest users of hazardous materials in their ward and wrote to them asking to visit their facilities and see what they were doing to prevent pollution. Today, these students are working with one of these local companies, GBS Technologies, Inc., to develop and implement plans to increase safety and reduce hazardous waste.

Find out who uses and stores hazardous materials in your neighborhood, and learn how you can promote environmental safety and pollution prevention in your community.

Do You Know?

Chemical substances are used in all sorts of ways to produce the things in life that we want and need. Food, water, clothing, newspapers, furniture, computers—all of these things are created using chemicals that can be potentially dangerous to humans and the environment if they are used or handled irresponsibly. Every day in the District of Columbia, thousands of pounds of hazardous substances are used and/or generated as waste by businesses, industry, government and households. Given the pervasiveness of chemicals in our life, it is inevitable that accidents and spills will happen. When chemicals get released into the air, soil, and water of our communities, it is important that the community is informed. In the long run, however, it is even more important that communities encourage businesses and individuals to practice safety and take steps to prevent pollution and spills from happening.

Key Facts About Chemicals & Hazardous Waste

- ▶ Nearly 70,000 synthetic chemicals have been introduced in the U.S. since World War II.
- ▶ Over 300 million tons of chemicals are produced in the U.S. each year.
- ▶ 764 tons of hazardous waste were generated in D.C. in 1995.
- ▶ An additional 1000 tons of chemicals and hazardous materials are used, stored, or transported each year in the District of Columbia.
- ▶ There are 924 sites in the district that have permits to generate, use, store, or transport hazardous materials.
- ▶ 260 spills of hazardous materials were reported in the District of Columbia between 1988 and 1995.

What Is a Hazardous Substance?

A **hazardous substance** is any material (solid, liquid, or gas) that can potentially cause serious harm to human health or the environment if it is improperly used, stored, transported, disposed of or otherwise mismanaged. Some hazardous substances are also known as toxic substances or pollutants.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) defines **hazardous waste** as any waste that is “ignitable, corrosive, or reactive (explosive). Also, if waste contains certain amounts of toxic chemicals, it is considered hazardous.” Five hundred specific kinds of hazardous wastes have been defined by the EPA. More information is available on the EPA web site at www.epa.gov/oswer/.

Who Uses Hazardous Materials?

Large facilities such as military bases, medical facilities, petroleum storage yards, utilities, and factories. Large facilities often manage the greatest amounts of hazardous materials—and have the largest accidents. Facilities that use, store, treat, or dispose of toxic substances and hazardous waste are often located in low income and minority communities. These communities often have a disproportionate amount of pollution compared to other communities.

Smaller businesses such as dry cleaners, auto repair shops, and printers also use toxic chemicals that are dangerous to human health and the environment. While their total toxic releases may be small in comparison to bigger operations, they can be dangerous because they are often located in our neighborhoods, close to our homes, schools, and churches. In fact, our schools and homes are common places where hazardous materials are used!

Households. Individuals also use hazardous materials in their homes including cleaning agents, paints, motor oil, batteries, and solvents. Whereas large and small businesses must have permits to handle hazardous materials, many people at use and dispose of dangerous products in their homes in very unsafe ways. On average, each U.S. household uses 25 gallons of chemicals yearly for cleaning and yard care. Americans produce 1.6 million tons of household hazardous waste every year. Using these products around the house or throwing them in the garbage can pollute the air, water, and soil. See fact sheets on Healthy Rivers, Indoor and Outdoor Air Quality, and Recycling for more information on managing and disposing of household hazardous materials.

Hazardous Materials and Citizens' Rights

Under the **Emergency Preparedness and Community Right To Know Act of 1986 (EPCRA)**, Congress granted citizens the right to know:

- ▶ what businesses, facilities, and sites use or store hazardous materials in your community.
- ▶ the type and amount of hazardous materials that are generated, treated, or stored in your community.
- ▶ the type of threat that the identified materials pose to your community's health.
- ▶ the plans that facilities have to respond to accidents and to alert the community of spills.
- ▶ the measures that facilities are taking to minimize both the risks and the use of hazardous materials under their control.

In order to help citizens exercise their right to be informed about hazardous materials, the U.S. EPA Office of Pollution Prevention and Toxics developed the **Toxic Release Inventory (TRI)**. TRI requires manufacturing facilities that release any one of 600 types of chemicals into the air or water to report this information to the public. The U.S. EPA publishes TRI data on its web site, www.epa.gov/tri. TRI only includes data from facilities that employ 10 workers or more.

The “Community Right To Know” Act (EPCRA) also established **Local Emergency Planning Committees (LEPCs)**. Every county in the U.S. must setup an LEPC, which includes residents from all facets of a community who work with each other and with facilities to develop pollution prevention and emergency response plans to deal with hazardous materials spills. LEPCs are notified by companies if spills occur, and the LEPC is required to share this information with the public.

Regulating and Tracking Hazardous Waste

Apart from the Toxics Release Inventory mentioned above, facilities that store, treat, move, or dispose of hazardous waste are regulated by the **Federal Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA)**. Companies that use, generate, store or transport toxic chemicals must get a RCRA permit from the U.S. EPA to operate. In 1998 there were 964 RCRA sites in Washington, D.C. handling 306 thousand pounds of hazardous waste per month. RCRA permit information is available to the public from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. You can call the RCRA Hotline at 800/424-9346 or visit the Hotline's web site at www.epa.gov/oswer/ to request information about RCRA permit holders in your community.

Underground Storage Tanks. There are 5400 underground storage tanks in Washington, D.C. that hold hazardous substances, petroleum, and heating oil. The D.C. Environmental Health Administration (EHA) operates an Underground Storage Tank (UST) Program that regulates and enforces the safe operation of underground storage tanks, and oversees clean-up for leaking storage tanks. In 1998 the District of Columbia was recognized by U.S. EPA Region 3 as having the highest compliance rate in the region for tank upgrading (97 percent). The District had a leak

clean-up rate of 88 percent. For more information on UST issues and the District's management program, call the EHA's Bureau of Hazardous Materials & Toxic Substances at 202/535-2270 or visit their web site at www.environ.state.dc.us.

Cleaning Up Hazardous Waste & Pollution

Many years of use, storage, and treatment of hazardous substances and hazardous waste have polluted areas in the District of Columbia, endangering the health of people and the environment. Cleaning up these sites costs both time and money. In order to deal with and fund contaminated site clean-up, Congress passed the **Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA)** in 1980. The more popular name for CERCLA is **Superfund**. The program is managed by the U.S. EPA, and allows government to assess and clean up hazardous waste sites that are abandoned or uncontrolled. The costs of clean up are paid for by the polluters—both past and present.

The **CERCLIS Information System** (www.epa.gov/enviro/html/cerclis) lists and tracks sites. Information that is gathered is used to rank the degree of danger associated with each of the sites. The sites that pose the greatest risk to public health are placed on the National Priorities List (NPL) and targeted for rapid clean up. Of the 9 CERCLA sites listed for Washington, D.C., only one—The Washington Navy Yard—is currently on the NPL list. More information about Superfund sites is available on the U.S. EPA Superfund web site at www.epa.gov/superfund/ or by calling the national Superfund Hotline at 800/424-9346. Some information about CERCLA sites is unavailable to the public.

U.S. EPA fosters public involvement in the Superfund clean-up process is through **Community Advisory Groups (CAGs)**. CAGs provide a public forum for community members to discuss their concerns about sites near them and to get involved in cleanup decisions. CAGs are made up of people representing many different community interests. EPA makes sure that low-income residents, minorities and new immigrants get the facts and have a say in solving problems. U.S. EPA also provides technical assistance to communities to interpret technical data, understand site hazards, and become more knowledgeable about the different technologies being used to clean up sites. Contact the U.S. EPA Superfund Hotline at 800/424-9346 for more information.

Many CERCLA sites are located in urban areas where economic development and job opportunities are badly needed. In recent years there have been efforts to streamline some of the procedures required to clean up hazardous waste sites and to involve private sector investors who wish to redevelop these sites for the benefit of the entire community. These sites are called **Brownfields**. See the Brownfields and vacant lots

fact sheet for more information about Brownfields and redevelopment issues in the District of Columbia.

Take Action!

Learn About Hazardous Materials in Your Neighborhood. Environmental Defense's Chemical Scorecard (www.scorecard.org) tracks the companies that are emitting TRI (toxic release inventory) chemicals in your neighborhood, and explains the potential health risks associated with these chemicals. You can also call the U.S. EPA Hotline at 800/424-9346 or the D.C. Environmental Health Administration Bureau of Hazardous Materials & Toxic Substances at 202/535-2290 for more information about:

- companies in your neighborhood that pose a risk of chemical emergencies;
- lists of chemicals stored by facilities in your neighborhood;
- safety information about chemicals stored by facilities;
- chemical and oil spills that have occurred;
- evacuation routes in case of chemical emergencies;
- steps being taken by government and companies to reduce the risk of chemical emergencies.

Encourage Companies to Practice Pollution Prevention. Environmental Defense's Chemical Scorecard (www.scorecard.org) allows you to send a fax directly from your computer to facilities that release chemicals in your neighborhood, asking them to tell you what they are doing to reduce pollution. An address and phone number is also provided so you can contact them yourself.

Report Chemical Spills and Emergencies. Call the D.C. EHA at 202/535-2270 or 202/535-2290 to report accidents or spills involving hazardous materials. You can also call the EPA Region 3 Response Center at 215/814-9016 and the federal National Response Center Emergency Hotline at 800/424-8802 to report oil and hazardous materials spills.

Get Involved In The Permit Process. The D.C. EHA and the U.S. EPA must inform the public before a RCRA permit is issued or reissued. Public hearings are often held to give community residents a chance to comment on permit decisions. Find out about upcoming permit hearings by contacting the D.C. EHA at 202/535-2290 or check their web site at www.environ.dc.state.us.

Prevent Pollution. Find out about practical steps you can take at home and in your community to reduce the risks of hazardous materials. See the fact sheets on Indoor Air, Asthma, Lead Poisoning, Healthy Rivers, and a Clean and Healthy Home for more information on alternatives, safe handling and safe disposal. Suggestions include:

- **Minimize Contact with Hazardous Materials.** Purchase and use products containing toxic chemicals only when you need them and only buy as much as you will use right away so you won't need to

store them. Storing products increases the risk of spills or other accidents.

- ▶ **Use Non-Chemical Alternatives If Possible.** Many stores sell natural, non-toxic, or non-chemical alternatives to most hazardous household products. Ask the store clerk for information or check with the D.C. Solid Waste Division at 202/727-4600 for tips on making and using non-toxic or non-chemical household products.
- ▶ **Use and Store In Well-Ventilated Areas.** Household hazardous products can cause indoor air pollution or fire hazards, and can trigger asthma attacks and other respiratory ailments. If you store hazardous materials in your home, keep them in well ventilated areas away from asthma sufferers. See the Indoor Air Quality and Asthma fact sheets for further information.
- ▶ **Dispose Chemical Products Safely.** Do not just throw hazardous materials into the garbage or pour them down the drain. Professionals who can dispose of or recycle them properly should collect these materials. Call the Department of Health, EHA Bureau of Hazardous Materials and Toxic Substances at 535-2270 and 535-2290 or the main D.C. government information number (202/727-1000) for information on household hazardous waste collection days and handling hazardous wastes responsibly.

Contact Your Local Government Officials. Ask your local government officials to strengthen and expand Federal right-to-know reporting and pollution prevention planning requirements. Also ask them to work quickly and effectively to clean up toxic waste sites and to include residents in major decisions that affect the entire community.

Resources

Local Contacts

D.C. EHA Bureau of Hazardous Materials & Toxic Substances (www.environ.dc.state.us): 202/535-2270 or 202/535-2290

D.C. Underground Storage Tank Program: 202/535-2525

D.C. Department of Public Works Sanitation Information Line **Sanitation Information Line:** For household hazardous materials collection and handling information, call 202/727-4600.

Regional Contacts

U.S. EPA Region 3 Hazardous Site Clean-Up Division (www.epa.gov/reg3hwmd/): 800/438-2474

U.S. EPA Region 3 Waste and Chemicals Management Division (www.epa.gov/reg3wcmd/): 800/438-2474

U.S. EPA Region 3 Response Center (215/814-9016) should be called in the event of emergencies and spills involving hazardous materials.

National Contacts

Call U.S. EPA's EPCRA Hotline 800/962-6215 for information on chemicals, hazardous materials, Superfund, and your right-to-know.

U.S. EPA's RCRA toll-free Hotline 800/424-9346 has information on Federal hazardous waste programs.

U.S. EPA National Response Center 800/424-8802 should be contacts in the event of emergencies and spills involving hazardous materials.

Internet Resources

Access the **EnviroSense Homepage** (<http://es.epa.gov/>) for information on what the Federal government is doing to help businesses practice pollution prevention.

Access **U.S. EPA's Toxic Release Inventory Homepage** (www.epa.gov/tri/) for more information on the program.

Access **Environmental Defense's Pollution Prevention Alliance Pollution Prevention Homepage** (www.environmentaldefense.org/PPA).

Access **U.S. EPA's Household Hazardous Waste Guide** (www.epa.gov/epaoswer/non-hw/househld/hhw.htm) for more information on household hazardous waste.

Access **U.S. EPA's Office of Solid Waste and Emergency Response Homepage** (www.epa.gov/oswer/) for information on Federal chemical emergency programs and hazardous waste management programs.

Full mailing addresses and phone numbers of organizations listed on this fact sheet are available in this Guide's Directory of Organizations.

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Clean & Healthy Homes

The Sustainable Washington Environmental Health Action Guide

Picture This

According to his pediatrician, the Johnson's son James is sick more often than other toddlers. In addition to the baby's health problems, Mr. Johnson's asthma has gotten worse in the past year. After learning about these problems, their family doctor asks some questions about their household activities. After James was born, Mr. Johnson volunteered to do more housework. But the Johnson's don't clean as frequently as they did before, because the baby has taken up much of their time. Their doctor provided them with information about preventive health maintenance in the home that may help them.

Find out what you can do to maintain a healthy home.



Do You Know?

You can protect your family's health by keeping your home clean, and free of harmful or toxic products. Something as simple and common as dust can create real health hazards, especially for children or people with serious illnesses. Some household cleaning products can be dangerous too, especially if used together. Ammonia and chlorine bleach, for instance, produce a deadly gas when they are mixed. Pesticides, motor oil and other toxic products often found in the home create more sources of potential health harm. Using safe products, keeping a clean home, and learning about dangerous substances in your home can help prevent serious health problems or injuries.

Key Facts About Dust and Cleaning

- ▶ **Dust can contain hundreds of chemicals, some of which may cause diseases including infections, asthma, and cancer.**
- ▶ **Dust can be made of many biological components, such as pollens, mold spores, skin flakes, animal dander, insect parts, mite feces and others which can lead to health symptoms.**
- ▶ **Dust can contain heavy metals, such as lead, cadmium and mercury, which can cause learning and other developmental disabilities.**
- ▶ **Crawling infants who mouth their fingers can ingest 10 grams of dust per day in a dusty home and because of their body size and development they are 20 times more at risk than an adult.**
- ▶ **Chemical products used to clean your home may also contribute to environmental, indoor air quality and health related problems.**
- ▶ **Cleaning can make a major impact on your indoor home environment and can improve health symptoms, especially among children, the elderly and those with pre-existing health conditions.**

Take Action!

Clean Frequently. Cleaning is an effective health maintenance strategy, and a very cost effective one at that. It's true! A clean home is a healthy home.

Begin Outdoors. Look at entryways for how dust and other soils can be tracked into the house. Keep all walks and entrances free of soil, especially as they get closer to the house. Keeping soil and dust outside eliminates time and effort removing them through cleaning.

Use Entrance Mats and Remove Shoes. Studies have clearly indicated that mother was right when she told us to "wipe our feet." Use high quality mats both outside and inside entryways. Mats should be cleaned, vacuumed and replaced periodically. Furthermore, removing shoes, as done in many Eastern cultures, significantly reduces household dust.

Minimize Clutter. Reducing clutter makes cleaning easier and reduces dust and hiding places for cockroaches and pests. Organize toys and stuffed animals.

Dust and Vacuum. Dust weekly using a moist cloth. Feather dusters only serve to redistribute the dust. Carpets, upholstered furniture and draperies are major "reservoirs" for dust and biological pollutants. Vacuum once or twice a week with a high quality vacuum fitted with a double lined paper filter bag at the least (some filters are so porous that the captured dust is just blown back into the area). Filter bags should be changed when they become half full. Steam clean at least once per year. The most effective machines to "steam clean" or "evacuate" your rugs can be found at your local janitorial supply house. While this may seem costly, consider having a cleaning party and sharing the costs with friends and neighbors, and finish the day with an outdoor picnic to let your rugs dry! Upholstered furniture needs to be vacuumed and cleaned periodically as well. If there are infants who crawl around on floors who mouth their fingers (suck their thumbs), the frequency of vacuuming should be increased to keep the children from ingesting dust and other contaminants.

Use Hard Flooring. There is no place for dirt to hide on hardwood, tile, linoleum or vinyl flooring. Carpeting is a wonderful floor covering with many benefits—however, if it is not maintained correctly, the contaminants in the carpets can lead to health

problems. Thus, if you cannot maintain the carpet correctly, consider removing it.

Consider Replacing Draperies and Horizontal Blinds with Vertical Blinds. Both draperies and horizontal blinds collect dust and other contaminants. Vertical blinds present less surface area to hold dust.

Change Air Filters Regularly. Replace the typical blue mesh screens with pleated filters for heaters and air conditioning units. Check them monthly. Write the replacement date on the new filter and keep a replacement log. Keep weeds, standing water and trash receptacles away from air conditioners and other fresh air intakes.

Manage Temperature, Humidity and Ventilation. Mites, molds, and other allergens can be controlled through managing the indoor environment, especially keeping humidity under 50%. Use of dehumidifiers, keeping windows open when outside conditions allow and using fans to increase ventilation can all contribute to limiting the growth of unwanted contaminants such as mold and mildew. When cleaning, pay particular attention to areas where moisture and condensation collects, such as under sinks, and near toilets and bathtubs. Also, make sure to ventilate the rooms in which you're using cleaning chemicals.

Wash Mattress and Pillow Covers. Mattress and pillow covers protect children from sleeping in an environment where millions of dust mites may exist. The covers encapsulate the mattress and pillow but still allow the bedding to breathe. Washing bedding and blankets weekly in hot water can kill dust mites.

Keep Food Areas Clean and Store Food in Sealed Containers. Clean kitchens and eating areas soon after food preparation. Do not let dishes accumulate. Crumbs attract cockroaches and other pests. Address spills as soon as possible. Most common household spills can be absorbed easily into a clean sponge, cloth or paper towel without the use of chemicals, if done while the spill is wet. Once dry, strong chemicals which can affect health may be required to remove the spot and may also increase the potential for damage to the surface being cleaned.

Select Cleaning Products Carefully. Cleaning products themselves can contribute to an unhealthy and unsafe home. Replace common household products that can trigger respiratory attacks such as those that contain solvents, aerosols, chlorine bleach and ammonia. These products are often flammable and toxic, and may produce toxic gas when mixed with



others. Many household cleaners are poisonous—even in small quantities if consumed by a child. These products can be replaced with non-toxic detergent-based cleaners.

Minimize the Use of Pesticides. Keeping the house clean, eliminating food and water sources that attract pests, eliminating nesting and hiding places (clutter) and means of entry (sealing cracks and fixing torn screens) are the best way to control pests. When additional measures are needed, use traps and adhesive strips. These should be placed in areas where children do not have access. If chemical pesticides are necessary, use pest-specific products. For instance, if the cockroaches are the problem use a pesticide specific for cockroaches. Use pesticides only where and when necessary and with a lot of ventilation.

Smoke Outdoors. Not only is smoking bad for your health and the health of those close to you, but smoking is also very dirty and contributes to the problem of keeping a home clean.

Resources

Read other fact sheets in this guide for related information, such as "Childhood Lead Poisoning," "Asthma," and "Indoor Air Pollution."

Local Contacts

The National Capital Poison Center: 202/625-3333. For emergency treatment information in case of household cleaner or poison ingestion. Reference brochures and basic information for treating your pet are also available.

UDC Cooperative Extension Service: 202/274-6900 or 274-7159 for information on household chemicals and alternatives, pest control, pesticide precautions and landscaping.

Department of Public Works Sanitation Information Line: 202/727-4600. Information on household hazardous waste collection and alternatives to household cleaners and pesticides.

National Contacts

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Healthy Home program: 800/HUDS-FHA. For similar information and more on child health and safety in the home. Call or visit HUD's Healthy Homes for Children webpage at www.montana.edu/www.cxair.

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Indoor Air Quality Information Hotline: 800/438-4318. Para ayuda en español, llama la Línea Nacional Hispana de Protección Ambiental Para Su Vivienda a 800/725-8312.

We thank and give special credit to Stephen Ashkin for developing this fact sheet. Stephen invites questions and feedback:

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Website: <http://www.seventhgen.com>

Dust
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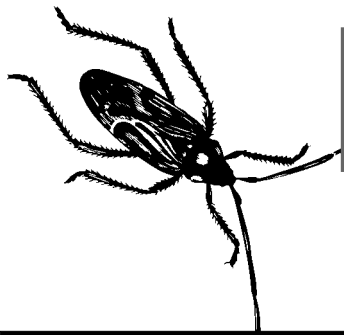
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Pest Control

Rats and Roaches

The Sustainable Washington Environmental Health Action Guide

Picture This

Diane woke up early and went to the kitchen for something to eat. To her disappointment, she noticed the quick retreat of several cockroaches as she turned the lights on. The can of bug killer she used last night didn't have much effect, if any. Diane is tired of living with roaches, and is concerned for her children's health. She has also seen some rats in the alley behind her townhouse, where the garbage is put out. Her children sometimes play ball in the alley because the neighborhood streets are too busy with traffic—but she wonders if the alley is too dangerous as well. Diane knows that it doesn't have to be like this. Fed up with these nuisances and eager to improve her family's living environment, Diane decides to look for solutions.

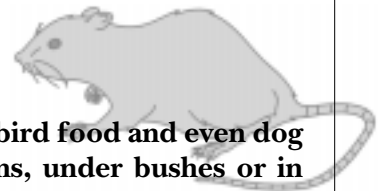
Find out what you and your neighbors can do to get rid of these unhealthy pests.

Do You Know?

An important part of improving the quality of life for every Washingtonian is to get rid of the unsanitary pests that invade our homes, schools, neighborhoods and businesses. As is common in cities, rats and cockroaches are examples of pests that pose the biggest health risks to District residents, especially children.

Key Facts About Rats

- ▶ Rats eat garbage, leftover dog food, bird food and even dog excrement that is deposited on lawns, under bushes or in alleys.
- ▶ Rats spread serious diseases to people in multiple ways: through the lice or disease-carrying fleas that live on rats, through their droppings and urine and by biting people. Rat bite fever is a particularly serious disease.
- ▶ Rats can reproduce every 21–23 days, which means that a single pair can have 15,000 descendants within one year!
- ▶ Rats crawl through holes as small as a quarter.
- ▶ Rats gnaw through plaster, wood and similar building materials.
- ▶ Rats are amazing survivors: they can land unharmed after a five-story fall, jump three feet in the air, and tread water for three days.



Key Facts About Cockroaches

- ▶ The German cockroach is present worldwide. It is estimated that one female cockroach can have 40,000 descendants within one year.



continued

Key Facts About Cockroaches *continued*

- ▶ Roaches spread diseases such as dysentery and urinary infections. This is why supermarkets, delicatessens and restaurants may be closed when health inspectors find roaches.
- ▶ Roaches cause dermatitis (inflammation of the skin) and are associated with an increase in incidence and severity of asthma, especially in children.
- ▶ Roaches leave a scented trail, which allows them to quickly find their way back to their hiding places and can make eliminating them a tough challenge.

Take Action!

Rats

Your key to keeping rats away: Don't provide them with food and shelter!

Keep Your Yard Free of Trash

- ▶ Regularly remove dog excrement—it attracts rats!
- ▶ Immediately remove loose trash such as food wrappers and beverage containers.
- ▶ Feed your pets indoors or, if they must eat outside, remove leftovers after they are done. Rats will even eat bird food.
- ▶ If there's a vacant lot next to you that is not being maintained, ask the owner to do so. If you feel a neighboring lot is a health hazard, call the Department of Health, Environmental Health Administration (EHA) Rodent Control Program at 202/535-1954.

Secure Your Trash

- ▶ Use metal trash cans. Rats eventually eat through plastic trashcans. Plastic bags left outside of trashcans are easy prey for rats, so don't use them.
- ▶ Avoid using damaged trash cans. Rats can squeeze through small holes.

A single pair of rats can have 15,000 descendants within one year. One female cockroach can have 40,000 descendants within one year.

- ▶ Use enough trash cans to handle your disposal needs without overflow.
- ▶ Place the lids on tightly. Damaged or loose-fitting lids may let rats in.

Avoid Creating Shelters for Rats

- ▶ Old furniture and appliances left outside are homes for rats. Call the D.C. Department of Public Works' (DPW) Sanitation Information Line at 202/727-4600 to find out how you can arrange for a free pick-up.
- ▶ Remove any old, unused cars from your property. Call the DPW's Abandoned and Junk Vehicles Branch, at 202/645-5800 to request removal of abandoned vehicles from your property or elsewhere.
- ▶ Store lumber and other items at least 18 inches from the ground.
- ▶ Trim your weeds and grass. High growth provides a hiding place for rats.

Get Help: Call the EHA Rodent Control Program at 202/535-1954 if you see rats outside. Call a licensed pest control company if you find rats in your home.

Contact Your Local Elected Official and urge support for a strong rat control program.

Cockroaches

Prevention and Cleanliness are the first lines of defense.

- ▶ Carefully check incoming grocery bags, moving boxes, used appliances and other packages that have been moved from a suspicious site.
- ▶ Roaches like warm, dark, humid places. Change the nature of those places or avoid using those places for storage.
- ▶ Block entry points. For example, use caulking to seal cracks in walls and cabinets.
- ▶ Keep a clean house—especially the kitchen and bathroom. Clean dirty dishes soon after a meal. Sanitation reduces the nutrients available to roaches. Do not leave food uncovered overnight.

Monitor and Trap

- ▶ Infestation is indicated by the presence of baggy roach skins from molting and small droppings which look like black pepper.
- ▶ Use sticky bait traps to monitor and catch roaches, increasing trap placement where roach population is greatest.

Pesticides May Be Necessary

- ▶ If the problem persists, you may need to hire a licensed pest control company. Pest control personnel may use baits, insecticides and insect growth regulators, for long-term control. Just remember that exposure to insecticides can be dangerous for people with respiratory ailments, especially children. See the discussion about pesticides in the Indoor Air Pollution section of this guide.

Contact a **licensed pest control company** (look in the Yellow Pages under “Pest Control” or “Extermination Services”).

D.C. EHA Toxic Substance Division: 202/535-2299. Call if you would like to confirm that a pest control company is licensed, or if you suspect misuse of a pesticide by a commercial company.

Resources

Local Contacts

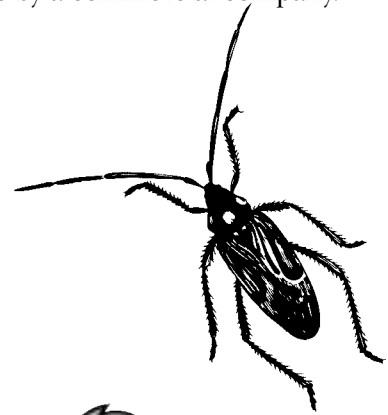
EHA Rodent Control Program: 202/535-1954. They provide rat control advice and services.

D.C. EHA Pesticide Program: 202/535-2270. Call to find out if a company is licensed in D.C. and for information on preventing pesticide poisoning.

University of the District of Columbia Cooperative Extension Service: 202/274-7166. Identification of pests and pest control advice. Learn about pesticide alternatives and precautions by reading “Pesticides In and Around the Home.”

D.C. Abandoned and Junk Vehicles Branch: 202/645-5800. Request removal of these vehicles from your property or elsewhere.

D.C. DPW Sanitation Information Line: 202/727-4600. Information on household hazardous waste collection and alternatives to household cleaners and pesticides.



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For more information contact: Sustainable Washington Alliance c/o Concern, Inc. 1794 Columbia Rd. Washington, D.C. 20009 202.328.8160

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Lead Exposure & Your Children's Health

The Sustainable Washington Environmental Health Action Guide

Picture This

Five months after Jorge and Jasmina moved into their dream home, they discovered that their five-year-old daughter Serena had high levels of lead in her blood. In fact, there was so much lead that it was twice the allowable level for children. Jorge and Jasmina are now confronting many questions: Where did the lead come from? How can they get it cleaned up? Why was Serena not showing any symptoms of lead poisoning? They are, however, thankful to their friend Mike who works for the city's childhood lead poisoning prevention program and who suggested that they test Serena, and their 110-year-old house, for lead.

Tests of their home found high amounts of lead everywhere, including in the soil surrounding the house. Mike told Jorge and Jasmina of a new federal law that requires owners of homes built before 1978 to inform buyers and renters about known lead hazards on their property and provide them with information brochures on lead poisoning.

Find out what you can do to ensure your family is safe from lead.

Do You Know?

Lead poisoning is a serious problem for children in America, and the younger the child, the greater the risk. Children with blood lead levels as low as 10 micrograms per deciliter can experience learning disabilities, decreased growth, hyperactivity, hearing difficulties, nervous system damage, motor skills impediments, and brain damage. Lead poisoning in pregnant women can lead to premature births or aborted births, low-weight babies, and decreased mental ability in babies.

About 16 percent of all children under 5 years old in the U.S. have high levels of lead in their blood. Low income, urban, minority populations are at the greatest risk of lead exposure because of poor housing conditions and nutrition. Rates of lead poisoning for black children age 5 and under may be twice the average amount.

In the District of Columbia in 1997, of the 22,881 children tested for lead poisoning, 7.1 percent had elevated blood lead levels above 10 micrograms per deciliter. Less than 50% of children who live in the District were tested, however, and often the children with the highest risk of lead poisoning are the least likely to get tested.

Key Facts About Lead and Lead Poisoning

- ▶ **Lead is listed as a known carcinogen in the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (U.S. EPA) Toxic Release Inventory.**
- ▶ **One in six children in the U.S. has dangerous levels of lead in their blood.**
- ▶ **An estimated 7 percent of children in the District of Columbia have elevated blood lead levels.**
- ▶ **The younger the child, the greater the risk of lead poisoning.**
- ▶ **Children absorb lead at a rate 5 times greater than adults.**

Health Problems Associated with Childhood Lead Poisoning

Lead poisoning has been called "the silent disease" because symptoms are slow to form and may not be reversible once the problem is finally diagnosed. The American Association of Pediatrics recommends that every child under six years old in areas like the District of Columbia have a blood lead level screening once a year. **It is important to get your child's blood tested for lead.**

Effects of Lead Poisoning

In Children:

- ▶ damage to kidneys, nervous system, and brain
- ▶ learning disabilities
- ▶ loss of visual and motor skills
- ▶ behavioral problems
- ▶ slowed or stunted growth

In Adults:

- ▶ hypertension
- ▶ cancer
- ▶ reproductive complications

For more information about health problems associated with lead poisoning, call the Lead Clearinghouse at 1-800/424-LEAD (800/424-5323).

Two High-Risk Factors for Lead Poisoning

- ▶ **Housing.** People living in homes built before 1978 have a high probability of having lead paint in their home.
- ▶ **Age.** Children under six are at greatest risk of lead poisoning because they have so much hand-to-mouth activity as they explore their surroundings.

How Lead Poisoning Happens

Eating, drinking, or breathing substances or particles that contain lead can cause elevated blood lead levels. Lead cannot be absorbed through the skin, but when ingested, the body cannot break down lead and it accumulates in the body's organs. Some of the most common ways that humans contact lead include:

Lead in Paint. Lead paint was used in almost all homes built before 1960 and many homes built before 1978. It may also have been used on walls (indoor and outdoor), window frames, toys and furniture like cribs, cabinets and tables. This paint can chip or peel off and be eaten by children. Raising and lowering windows wears off paint in the windowsash, creating an airborne lead dust that is inhaled.

Lead in Soil. Lead is a serious problem in dirt throughout the District of Columbia. Lead does not break down naturally in nature, so soil by roads and highways may be contaminated with lead from car and truck fumes that contained lead in the past. Soil may also have lead in it from dust, chipped paint, and air pollution. Children come into contact with this lead by playing in dirt and putting their dirty hands in their mouths.

Lead in Dust. Deteriorating lead paint is the largest source of lead dust in homes. This dust can coat almost anything in the home, especially windowsills. The dust comes from abrasive actions such as opening and closing windows or sanding surfaces that are painted with lead paint.

Lead in Food. Food that is grown in soil that contains lead can contribute to lead poisoning. Food can also absorb lead from some containers such as crystal, old pottery, and glazed china. Some printing inks used on plastic food bags also contain lead, so it is important to use bags properly and keep the ink on the outside away from food.

Lead in Water. Water that runs through old pipes, plumbing, and fixtures found in some old homes may pick up lead, although this is not a major contributing factor in most lead poisoning cases. The District of Columbia has approximately 28,000 lead service lines that connect water mains with private property.

In most of these pipes, minerals from water have coated the inside lining creating a barrier between the lead and the flow of water.

The
American
Association of
Pediatrics recommends
that every child under six
years old in areas like the
District of Columbia have
a blood lead level
screening once
a year.

Take Action!

Prevent lead poisoning by following these tips for keeping your child and home safe:

Get Children Tested. All children should be tested for lead poisoning at age six to nine months, and yearly until age six. The District of Columbia offers free screenings for residents. Contact the Department of Public Health's Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program at 202/535-2690 to find out where to go for a test.

Get Your Home Tested. If your child tests high for lead poisoning, the city and county will test your home for free. Call the D.C. Department of Public Health's Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program at 202/535-2690 for information.

Get Help. If you suspect your home has lead hazards, take the steps mentioned below to reduce the problem, and call the National Lead Information Center at 800/LEAD-FYI for information on reducing lead hazards in your home.

Keep Your Home Clean. Because dust and dirt can contain lead, it is important to keep the areas where your children play as dust-free and clean as possible. If

your home has lead paint, regularly clean floors, windowsills, window sashes and frames—and any surfaces that young children chew on—with water and powdered dishwasher detergent. Regular cleaners do not work well at cleaning lead dust.

Safely Remove Paint Chips. Safely clean up paint chips immediately. It is important that you clean up this hazard safely because you could make the problem worse. Contact the National Lead Information Center at 800/LEAD-FYI for information on safely removing paint chips from your home. If you rent, contact your landlord about repairing or repainting damaged or chipped paint surfaces. Public housing residents should call the Housing Authority Tenant Assistance Program at 202/535-1433.

Know Your Rights. The Residential Lead-Based Paint Hazard Reduction Act is a 1992 federal law that requires landlords to notify tenants about lead paint in their units, and requires property sellers to let potential buyers know about lead hazards up front. The Justice Department recently sued 31 landlords in the District of Columbia for \$1 million for failing to alert tenants about lead paint. For information on your right to know about lead risks in your home, contact the D.C. Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program at 202/535-2690.

Keep Children Out of Dirt. Because lead collects in dirt, encourage children to play in grassy areas rather than in bare dirt. Keep your children's play area clean and wash toys and pacifiers often.

Keep It Outside. If you come into contact with lead at work, shower and change your work clothes before you come home. Also, dirty shoes can bring lead into the home. Clean or remove shoes before entering the house.

Wash Your Hands. Children should always wash their hands and face before eating.

Eat A Healthy Diet. Children who eat nutritious, low-fat meals high in iron and calcium will absorb less lead. Suggested foods include milk, cheese, green vegetables, lean meat, poultry, fish, peanut butter, cereals, and more. Call the Lead Clearinghouse at 800/424-5323 for dietary information and suggestions. Learn whether your china poses a potential health risk. Read the *"Lead in China"* brochure available through the Environmental Defense Fund (<http://www.environmentaldefense.org/pubs/Brochure/LeadinChina/>).

Use Cold Tap Water for Cooking. If you think you have a problem with lead in your water (25% of D.C. taps tested positive for lead in 1993), let tap water run for at least 30 seconds before using it. Hot tap water absorbs more lead than cold, so use cold water for all cooking.

Contact Local Government Officials. Write or call asking them to support strong policies and laws to prevent lead poisoning in Children. See the Government Officials fact sheet for contact details.



Resources

Local Contacts

District residents should contact the D.C. Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program at 202/535-2690 or the Lead Poisoning Prevention Hotline at 800/532-3394 for information on free lead screening tests and lead poisoning prevention tips.

The D.C. Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program maintains a lead poisoning speaker's guild and a hotline. Call 202/535-2690 to request a speaker to come and talk to your group about lead poisoning in the District of Columbia.

Regional Contacts

U.S. EPA Region 3 Hotline (www.epa.gov/region03) has more information and publications about childhood lead poisoning and lead poisoning prevention programs. Call 800/438-2474.

National Contacts

The Lead Clearinghouse provides lead-related information and lead testing and laboratory information. Call 800/424-5323.

The National Lead Information Center Hotline (www.nsc.org/ehc/lead.htm) can send you the publications *"Lead and Your Children"* and *"Lead in Your Home: A Parent's Reference Guide."* Call 800/LEAD-FYI (800/532-3394) to request an information packet in English or Spanish. Call 800/424-LEAD to speak with an information specialist in English or Spanish.

The Consumer Products Safety Commission (www.cpsc.gov) has information on lead contained in popular consumer products, including toys and household goods. Call 800/638-2772.

The Alliance to End Childhood Lead Poisoning (www.aecplp.org) is a national advocacy organization that supports nationwide policies to fight lead poisoning. Call 202/543-1147 for more information.

The Lead Poisoning Prevention Branch of the Centers for Disease Control can be reached at 404/488-7330.

Check the Environmental Defense website (<http://www.environmentaldefense.org/pubs/Brochures/LeadinChina/>) to learn about lead-safe china and where to order home test kits. Or, you can write for a printed copy in English, Spanish, or Chinese: Lead Safe China Brochure, Environmental Defense, 1875 Connecticut Ave. NW, Suite 1016, Washington, DC 20009.

Full mailing addresses and phone numbers of organizations listed on this fact sheet are available in this Guide's Directory of Organizations.

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Notes

Safe Drinking Water & Water Quality

The Sustainable Washington Environmental Health Action Guide

Picture This

Shawana loved everything about water—she loved floating around in the community pool, swimming in the ocean, playing in the rain—and just drinking water. Cool and delicious, she knew water was good for her. On a recent TV show, she learned that 70% of her body is water just as 70% of the earth itself is covered in water—and both are mostly saltwater! Only 1% of the earth's water is readily available to supply human needs for clean, drinkable water.

Shawana decided she wanted to learn more about the water in her community after reading about the horrible floods caused by Hurricane Floyd and the immense damage done to supplies of safe drinking water. She felt sorry for the families who had no water to drink because she knew that humans can survive only a few days without water. And she remembered once when her grandmother had had to boil water because the local water supply was not safe to drink from the tap. Shawana wondered how that had happened.

What should you know about water?

Do You Know?

The District of Columbia gets its drinking water from the Potomac River, a “surface water source.” The 400 mile-long Potomac starts in the highlands of West Virginia and travels through Maryland, Virginia, and Washington, D.C. before entering the Chesapeake Bay. As river water travels it picks up natural and manmade debris in tributaries and carries it downstream. Water that runs off of lawns, streets, golf courses and farms into storm drains and tributaries of the Potomac also picks up chemicals and nutrients that can make water unhealthy for humans and wildlife. Rain can also pick up contaminants when it falls through the atmosphere and into the river. Our drinking water is treated to remove sediment and contaminants, and to make certain our water meets the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) safety standards that regulate acceptable levels of contaminants. Because some contaminants can be introduced through contact with city and privately owned pipes before the water reaches the consumer, steps are taken to maintain a residual level of disinfectant (chlorine) and to adjust the chemical composition of the water so that corrosion is minimized.

Washington, D.C. Key Drinking Water Facts

- ▶ Americans use approximately 70 gallons of water per person each day.
- ▶ Up to 180 million gallons of water per day are taken from the Potomac River for treatment and use in the Washington, D.C. area.
- ▶ Washington, D.C. drinking water supply is treated at the Dalecarlia and McMillan Water Treatment Plants, operated by the Army Corps of Engineers.

continued

Key Drinking Water Facts *continued*

- ▶ In 1998, the amounts of all detected contaminants in the water supply were considerably below limits set by the U.S. EPA.
- ▶ Over 12,000 miles of water pipes connect water treatment facilities to homes and businesses in the D.C. area.
- ▶ The quality of our drinking water source is potentially affected by farms and suburban development upstream.

Two Common Sources of Water Pollution

Point-Source Pollution. This is pollution that is discharged directly into water from a pipe, usually from a municipal or industrial wastewater treatment plant, or sewer overflows, especially during heavy rainfall. The key to reducing point source pollution is both improving treatment technologies and reducing the use of toxic contaminants that need to be treated in the first place.

Non Point-Source Pollution. This type of pollution does not come from a pipe or specific facility, but from water which runs off of farms, fields, streets, and yards. It picks up pollutants along the way before ending up in lakes, rivers, streams, and groundwater. Non-point source pollution is considered to be the most serious water pollution problem today. Non-point source pollution comes from sources such as:

- ▶ Fertilizers and pesticides from agricultural land;
- ▶ Animal wastes and nutrients from livestock, wildlife, and household pets;
- ▶ Oil, grease, and other chemicals from city streets;
- ▶ Dirt and sediment from construction sites, deforested hillsides, and eroding stream banks;
- ▶ Inadequately treated sewage from overloaded or faulty septic tanks.

Watersheds

Watersheds are areas of land where all rain and melting snow drain into a specific waterway. Washington, D.C. is part of the Potomac Watershed, an 11,500 square mile area encompassing parts of West Virginia, Virginia, Maryland, and Washington, D.C. The Potomac Water-

shed is the 4th largest watershed on the East Coast and the second largest river nourishing the Chesapeake Bay. Non-point source pollution from farms and development upstream from Washington, D.C. are having a significant impact on water quality in the Potomac Watershed, prompting the organization American Rivers, Inc. to name the Potomac one of the most endangered rivers in America in 1998. Reducing pollution and carefully managing the way we use land within a watershed is key to improving water quality and drinking water in our watershed.

Note: The Anacostia River joins the Potomac downstream from drinking water treatment plants for the District. See the "Healthy Rivers and You" fact sheet for more information about this important river.

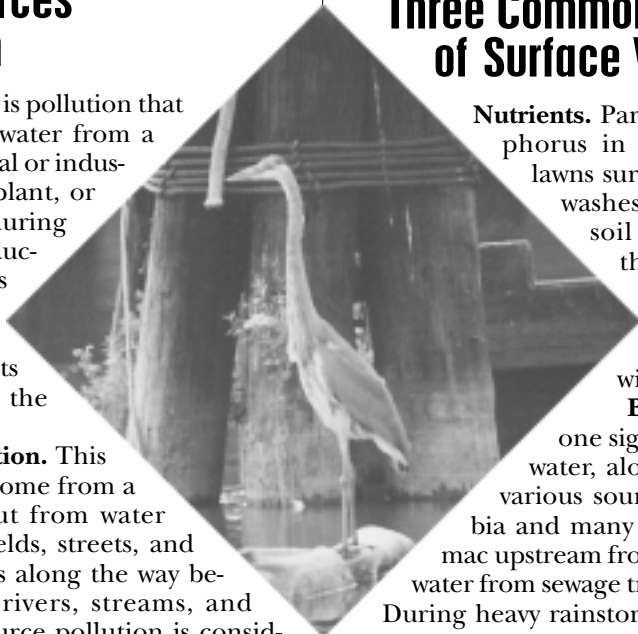
Three Common Types of Surface Water Pollutants

Nutrients. Particularly nitrogen and phosphorus in fertilizers from farms and lawns surrounding water bodies. Rain washes these nutrients out of the soil (runoff). Algae feeds off these nutrients and spreads rapidly, depleting the water's oxygen and killing fish, water plants and other wildlife.

Bacteria. Sewage systems are one significant source of bacteria in water, along with animal wastes from various sources. The District of Columbia and many other cities along the Potomac upstream from us discharge treated wastewater from sewage treatment plants into the river.

During heavy rainstorms and periods of flooding, some sewerage systems may become overloaded and discharge untreated or partially treated sewage into waterways. Within the District of Columbia, combined sewer overflows contribute bacterial pollution in D.C. rivers.

Toxic Substances. Industry and agriculture are the greatest sources of toxic pollution, but in urbanized, non-industrial areas, household chemicals and pesticides can be a significant source of pollution. Upstream from Washington, fertilizer and pesticide runoff from farms may affect the quality of the raw water Washingtonians receive. But urban runoff from streets and businesses in and around the District are contributing factors to the high concentrations of cadmium, mercury, lead, PCBs, and DDT found in sediment samples from the lower sections of the Potomac and Anacostia Rivers and their tributaries. This pollution is dangerous because it breaks down slowly and remains in the water, in fish and other animals, and in humans for many years.



Washington, D.C.'s Drinking Water

Drinking water for all District residents comes from the Potomac River via the Washington Aqueduct, a system of pipelines, reservoirs and treatment plants that began operation in 1863 and today serves over a million people in Washington, D.C. and Northern Virginia. Drinking water is treated at two facilities, the Dalecarlia Reservoir and Treatment Plant and the McMillan Reservoir and Treatment Plant. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers treats the raw river water in compliance with U.S. EPA drinking water standards and the District of Columbia Water and Sewer Authority delivers the water to your tap. Although there were safety alerts regarding the quality of drinking water for District residents in 1996, WASA has met or exceeded all U.S. EPA standards for drinking water safety and quality throughout 1997 and 1998 and to date in 1999.

Clean water laws in America were developed based on the assumption that exposure to low levels of pollutants is not harmful. Clean water laws allow you to drink water that has minimal levels of pollutants in it, some of which occur naturally and some of which come from pollution sources. While drinking water contaminant levels are set at extremely low levels, differences in opinion exist as to what levels of pollutants should be allowed in our drinking water.

Drinking water can be contaminated by two types of contaminants:

Microbiological. These include bacteria, viruses, and protozoa and come from human or animal waste. For example, cryptosporidium is a parasite found in rivers and lakes that are contaminated with sewage and animal wastes. This parasite is not easy to remove from the water, even with common water treatment technologies. The District of Columbia Water and Sewer Authority (D.C. WASA) regularly tests for this parasite and has not found it to be a problem. If WASA does detect certain levels of contaminants, it is required to issue "Boil Alerts" on local radio and TV stations and in the local newspapers. If you hear a "Boil Alert" this just means that you must boil your drinking water to destroy these contaminants.

Chemical. In general, these include metals and minerals and can occur naturally in the water but are usually caused by point and non-point source pollution. Long term exposure to chemicals in your drinking water can cause health problems. The U.S. EPA has established regulations on 80 chemical pollutants in U.S. drinking water. But over 60,000 chemicals are produced in the United States, and over 2,000 of these have been detected in public water supplies. The Safe Drinking Water Act of 1996 reduced the number of chemicals that must be evaluated for regulation through 2003.



Major Government Clean Water Policies

The **Clean Water Act (CWA)**, passed by the Federal government in 1972 and administered by the D.C. Department of Health/Environmental Health Administration, is the major Federal law designed to reduce water pollution. The goal of the CWA is to achieve water quality that is "fishable" and "swimmable" by controlling and reducing pollution from water treatment plants and factories. Few sections of the Potomac, and none of the Anacostia currently meets the fishable/swimmable goal.

National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permits: NPDES permits are required for all companies and sewage treatment plants that discharge treated wastewater directly into waterways.

These facilities are sources of point-source pollution. An NPDES Permit to address the quality of runoff from the District of Columbia's storm water drainage system is currently under development by U.S. EPA.

Find out which companies and government offices in the District have NPDES permits to discharge wastewater into local waterways by looking at U.S. EPA's Water Discharge Permit Database web site at <http://www.epa.gov/safewater/dwinfo.htm> or by calling the Interstate Commission on the Potomac River Basin at 301/984-1908. Also call EPA's Region 3 Public Access Line 800/438-2474.

The Safe Drinking Water Act, passed by the Federal government but administered by the D.C. Department of Health/Environmental Health Administration and the U.S. EPA, works to ensure Americans have access to clean and safe drinking water. This law sets limits on over 100 common drinking water pollutants.

The District of Columbia Source Water Assessment Plan was completed in February, 1999 through a collaborative effort between the Interstate Commission on the Potomac River Basin, the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, and local government agencies in the District of Columbia. You can read the Plan on-line at <http://www.potomacriver.org/dcsmap.htm> or call the Interstate Commission on the Potomac River Basin for more information at 301/984-1908.

The Interstate Commission on the Potomac River Basin (ICPRB) was established in 1940 with participation by Pennsylvania, Virginia, Maryland, West Virginia, the District of Columbia and the federal government to integrate and coordinate the planning for the development and use of the water and associated land resources of the Potomac River Basin. Contact their office at 301/984-1908 for more information.

Take Action!

How You Can Reduce Water Pollution

Find Out About the Quality of Your Drinking Water. The D.C. Water and Sewer Authority (D.C. WASA) monitors your drinking water for pollutants. Call them at 202/612-3492 and ask them for a water quality report.

Make a Complaint. Call the D.C. WASA Water Operations Emergency Office at 202/612-3400 to report pipe breaks, leaks, open hydrants, clogged storm drains, disruptions of service, or if you have concerns about the taste or smell of your water.

Find Out About Compliance With Drinking Water Standards. Information on compliance with drinking water standards by D.C. WASA is available in WASA's "Drinking Water Quality Report" or the U.S. EPA's Office of Water by calling the EPA Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 800/426-4791.

Find Out About Lead In Your Drinking Water. The U.S. EPA lists lead as the most hazardous chemical it regulates in relation to drinking water. Lead from old water pipes and fixtures can get into your drinking water, causing health problems for many people. (See **Lead Exposure Fact Sheet**). To minimize water lead levels let tap water run for 2 minutes before use. Hot water picks up more lead than cold water, so avoid using hot tap water for cooking or drinking. Call the D.C. WASA Hotline at 202/787-2000 or the Water Quality Division at D.C. EHA at 202/535-2190 if you think you may have lead in your water.

Consider A Home Water Filter. Water filters remove some pollutants from your drinking water, although they can be expensive and sometimes unnecessary. Contact NSF International, an independent, nonprofit water certification company, at 800/673-8010 for information on home water filters. If you do use a water filter, be sure to carefully follow the instructions about periodic maintenance and changing of filter inserts. Filters can quickly lose effectiveness and can become a breeding ground for bacteria if not properly maintained.

Find Out If Rivers and Lakes Near Your Home Meet Pollution Standards. D.C. WASA performs monthly physical and chemical sampling at 80 fixed stations on the Potomac and Anacostia Rivers and their tributaries. Contact the D.C. WASA Public Affairs Office at 202/787-2200 to find out more information about the results of these tests.

Find Out Who Is Dumping Toxic Pollution Into Your Rivers. Use Environmental Defense's Chemical Scorecard (<http://www.scorecard.org>) to find out which companies are discharging chemicals in local waterways, which chemicals they are releasing, and the health effects of those chemicals. Access U.S. EPA's Water Discharge Permits Database <http://epa.gov/>

safewater/dwinfo.htm or call U.S. EPA's Region 3 Public Access Line at 800/438-2474 to find out which companies have NPDES permits to discharge pollutants in local waterways.

Practical Pollution Prevention at Home. Be responsible in the use and disposal of household hazardous chemicals (paints, pesticides, cleaners). Collect and properly handle used oil and other automotive fluids.

Conserve Water. The average American uses 70 gallons of water each day. Conserve water by economizing, repairing leaks, installing water-saving devices, and reusing water. Report open hydrants, pipe leaks and other water problems to the D.C. WASA Water Operations Emergency Office at 202/612-3400.

Find Out About Fishing Advisories. Since 1994, the District of Columbia has had a fish consumption advisory recommending that no bottom dwelling fish (such as catfish, eel, and carp) be consumed and no more than half a pound of gamefish (such as largemouth bass and sunfish) be consumed by an adult per week. Contact the D.C. EHA Fisheries and Wildlife Division at 202/535-2260 for more information.

Join a Watershed Protection Group. There are dozens of organizations in the District working to clean up D.C. rivers, reduce pollution, and educate residents about water quality and water protection. Find out about these efforts through the Interstate Commission on the Potomac River Basin. Contact their office at 301/984-1908. And read the fact sheet **Healthy Rivers and You** (page C-1) for more contacts.

Contact Your Local Government Officials. Encourage them to support strong local, state, and Federal policies to protect our lakes, rivers, and streams. *Check the back of this Guide for addresses and phone numbers of local elected officials serving Washington, D.C.*

Resources

Local Contacts

District of Columbia Environmental Health Administration Water Quality Division: 202/535-2190. Information on local efforts to protect source water.

District of Columbia Water and Sewer Authority Public Affairs Office: Call 202/787-2200 or visit their web site at <http://www.dcwasa.com> to find out more about drinking water in the District. Ask for the "Drinking Water Quality Report."

District of Columbia Water and Sewer Authority Quality Division: 202/612-3492. More information on drinking water quality. Ask for the "Drinking Water Quality Report."

Washington Aqueduct Division of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers: 202/764-2753. Find out more about drinking water treatment.

Friends of the Earth: 202/783-7400. For information on drinking water quality, including *Our Unfair Share II: Pollution in Washington, D.C.* Web site: www.foe.org.

Regional Contacts

Interstate Commission on the Potomac River Basin: Call 301/984-1908 or visit their web site at <http://www.potomacriver.org> for more information on source water protection and water quality standards.

Pesticides in Surface Water of the Mid-Atlantic Region: Web site: <http://md.water.usgs.gov/publications/wrir-97-4280/>

U.S. EPA Chesapeake Bay Program Office: Call 800/YOUR-BAY or visit their web site at <http://www.chesapeakebay.net> for information on this public and private, state and federal partnership effort to clean and protect the environment of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed.

U.S. EPA Region 3's Water Protection Division: Call 215/426-4791 or visit their web site at <http://www.epa.gov/reg3wapd/> for information on Federal drinking water programs and federal/state partnerships to protect source water and prevent pollution.

Water Resource Directory: This directory is intended to give the citizens of the greater Washington metropolitan area the information needed to take action for a safe and clean water supply. It includes multi-state groups (e.g., Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay), DC, MD, and VA organizations, local water companies, and water-saving tips. Contact: Educational Services & Community Outreach, WETA-TV, 2775 S. Quincy St., Arlington, VA 22206; 703/998-2827

WETA Public Broadcasting: Read the "Potomac Adventure" documentary on the Internet at www.weta.org/potomac to learn more about this river's region, history and ecology. Includes lesson plans for teachers.

National Contacts

Visit the **U.S. EPA Office of Ground Water and Drinking Water** web site at <http://www.epa.gov/ogwdw/> to access information on drinking water and health, drinking water supply programs, drinking water standards and source protection.

U.S. EPA's Safe Drinking Water Hotline: 800/426-4791. For information on Federal drinking water regulations and the health impacts of various pollutants.

Visit U.S. EPA's "Surf Your Watershed" web site <http://www.epa.gov/surf> for more information about Potomac Watershed facts.

Visit the **American Water Works Association** web site <http://www.awwa.org>, for more information about drinking water and water treatment.

American Rivers: 202/347-7550 or <http://www.amrivers.org>. A national organization working to protect rivers across the country.

Clean Water Action: 202/895-0420 or <http://www.cleanwateraction.org>. Information on its national fight for stronger Federal water pollution laws.

Full mailing addresses and contact details of organizations listed on this fact sheet are available in this Guide's Directory of Organizations.



The Sustainable Washington Environmental Health Action Guide is an environmental health and information tool for Washington, D.C. residents compiled and maintained by the Sustainable Washington Alliance.

The Guide was developed in partnership with the D.C. Department of Health, Environmental Health Administration and Environmental Defense. Together, the Sustainable Washington Alliance, the Environmental Health Administration, and Environmental Defense undertook this project to create a resource tool that expands D.C. residents' awareness of environmental issues that affect individual and community health and the quality of life in D.C. neighborhoods.

This fact sheet is also available on the Sustainable Washington Alliance website: <http://www.swampnet.org> and the Environmental Health Administration website: <http://www.envron.state.dc.us/>

For more information contact: Sustainable Washington Alliance c/o Concern, Inc. 1794 Columbia Rd. Washington, D.C. 20009 202.328.8160

Disclaimer: The information in this guide has been compiled from recognized sources and is accurate to the best of our knowledge. The information presented should not be considered as medical advice and is not a substitute for care by a licensed health professional. The Sustainable Washington Alliance is not responsible for any errors or inaccuracies presented.

Indoor Air Quality

The Sustainable Washington Environmental Health Action Guide

Picture This



Juan associated air pollution with the hot, hazy days common in a Washington, D.C. summer. To keep the bad air out, he kept his windows closed and used an air conditioner and a humidifier to control the air in his apartment. Juan didn't smoke but he was always fighting colds, feeling sluggish, and experiencing breathing problems. When he finally went to a doctor, he was amazed to find that air he breathed inside his home could be the reason his health was failing and his energy was low.

Find out what may be polluting the air inside at home, in the workplace and in schools and learn what you can do about it.

Do You Know?

Many of these air pollutants come from everyday products and activities. They are often invisible and odorless, but they can have damaging effects on our health. Poor indoor air quality can contribute to everything from sluggishness and headaches to asthma and cancer.

- ▶ **Average Americans spend up to 90% of their time indoors.**
- ▶ **According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Administration, in most U.S. cities indoor air is more polluted than outdoor air.**
- ▶ **Indoor air pollution can cause lung disease, including respiratory tract infections, asthma, and lung cancer.**
- ▶ **Children, the elderly, and the ill are most at risk from indoor air pollution.**

Signs of Possible Indoor Air Quality Problems

- ▶ **unusual and noticeable odors**
- ▶ **stale or stuffy air**
- ▶ **lack of air movement**
- ▶ **dirty or faulty central heating or air conditioning equipment**
- ▶ **damaged flue pipes or chimneys**
- ▶ **unvented appliances that use oil or natural gas such as a furnace, stove or hot water heater**
- ▶ **excessive humidity**
- ▶ **presence of molds and mildew**
- ▶ **health reaction after remodeling, weatherizing, using new furniture or carpeting, use of household or hobby products, or moving into a new home**
- ▶ **feeling noticeably healthier outside the home**

Take Action!

Secondhand Tobacco Smoke

Tobacco smoke can cause many health problems for smokers and for other people who breath secondhand smoke. Secondhand smoke can cause eye, nose and throat irritation. It can also cause respiratory infections and asthma attacks. There are over 4,000 chemicals in secondhand smoke, and 43 of them cause cancer. Over 3,000 non-smokers die from lung cancer each year as a result of exposure to secondhand smoke. Young children are especially at risk.

Kick the Habit! The American Lung Association of D.C. has programs to help you quit smoking. Call 202/682-5864.

Don't Smoke Near Children.

Help Stop Kids from Smoking. Contact the Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids at 800/284-KIDS.

Radon Gas

Radon Gas is a cancer-causing gas in the earth that can leak into the home through dirt floors, cracks in foundations, walls, wells, and drains. Washington, D.C. does not have a large radon problem. But even when radon gas is present, you cannot see it or smell it. 1 in 15 U.S. homes has unsafe levels of radon, and exposure to the gas is a contributing factor in over 20,000 lung cancer deaths each year in America.

Call the Indoor Air Quality Information Hotline at 800/438-4318 for "A Citizens Guide to Radon."

The National Radon Hotline 800/557-2366 can provide more information about radon's health effects.

Call the D.C. Radon Hotline at 202/535-2250.

Call U.S. EPA's Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 800/426-4791 for information on radon in drinking water (from wells).

Find Out if Radon is a Problem. Get your home tested. The Radiation Control Division of the D.C. Environmental Health Administration at 202/535-2250 can help you decide if your house needs testing and can direct you to the help you need.

Seal Cracks in Floors and Walls.

Increase Ventilation. Open windows on the lower levels of the home.

Stop Smoking. The combined health effects of smoking and exposure to radon are very serious. Stop smoking and lower your radon levels to reduce the risk of lung cancer.



Molds & Mildews

Molds and Mildews, fungi, bacteria and dust mites are forms of "biological pollutants" in our homes that contribute to mild and severe illness and health problems like the common cold, flu, measles, and chicken pox. Other biological pollutants including pollen, pet dander, cat saliva, and household pests like mice, rats, and cockroaches can also cause health problems and trigger asthma and allergies. The elderly, children, pregnant women and people with respiratory problems are particularly susceptible to health complications caused by biological pollutants.

Biological pollutants in the home are airborne and we inhale them every time we take a breath. They can also travel through a building's ventilation system. Molds and dust mites thrive in areas of high humidity.

The American Lung Association reports that 30–50 percent of homes and offices in the U.S. have humidity levels greater than 50 percent. Dust mites also thrive on the microscopic skin cells and animal dander that are deposited on bedding, carpeting and upholstery.

The publication *Biological Pollutants in Your Home* by Montgomery County, MD Department of Environmental Protection is available by calling 240/777-7770.

The National Antimicrobial Information Network (NAIN) 800/447-6349 has free and helpful information about biological pollutants in the home (www.ace.orst.edu/info/nain/).

Increase Ventilation. Install fans in the kitchen and bathroom that are vented to the outdoors and keep fresh air circulating indoors. Ventilate attics and crawl spaces.

Keep Humidity Low. Mold, bacteria, and dust mites grow easily in damp, humid rooms. Humidity levels indoors should be 30%–50%.

Keep Indoor Areas Clean. Clean and vacuum regularly.

Follow Maintenance Procedures for Air Filters and Humidifiers. Dirty humidifiers and filters are breeding grounds for bacteria and mold. Follow maintenance and operating instructions carefully.

Throw Away Water-Damaged Carpets. Harmful mold and bacteria grow on wet carpets, water damaged flooring and walls, and other building materials.

Keep Basement Clean and Dry. Fix water leaks and keep floor drains clear and clean.

If You Rent. Landlords must make reasonable efforts to maintain rental property in a condition suitable for its intended use. If you feel your unit has structural or maintenance problems that generate excessive mold, mildew, or pest infestation call your landlord. If no action is taken, call the D.C. Department of Con-

sumer and Regulatory Affairs Housing Regulations Administration at 202/442-4610.

Public housing residents should report problems to the D.C. Housing Authority Control Center at 202/535-1044.

Carbon Monoxide Gas

Carbon Monoxide gas is one very serious type of "combustion pollutant"—an air pollutant that is caused by burning fuel like natural gas or wood in a space with inadequate ventilation. Other combustion pollutants include nitrogen dioxide, sulfur dioxide, and particulates. Furnaces, boilers, water heaters, fireplaces, stoves, space heaters, ranges, clothes dryers and other combustion appliances can create problems if leaks develop and there is poor air ventilation. Car exhaust from attached garages and secondhand smoke are also sources of combustion pollutants.

Carbon Monoxide gas is invisible and odorless and exposure causes headaches, chest pains, nausea, dizziness, weakness, disorientation, unconsciousness and even death. The gas may be emitted by a heating system, oven, or fireplace that is leaking or poorly ventilated. If you think you are being poisoned by carbon monoxide, immediately leave the building and get fresh air.

Order the booklet *Protecting Your Family From Carbon Monoxide Poisoning* from U.S. EPA's Indoor Air Quality Information Clearinghouse at 800/438-4318. Spanish speakers call the National Hispanic Indoor Air Quality Hotline at 800/725-8312.

Order the booklet *What You Should Know About Combustion Appliances and Indoor Air Pollution* by calling the American Lung Association of D.C. at 202/682-5864.

Get Help! If you suspect a gas leak indoors or out, call the fire department at 202/462-1762. If you are having trouble with a gas heater, stove, or other combustible appliance, call Washington Gas at 703/750-1000.

Buy Certified Appliances. All combustion appliances should be certified to meet safety standards. Certifying organizations include Underwriters Laboratory (UL) or American Gas Association (AGA) laboratories. Labels should clearly show these seals.

Inspect and Maintain Appliances. Carefully select, install, inspect, and maintain all appliances. Keep stove burners properly adjusted. Adopt an annual inspection schedule for Furnaces, Flues, and Chimneys. Change filters frequently.

Properly Vent Appliances. Combustion heating and cooking appliances should always be vented to the outside, keeping pollutants out of the house. Never heat your house with a gas stove!

Be Careful Using Space Heaters. Strictly follow directions for use and maintenance. When in use, keep a window or door open for ventilation.

If You Rent. Landlords must make reasonable efforts to change filters and maintain equipment in a timely manner. If you feel you are exposed to combustion pollutants or other unhealthy airborne pollutants, call your landlord. If no action is taken, call the D.C. Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs Housing Regulations Administration at 202/442-4610 for help.

Public housing residents should report problems to the D.C. Housing Authority Control Center at 202/535-1044.

Chemicals in Household Products

Many common household products contain dangerous organic chemicals that can cause indoor air pollution and health problems. These products include paints, varnishes, cleaners, degreasers, cosmetics, perfumes, mothballs, dry-cleaning chemicals, and hobby products like glues and model paints. Any product that evaporates into the air can be an indoor air pollutant depending on how, and how much of the product is used, and depending on the user's sensitivity.

Most products have labels that tell you what they contain. The compounds that are especially dangerous to use in poorly ventilated indoor spaces include: petroleum distillates, mineral spirits, chlorinated solvents, carbon tetrachloride, methylene chloride, trichloromethane, toluene and formaldehyde.

Exposure to organic chemicals is particularly dangerous for young children who may experience increased occurrence of respiratory infections. If you think a child has been poisoned by a household product, call the **Poison Control Center at 202/625-3333.**

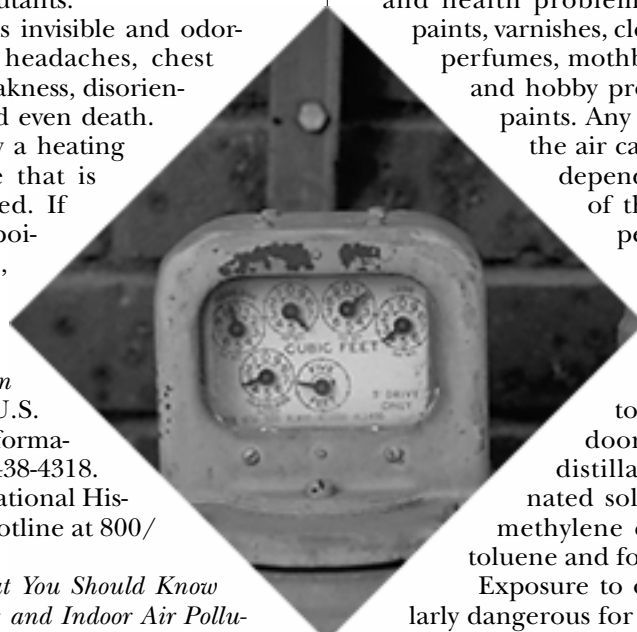
Find out more about product safety information and proper product use from the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission 24 hours a day at 800/638-2772 (Spanish and English operators).

Also see Fact Sheet on **Clean Homes.**

Consider Non-Chemical Alternatives When Possible. Many stores sell natural or nontoxic alternatives to most household cleaning products.

Reduce the Need to Use Toxic Chemicals by quickly attending to stains, spills, leaks, and accidents, you can use much milder cleaning agents, and you can keep mold, mildew, and other pollutants from finding homes in the first place.

Ventilate, Ventilate, Ventilate! Use and store all household cleaning products in areas with ample ven-



tilation. Follow all label instructions. Fresh air will help reduce your exposure to the harmful compounds in many products.

Keep Out of Reach of Children. While these products cause indoor air pollution, some of them are also poisonous.

Buy Only What You Need. Use these products only when you need them and only buy as much as you will use right away so you won't need to store them.

Dispose of Unneeded Chemicals Carefully. Do not throw these materials into the trash! Call the D.C. Department of Public Works at 202/727-1000 for information on household hazardous waste collection days or for information on how to safely get rid of or recycle household chemicals.

Also see Fact Sheets on **Recycling** and **Toxic Substances**.

Formaldehyde

Formaldehyde is widely used in building industry as a preservative and adhesive in particleboard, fiberboard, plywood paneling, carpet backing, and upholstery. It emits a strong odor that decreases over time. Cigarette manufacturers also put formaldehyde in cigarettes. Formaldehyde can cause irritation to nose, eyes, and throat, as well as coughing, skin rashes, fatigue, and allergic reactions. If extensive exposure to formaldehyde occurs, it can cause damage to a person's liver, kidneys, and central nervous system. Formaldehyde content is regulated in most building materials, but high humidity and temperatures can cause materials to release formaldehyde fumes.

Get Help. Contact the D.C. Division of Air Quality at 202/535-2250 to get help with an indoor air pollution problem or to make a complaint.

Keep Indoor Areas Well Ventilated. High heat and humidity may increase formaldehyde pollution. Keep indoor areas well ventilated with mild temperatures.

Buy Materials Containing Low Levels of Formaldehyde. Formaldehyde content in building materials and other products is regulated, but you can check with a salesperson or manufacturer to see if formaldehyde free alternatives are available.

Quit Smoking. Call the American Lung Association of D.C. at 202/682-5864 for information on programs that can help.

Pesticides

Pesticides are chemicals used to kill bugs and other household pests, i.e. cockroaches, fleas, ticks, etc. Pes-

ticides include insecticides (insects), disinfectants (germs), or fungicides (mold and mildew). They are often used outdoors but can drift indoors. 75 percent of households used at least one pesticide product indoors during the past year. In 1990, common household pesticides poisoned 79,000 children. Exposure to pesticides can cause eye, nose and throat irritation and damage kidneys and the central nervous system. Exposure also increases one's risk of cancer.

Contact the National Center for Environmental Publications at 800/490-9198 to order the brochure *Citizen's Guide to Pesticides and Pesticide Safety*.

Contact the U.S. EPA's Office of Pesticide Programs at 703/305-7090 for more information and brochures on pesticides.

Contact the National Pesticide Telecommunications Network (NPTN) at 800/858-PEST for health and environmental information on specific pesticides.

Use Safe, Stable, or Non-Chemical Alternatives. Avoid using unstable and unsafe foggers, bombs, or sprays. Many natural, safe, stable, and inexpensive alternative pest control methods are available. Check labels for ingredients and ask store managers about alternative products.

Follow Instructions for Use. Follow instructions on the label. Never use a product yourself that can only be applied by a licensed professional.

Mix or Dilute Pesticides Outdoors and Increase Ventilation When Using Indoors. Take pets or plants outside when applying.

Choose licensed pest control companies with a good record for safety and reliability.

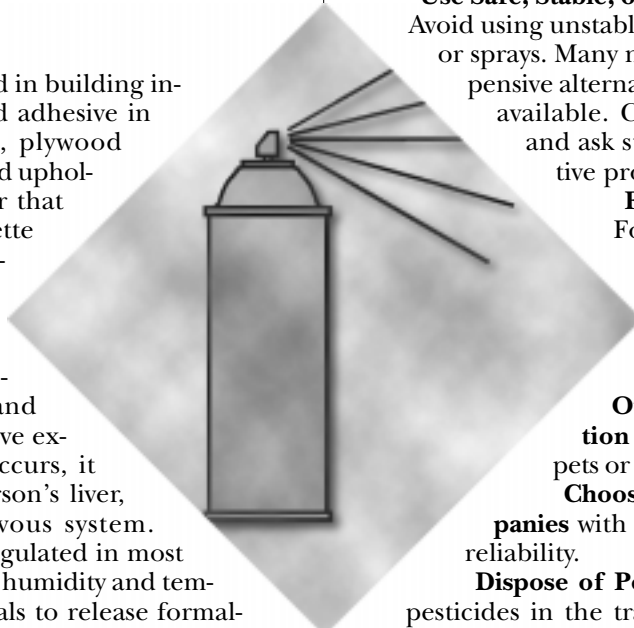
Dispose of Pesticides Safely. Don't throw pesticides in the trash because they could leak into the ground or water. Call the D.C. Sanitation Information Line at 202/727-4600 for information on pesticide and chemical collection programs or for information on how to safely get rid of or recycle pesticides and chemicals.

Contact Poison Control Center at if you think a pesticide has poisoned you. 202/625-3333.

Join the Fight Against Unsafe Pesticide Use. Contact the National Coalition Against the Misuse of Pesticides at 202/543-5450.

Asbestos

Asbestos is a mineral fiber that was commonly used in construction materials for insulation and as a fire-retardant. It is mostly found in older homes and buildings, pipe and furnace insulation materials, car brake pads and lining, shingles, floor tiles, millboard, and textured paints and now has been banned in most products. Asbestos fibers usually get into the air during cen-



struction, remodeling, building maintenance, or even when trying to remove asbestos from buildings. Most asbestos fibers are so small they are nearly invisible. Tiny asbestos fibers are inhaled and remain deep in the lungs. Most people with health problems from asbestos were exposed on the job. These problems can appear years after exposure. They include lung cancer, cancer of the chest and abdominal lining, and lung scarring (asbestosis).

Contact U.S. EPA Region 3 at 800/438-2474 for information on its asbestos program and to order the brochure *Asbestos in Your Home*.

Contact the American Lung Association of D.C. at 202/682-5864 for information on asbestos.

To find out if a product contains asbestos, contact the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission at 800/638-2772.

Get Help! If you think asbestos is a problem in your home or office, call the D.C. Environmental Health Administration at 202/535-2250 for advice on how to proceed.

Don't Remove Asbestos Yourself. Removing asbestos puts fibers into the air that can be inhaled into the lungs. Contact D.C.'s Environmental Health Administration at 202/535-2250 for information on licensed contractors.

Do Not Cut, Rip, or Sand Asbestos-Containing Materials. This sends asbestos fibers into the air which can be inhaled into the lungs.

Leave it Alone! If you have asbestos in the home that is not damaged, leave it alone.

Resources

Local

D.C. Environmental Health Administration Division of Air Quality: 202/535-2250.

The American Lung Association of D.C.: 202/682-5864.

D.C. Office of Occupational Health and Safety: 202/698-7520.

Regional

EPA's Region 3 Air Protection Division Hotline: 215-814-2100.

EPA's Region 3 Public Access Line: 800/438-2474.

National

EPA Indoor Air Quality Information Clearinghouse. Call 800/438-4318 to receive a copy of *The Inside Story: A Guide to Indoor Air Quality* and for other detailed information on indoor air pollution. Spanish speakers call the National Hispanic Indoor Air Quality Hotline at 800/725-8312.

Internet Resources

U.S. EPA's web site on home: www.epa.gov/epahome

U.S. EPA's Indoor Air Quality web site: www.epa.gov/iaq/

Healthy Indoor Air for America's Homes Project: www.montana.edu/wwwcxair/

Environmental Issues in Rental Property Management: www.cses.com

U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission: www.cpsc.gov

Full contact details of organizations listed on this fact sheet are available in this Guide's Directory of Organizations.

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Outdoor Air Quality

The Sustainable Washington Environmental Health Action Guide

Picture This

One hot summer day when Charise boarded the bus to go to work, the driver told her that the trip would be free. It was an “Ozone Action Day” meaning that there were dangerously high levels of air pollution. The city was trying to help reduce the pollution by getting people to use public transit.

As Charise rode to work she thought about how bad the air must be to make the government decide to offer free bus rides. She wondered if it was safe for her children to play outside in that same air all day with their friends. All of a sudden, she wanted to know more about air pollution and its causes. She called the Metropolitan Air Quality Hotline to find out about what causes an “Ozone Action Day” and the impacts that such days can have on health.

Find out how you can get information on air pollution levels in your city.

Do You Know?

Outdoor air pollution is still a serious problem in most urban areas as well as in many rural ones in the United States. In urban areas, The problem affects low income and minority communities disproportionately because these groups tend to live in the core of urban metropolitan areas where air pollution tends to be the worst. Every year, millions of pounds of dangerous chemicals, gases, and particles are released into the air by our vehicles, power plants, factories, and the consumer products we use in our homes. Air pollution can have long-term effects on our health and can contribute to the development of respiratory tract infections, asthma, and lung cancer. The America Lung Association reports that rates of lung diseases such as these have been growing rapidly over the past decade.

Key Outdoor Air Quality Facts

- ▶ Nearly 46 million Americans live in areas with air that is unhealthy.
- ▶ Researchers have found that higher percentages of African-Americans and Hispanics than whites live in areas that do not comply with national air quality standards for particulate matter, carbon monoxide, ozone, sulfur dioxide and lead.
- ▶ Air pollution comes from many sources, but cars, trucks, buses, and construction equipment are the biggest sources of air pollution, producing over one-third of air pollutants.
- ▶ The District of Columbia’s biggest air pollution problem is ground-level ozone. Motor vehicles account for over 40% of ozone-causing pollutants in the Washington area.

What Are Ozone Action Days?

Ozone Action Days are declared by the government when air quality is predicted to violate U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) health-based standards (code RED days). In the Washington area, many public and private sector businesses are participating as “ENDZONE” Partners in developing Ozone Action Day plans that raise awareness about our air quality problems and reduce pollution. To find out more call the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments at 202/962-3356.

The Daily Air Quality Forecast for Washington, D.C. can be obtained by calling the Air Quality Hotline at 202/962-3299.

Air Pollution Laws and Enforcement

The Clean Air Act (CAA) is the nation’s major air pollution law. Under the law the U.S. EPA sets health-based air pollution standards for major air pollutants; State and local governments must make sure air pollution standards are met.

In Washington, D.C., the Environmental Health Administration’s Division of Air Quality is responsible for making sure air pollution standards are met. Its responsibilities include:

- ▶ measuring air pollution regularly
- ▶ enforcing air pollution laws
- ▶ issuing air pollution permits
- ▶ forcing polluters to take action to reduce their pollution emissions
- ▶ making air pollution information available to the public

They monitor two types of air pollutants:

Hazardous Air Pollutants (HAPS)

Millions of pounds of toxic chemicals suspected of causing cancer or other serious health problems are released into the air from businesses and factories each year. These are called hazardous air pollutants, or HAPS. The government regulates 189 HAPS. A list of HAPS is available on the U.S. EPA web site at www.epa.gov/ttn/atw/index.html.

(See the **Toxic Substances and Hazardous Waste** fact sheet for more information)

Criteria Air Pollutants

The six most common air pollutants are called Criteria Pollutants. The government sets health-based pollution standards for each criteria air pollutant, called National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). If air pollution levels in an area exceed these standards, that area is a “nonattainment” area and is violating air pollution laws. These areas must take steps to reduce pollution levels below the health standard.

The six criteria pollutants are:

Ozone (O₃). Ground-level ozone—an invisible gas—is the main ingredient of smog. Ozone is the Washington area’s most serious air pollution problem and Washington is still designated an ozone “nonattainment” area by the U.S. EPA. Ozone is formed when different types of air polluting emissions from vehicles, power plants and factories react with sunlight. The main pollutants that contribute ground-level ozone are hydrocarbons (Volatile Organic Compounds or VOCs) and nitrogen oxides (NO_x). Heat and sunlight are also important contributing factors to our area’s ozone problem. That is why ozone and smog levels are the worst during the day, especially during the long, hot days of summer (actually, between April and October).

CODE (POLLUTION INDEX)	AIR QUALITY	WEATHER	ACTIONS
RED (151–200) Ozone Action Day!	Unhealthy	Temperatures in the 90s to 100s; hazy, humid, stagnant air.	Active children and adults, and people with respiratory problems such as asthma should avoid prolonged outdoor exercise and comply with pollution reduction measures (below).
Orange (101–150)	Approaching Unhealthy	Temperatures in the upper 80s to 90s and light wind.	Refuel cars only after dusk; limit driving; share rides, combine trips; avoid mowing lawns with gas-powered mowers; don’t idle engines.
Yellow (51–100)	Moderate	Mild Temperature in upper 70s to 80s; winds under 15 mph	Unusually sensitive people should limit outdoor exertion. Consolidate trips.
Green (0–50)	Good	Cool, windy, raining, clearing.	No health impacts are expected when air quality is good, but if possible try to minimize impact by keeping cars tuned and using mass transit when possible.



Carbon Monoxide (CO) is an odorless, poisonous gas. CO is produced by the incomplete burning of carbon in fuels. Major sources include automobile exhaust, woodstoves, incinerators, and other industrial sources.

Health Impact: Ozone damages lung tissue and causes breathing problems, including asthma, coughing, sneezing, and chest pain. Ozone can suppress the body's immune system, and can decrease lung capacity up to 20 percent in some adults. Over 27 million children under the age of 13 are exposed to unhealthy levels of ozone.

Ecological Impact: Plants and trees help clean our air; but ground-level ozone (or smog) damages their ability to do this. (While ozone is a dangerous air pollutant near the ground, ozone in the upper atmosphere is good, shielding the earth from harmful radiation from the sun.)

Carbon Monoxide (CO) is an odorless, poisonous gas. CO is produced by the incomplete burning of carbon in fuels. Major sources include automobile exhaust, woodstoves, incinerators, and other industrial sources.

Health Impact: CO reduces the body's ability to bring oxygen to the brain, heart, and other important organs. It is particularly dangerous to babies and people with heart disease.

Nitrogen Dioxide (NO²) is a brownish, acidic gas that also reacts with other gases to form ozone and smog. Fuel emissions from automobiles and power plants forms NO².

Health Impacts: NO² irritates the lungs, causing bronchitis and pneumonia. It also contributes to smog and acid rain.

Sulfur Dioxide (SO²) is formed by the burning of sulfur containing fuels such as coal and oil. Steel mills, refineries, and pulp and paper mills are also sources of SO² pollution.

Health Impacts: Breathing problems, lung damage, heart problems. It is especially harmful to those with

asthma, bronchitis, emphysema, and cardiovascular disease.

Ecological Impact: It also causes acid rain which damages plants, trees, crops, lakes, rivers, and historic buildings.

Particulates are tiny particles that are suspended in the air that, when inhaled, can cause lung damage. These tiny particles come from the burning of fuels (e.g. from trucks and buses) or dust from construction or mining. The particles can also include dirt, soot, smoke, and even liquid droplets emitted from factory smokestacks and other sources.

Health Impacts: While the body filters out larger particles, smaller particles are inhaled, causing lung damage, breathing problems, and triggering asthma. Eighty-nine million people in the U.S. live in areas with unhealthy levels of particulates.

Lead (Pb) pollution outdoors has been reduced significantly since leaded gasoline was banned several years ago. But outdoor lead pollution still exists, caused by the lead smelters, burning of lead batteries, and burning of lead-contaminated waste oil. It can be inhaled, eaten in food, ingested in water, soil, or dust. Infants and young children are especially sensitive to lead pollution. Lead pollution is most serious indoors, where people are exposed to it from old house paint and dust. See the Childhood Lead Pollution fact sheet for more information.

Health Impacts: Lead causes damage to the brain, blood, kidneys, and immune system. It also causes reproductive disorders in adults and developmental disorders in children.

Take Action!

Air Pollution from Vehicles

Vehicle emissions are single biggest source of air pollution, producing almost one-third of all air pollutants.

Walk and Bike More—Drive Less. Plan ahead to combine errands into one trip when possible and avoid driving during peak hours. Many errands take place within one mile of home. Walk or bike on these shorter trips to reduce pollution and get some exercise.

Take Public Transportation. METRO provides quality bus and light rail transportation.

Contact the METRO at 202/637-7000 (TDD: 202/638-3780) for current route and schedule information.

Carpooling. Avoid driving alone. Share driving costs and responsibilities with co-workers.

Don't Refuel or Idle on an Ozone Action Day. These activities release a significant amount of ozone-causing emissions that make air quality even worse. If you must refuel, do so after dusk.

Drive Carefully. Automobiles are most efficient at steady, medium speeds. Cars driving at 55 mph will get better gas mileage than those driving 65 mph, saving money and reducing pollution.

Keep Car Well Maintained. A properly maintained car will run more efficiently and produce little pollution. Good maintenance practices include:

- ▶ regular tune-ups
- ▶ keeping tires properly inflated
- ▶ keeping air filters and catalytic converters clean
- ▶ not removing or tampering with pollution controls, i.e. catalytic converters
- ▶ not overfilling or “topping-off” gas tank, which causes polluting gas fumes to escape

Buy Fuel Efficient Cars. When buying a new or used car, check its posted fuel efficiency and buy the most fuel efficient model. The U.S. EPA’s Fuel Economy Guide provides the latest fuel efficiency information for new model cars.

Support Clean Technology for Buses. Diesel fuel from buses is a real problem in the District. Ask your local government representatives to support cleaner public transportation options like buses that run on clean burning natural gas.

Air Pollution from Home and Work

Using consumer products such as paints, hairspray and cleaners in the home and at work contribute to air pollution problems. In the D.C. area, over 40 million pounds of ground-level ozone causing VOCs (volatile organic compounds) are released by residents every year. This is the same level of pollution produced by 3 million cars driving 10,000 miles a year!

Every day, and especially on Ozone Action Days:

Conserve Electricity and Save Money. Power plants are also a major source of air pollution.



Clean buses that run on electricity or natural gas reduce the amount of carbon monoxide released into the environment.

**Minimize
your contribution
to air pollution by
buying less, reusing more,
and recycling what you can.
Recycling will help keep trash
from being burned, will
reduce air pollution,
and will save
resources.**

- ▶ Turn lights and appliances off when not in use
- ▶ Use energy-efficient lighting—for lights that you leave on more than a few hours a day, replace regular incandescent light bulbs with energy efficient fluorescent light bulbs. If you have outdoor safety lighting, consider installing lights that are controlled by a motion detector.
- ▶ Buy the most energy efficient appliances you can find—look for the label that tells you how much energy an appliance will use. Using these appliances can also help you save money on your utility bill.
- ▶ Raise the temperature level of air conditioners a few degrees in summer and lower the temperature of heaters a few degrees in winter
- ▶ Ensure your home is properly insulated and weatherized—Call the D.C. Energy Office at 202/673-7797 for helpful tips and information.
- ▶ Run dishwashers, washing machines, and dryers only when full (but be careful to have ventilation!—See the **Indoor Air Quality** fact sheet for more information).

- ▶ Participate in energy conservation programs. Call your electric utility—Pepco—at 202/833-7500 or visit their web site at <http://www.pepco.com> to find out about their energy efficiency programs.

- ▶ Find out about your electricity on the Environmental Defense website: <http://www.environmentaldefense.org>

Seal Chemical Containers Tightly.

Make sure that containers of household chemical products are sealed tightly. Fumes from chemicals stored in open or loose containers will release into the air, causing air pollution.

On Ozone Action Days, refrain from using oil-based paint or solvents. Defer use of household consumer products that release fumes or evaporate easily.

Reduce, Reuse, Recycle. The more we consume, the more we pollute. Manufacturing all those products we buy can be very polluting. The stuff we throw away is sometimes burned in incinerators that produce air pollution. Minimize your contribution to air pollution by buying less, reusing more, and recycling what you can. Recycling will help keep trash from being burned, will reduce air pollution, and will save resources. See the Recycling fact sheet for more information.

Keep Woodstoves and Fireplaces Well Maintained. A well-maintained woodstove, fireplace, or chimney will release much less pollution. Use them only when necessary. Burn dry, well-seasoned wood.

Get Help. Contact the Environmental Health Administration’s Air Quality Division (Compliance and Enforcement Branch) at 202/535-2250 to make a complaint about air pollution or odors in your neighborhood.

Attend Public Hearings. All point-source polluters—businesses or industry that emit pollutants from



Air pollution comes from many sources, but cars, trucks, buses, and construction equipment are the biggest sources of air pollution, producing over one-third of air pollutants.

operations—must be granted a permit by the EHA to do so. The meetings to approve permit applications are open to the public. Contact the Environmental Health Administration's Air Quality Division (www.environ.state.dc.us) at 202/535-2250 to find out when and where public hearings occur.

Contact Your Local Government Officials. Call or write to encourage them to support policies that prevent air pollution at the local and federal level. See the Government Officials fact sheet for contact details.

Resources

Local Contacts

District of Columbia Environmental Health Administration, Division of Air Quality has information on local air pollution problems, enforcement efforts, and

public meetings. Call 202/535-2250 or visit their web site at www.environ.state.dc.us.

American Lung Association of the District of Columbia (www.aladc.org) has information on the health effects of air pollution. Call 202/682-5864.

Regional Contacts

Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (www.mwcog.org), Department of Environmental Programs has information about regional air pollution, pollution prevention programs, and public meetings of the Metropolitan Washington Air Quality Committee. Call 202/962-3200.

Washington, D.C. Air Quality Hotline has daily recordings about the Air Quality Index and Ozone Action Days in Washington, D.C. Call 202/962-3299.

U.S. EPA Region 3 Division of Air Protection Division (www.epa.gov/region03) has information on air pollution and health safety. Call 215/814-2100.

U.S. EPA's Region 3 Public Access Line can provide copies of the "National Air Quality and Emission Trends Report," an annual summary of air pollution levels across the U.S. Call 800/438-2474.

National

U.S. EPA's Office of Air and Radiation (<http://www.epa.gov/oar>) has extensive information on air pollution.

The **U.S. EPA National Center for Environmental Publications** can supply you with copy of "The Plain English Guide to the Clean Air Act," an easy to read guide to the nation's major air pollution law. Call 800/490-9198.

Full mailing addresses and phone numbers of organizations listed on this fact sheet are available in this Guide's Directory of Organizations.

The Sustainable Washington Environmental Health Action Guide is an environmental health and information tool for Washington, D.C. residents compiled and maintained by the Sustainable Washington Alliance.

The Guide was developed in partnership with the D.C. Department of Health, Environmental Health Administration and Environmental Defense. Together, the Sustainable Washington Alliance, the Environmental Health Administration, and Environmental Defense undertook this project to create a resource tool that expands D.C. residents' awareness of environmental issues that affect individual and community health and the quality of life in D.C. neighborhoods.

This fact sheet is also available on the Sustainable Washington Alliance website: <http://www.swampnet.org> and the Environmental Health Administration website: <http://www.environ.state.dc.us/>

For more information contact: Sustainable Washington Alliance c/o Concern, Inc. 1794 Columbia Rd. Washington, D.C. 20009 202.328.8160

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Asthma

The Sustainable Washington Environmental Health Action Guide

Picture This

Ten-year-old Joey Brown was sent home from school last month after he complained of breathlessness and began to wheeze. The Browns were informed at the Medical Center later that day that Joey suffered from childhood asthma and that incidence as well as severity of asthma were on the rise in their Northeast D.C. neighborhood. Recently, Joey's parents worked with his teachers in school and organized an asthma education program for parents and children. They learned that both indoor and outdoor air pollutants increase the frequency and severity of asthma. In order to reduce asthma, both pathways must be controlled.

Later, at another focus group organized by their local Community Center, the Browns learned that outdoor air pollution in the D.C. area comes mostly from emissions from traffic congestion. Is there any way they can control traffic emissions? What can they do about the indoor air quality for Joey both at home and at school?

Find out what you can do to improve the quality of life for your family members suffering from respiratory disorders.

Do You Know?

Asthma is the name given to a chronic condition that affects a person's ability to breathe. During an asthma attack or "episode," the muscles that surround a person's airways tighten and make it hard for the person to take in air freely. The lining of the airways can become swollen and irritated, making breathing even more difficult. In recent years, asthma has become a major health problem in the U.S. Asthma is now the number one childhood illness in America. The District of Columbia has the highest rates of asthma in the country. There is a lot of discussion about the initial cause of asthma, but it is widely accepted that asthma attacks are brought on by many types of indoor and outdoor air pollution.

Urban populations generally have a greater incidence of asthma because of high levels of air pollution and a greater incidence of poor housing conditions. Higher numbers of people of color and low-income households are located in these urban areas and thus have higher asthma rates.

Key Facts About Asthma

- ▶ **The District of Columbia has the highest rate of asthma in the nation—more than 5 percent of the District's residents have asthma, compared to less than 2 percent nationally.**
- ▶ **The number of Americans who suffer from asthma rose 61 percent from 1982 to 1994—There are over 14 million cases of asthma in the United States today.**
- ▶ **Asthma is the number one childhood illness in America. Nearly 5 million children in the U.S. have asthma, and the death rate from the disease has risen 78 percent from 1980 to 1993 for children under 19 years old.**
- ▶ **3 to 5 times more adults aged 74 years and older are dying from asthma now than in 1970.**

continued

Key Facts About Asthma *continued*

- ▶ **Asthma disproportionately affects minority groups in the U.S.:**
 - ▶ **Asthma is 26 percent more prevalent in black children than white.**
 - ▶ **African American infants (ages 0–4) and young adults (ages 16–24) are six times more likely to die from an asthma attack than whites of the same age.**
 - ▶ **20 percent of Puerto Rican children in the U.S. suffer from asthma, compared to 9 percent of black and 6.5 percent of white children aged 6 months to 11 years.**

Asthma is the leading cause of school and work absenteeism due to chronic illness—an estimated 10 million missed school days are attributed to asthma, and over 100 million days of restricted activity each year in the U.S. are attributed to asthma.

Symptoms of Asthma:

- ▶ Wheezing
- ▶ Coughing
- ▶ Shortness of breath
- ▶ Chest tightness
- ▶ Rapid breathing

Take Action!

The exact cause of asthma (and its recent increase) is not known. We do know that asthma attacks can be triggered by things in the environment that we are allergic to or that irritate the lungs. Both indoor and outdoor air pollutants can trigger attacks. The frequency and severity of attacks can be reduced by limiting exposure to these pollutants and taking medications as prescribed. See Indoor and Outdoor Air Quality fact sheets and the Clean and Healthy Home fact sheet for more information.

General Safety Information for Asthma Sufferers

See a Doctor. Many people don't know that cough can be an asthma equivalent—that is, a coughing child may really be having an asthma attack. If a child has a chronic cough, he or she needs to be checked by a doctor and asthma ruled out. If you have other reasons to suspect that you or your child suffers from asthma, talk to your doctor or health care provider about medications available to control the symptoms. Asthma sufferers should try to have 3 outpatient visits

per year with a health care provider to monitor their condition.

Asthma Management Plan. Ask your doctor to provide you and your child with a written asthma management plan that you can follow. Make sure that children know exactly what to do if an asthma attack occurs. Doctors can write a management plan for kids to keep with them for easy reference.

Prescriptions. Keep prescriptions filled and up to date. Asthma attacks can often be managed with prescription drugs delivered by small pumps that patients carry. Make sure any asthma prescriptions are filled, and that children carry their inhaler-pumps with them at all times.

Your School. Encourage schools to train teachers to handle asthma emergencies. The National Asthma Education and Prevention Program provides teacher training videos and training manuals at nominal cost. Call for information at 301/592-8573. The American Lung Association of the District of Columbia operates Open Airways for Schools for Schools®, an innovative program for children with asthma in the city's elementary schools. The curriculum teaches children, aged eight to eleven, many important aspects of asthma, including how to recognize its symptoms, identify personal "triggers," and take action to prevent attacks. For more information call 202/682-5864.

Exercise. Find out how exercise affects asthma. Talk to your doctor about how exercise affects your asthma or your child's asthma. Take asthma medication before exercising and always have medication with you when you exercise.

Stress Management. Relax! Social and emotional stress can trigger asthma attacks. Learn how to manage stress constructively and learn some relaxation techniques such as yoga or meditation.

Stay Healthy. The flu and colds can trigger serious asthma attacks. Ask your doctor about getting an annual flu shot. Follow a nutritious diet, keep your home clean and get proper exercise to reduce your exposure to illness.

To Reduce Indoor Triggers of Asthma

Also see the **Indoor Air Pollution** and **Clean and Healthy Homes** fact sheets for more information on reducing asthma triggers and improving indoor air quality.

Eliminate Tobacco Smoke from Your Home. Second-hand smoke has been clearly linked with asthma in infants and children.

Control Moisture Levels in Your Home. Homes with humidity levels over 50 percent can breed high levels

The District of Columbia has the highest rate of asthma in the nation—more than 5 percent of the District's residents have asthma, compared to less than 2 percent nationally.

of bacteria and mold—substances that trigger asthma. Keep bathrooms, kitchens, and basements clean and well ventilated. See the Indoor Air Pollution fact sheet for more information on lowering humidity levels and controlling mold and germs in the home.

Rid Your Home of Cockroaches and Rodents. Cockroach parts and feces are very common triggers of asthma. Remove food sources cockroaches are attracted to and set nontoxic traps. Avoid using sprays, foggers, or bombs. See the “Urban Pest Control” fact sheet for more information. If a neighboring apartment is the cause of your cockroach problem, call your landlord to report the problem. If you live in public housing, report problems to the D.C. Housing Authority Control Center at 202/535-1044.

Reduce Dust Mites in Your Home. Cover mattresses and pillows with an airtight cover. Replace down pillows and comforters with those made from hypoallergenic materials. Avoid sitting or sleeping on upholstered furniture. Wash bed covers, clothes, and stuffed toys regularly in hot water.

Keep Your Home Well Ventilated. Some paints and cleaners have ingredients that can trigger asthma attacks. Avoid painting or using perfumed cleaning products when an asthmatic person is present. For more detailed information about indoor air pollutants, see the Indoor Air Quality fact sheet.

Think Twice About Owning Pets with Fur or Feathers. Animal dander—the tiny pieces of skin shed by such pets as dogs, cats, birds, and rodents—can irritate the lungs and trigger asthma attacks. Keep pets out of the home or bedroom of the asthma sufferer. Wash the pet regularly. Consider choosing a pet without fur or feathers (e.g. goldfish).

Managing Outdoor Triggers of Asthma

Pay Attention to the Daily Air Quality Index. Ground level ozone, particulates, and sulfur dioxide are all major triggers of asthma attacks. The Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments has developed a “code” system to alert the public about days when outdoor air quality is dangerous. Asthma sufferers should avoid extended outdoor activity on “Code Red” and “Code Orange” days. Call 202/962-3299 for the daily air quality forecast. See the Outdoor Air Quality fact sheet for more information.

Dress Warmly on Cold Winter Days. Sudden contact with cold air can shock the system and trigger asthma attacks. Before going outside on cold days, bundle up and wear a scarf over mouth and nose.

Stay Indoors When the Pollen Count Is High. Listen to weather reports to find out about pollen levels in Washington, D.C. If the pollen level is high, remain indoors with air conditioning and windows closed when possible.

Contact Local Government Officials. Write or call asking them to support strong policies to reduce air pollution and protect both children and adults from asthma. See the Government Officials fact sheet for contact information.

Resources

Local Contacts

American Lung Association of the District of Columbia (www.aladc.org) runs a Childhood Asthma Campaign. Call 202/682-5864 for information.

National Contacts

American Lung Association (www.lungusa.org) has fact sheets and information about asthma and asthma control. Call 800/586-4872.

The National Asthma Education and Prevention Program at National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (www.nhlbi.nih.gov) can give you the latest medical and environmental information on asthma. Call 301/592-8573.

U.S. EPA’s Indoor Air Quality Information Hotline (www.epa.gov/iaq) provides information about asthma and asthma control. Call 800/438-4318 to receive a copy of brochures such as “Asthma, Air Quality, and Environmental Justice.”

Allergy and Asthmatics Network/Mothers of Asthmatics, Inc. (www.aanma.org) has information on asthma, doctors in your area, the latest medical treatments, and more. Call 800/878-4403.

Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America (www.aafa.org) conducts national asthma research and provides advocacy information. Call 800/727-8462.

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Healthy & Affordable Food

The Sustainable Washington Environmental Health Action Guide

Picture This

Natasha was excited. It was a summer Saturday morning—the time every week when she and her grandmother would go to the farmer’s market. Natasha loved the fruits and vegetables at the market—and from early spring through the fall, she and Nana would do the weekly shopping there. She was always sad when the market closed for the winter—she would miss her special farmer friends. And the regular grocery store wasn’t as much fun—it was a long bus ride away, and the fruits and vegetables didn’t have that earthy fresh smell like those at the farmer’s market. Natasha’s mother would make all sorts of wonderful meals for her and Nana from their farmer’s market finds: delicious soups, her favorite sauces for pasta, and big salads. Natasha’s mother had seen a special program on the news about the benefits of serving fresh vegetables and fruit, and she loved the produce from the farmer’s market because she knew she could prepare lots of healthy, nutritious meals for her daughter and mother.

Find out what you can do to provide more healthy and safe food for your family.

Do You Know?

Food is considered by many people to be our closest connection to the environment. Pollution of the air, ground, or water can effect the quality of the food we eat and our health. At the same time, the production of different kinds of food we choose to eat, whether vegetables or meat products, has different impacts on the quality of the environment. Many Americans, especially those in low-income, urban communities don’t have access to healthy food and affordable groceries.

Key Facts About A Well Balanced, Daily Diet

Americans need to eat a more well balanced diet to reduce the risk of diet related health problems. A well-balanced diet includes:

- ▮ **6–11 servings of bread, cereal, rice, and pasta;**
- ▮ **at least 5 servings of fruits and vegetables;**
- ▮ **no more than 2–3 servings of milk, cheeses, and other dairy;**
- ▮ **no more than 2–3 servings of lean meat, poultry, fish, and eggs;**
- ▮ **and very few fats, oils, and sweets.**

How Food Impacts Your Health and the Environment

Americans eat more meat and other high fat, salty foods than people in most other countries and thus have higher rates of such dietary health problems as heart disease, diabetes, cancer, high blood pressure, and obesity.

- ▮ **Only 23% of Americans eat five or more serving of fruits and vegetables each day.**
- ▮ **On average, men eat only three servings of fruits and vegetables each day while women eat four servings.**
- ▮ **Low-income people tend to eat fewer servings of fruits and vegetables each day than people with higher incomes.**
- ▮ **Almost 35% of all cancer deaths in the U.S. are linked to poor diet.**

Access to Healthy and Affordable Food

In many parts of the city, low-income households have less access to healthy and affordable grocery stores and food supplies than do people in more affluent areas. This is because some urban areas have fewer grocery stores than other areas. Ward 8 has no grocery store at all. Many Washington residents who live in areas without supermarkets don't own cars and carrying groceries plus children on public transportation can be very hard. When smaller grocery stores are present in communities, they often charge high prices for staple items, and fruit and vegetable selection can be limited and of poor quality due to age and handling.

- Residents of D.C. living East of the Anacostia River have 1/6 the access to fresh produce as those living West of Rock Creek Park.
- There are an estimated 30,000 people in D.C. who experience chronic food shortages. Nearly half are young children.

Pesticides

Most of the fruits and vegetables we eat are grown using chemical pesticides and fertilizers. It is important to wash all produce before eating it, because many of the pesticides and fertilizers that are used to grow food can cause long term health problems for people who are exposed to them. Pesticides can also cause environmental problems, contaminating the soil, water, and wildlife near agricultural areas.

- The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) estimates that ground water in 38 states is contaminated with at least some cancer-causing pesticides, polluting the drinking water supply for nearly half of the country's population.
- Nearly 911 million pounds of synthetic pesticides are applied to crops each year.
- U.S. EPA estimates that 60% of all herbicides, 90% of all fungicides, and 30% of all insecticides may cause cancer.
- Industrial agriculture contributes to the loss of up to 30 billion tons of topsoil annually due to erosion.

For additional information on pesticides and related toxic substances, contact the D.C. Environmental Health Administration at 202/535-2299.

Organic Foods

Organic fruits, vegetables, and even meats and dairy products are those grown without the use of pesticides and chemical fertilizers. Eating organic foods grown

Fats, Oils & Sweets
USE SPARINGLY

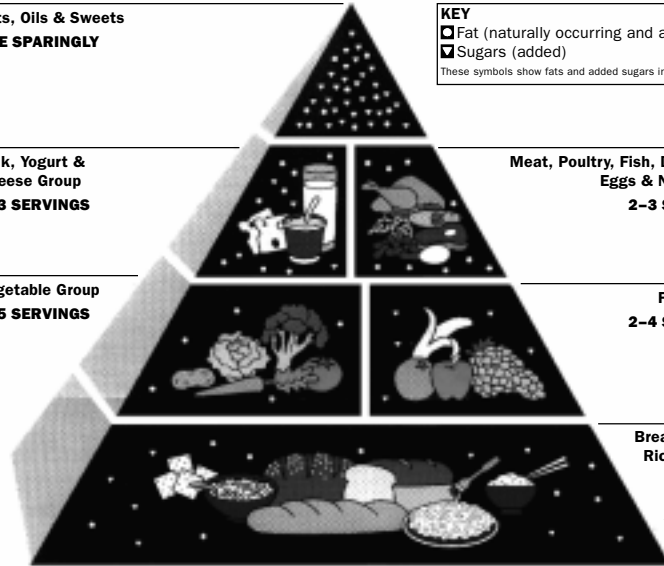
Milk, Yogurt & Cheese Group
2-3 SERVINGS

Vegetable Group
3-5 SERVINGS

Meat, Poultry, Fish, Dry Beans, Eggs & Nuts Group
2-3 SERVINGS

Fruit Group
2-4 SERVINGS

Bread, Cereal, Rice & Pasta Group
6-11 SERVINGS



The Food Pyramid.

USDA AND DHHS

without the use of dangerous pesticides or chemical fertilizers will help keep America's soil, water, and wildlife clean and healthy and may help you avoid the long-term health problems associated with these substances. Organic products are becoming easier to find and cheaper to buy as more people become interested in the benefits organic foods contribute to both personal health and the environment.

Take Action!

Eat More Fruits, Vegetables, and Grains/Eat Less Meat and Dairy. Improving your diet will improve your health by reducing your risks of heart disease and cancer. Follow the USDA "Pyramid of foods". Check your local library or bookstore for healthful cookbooks.

Hints Around the Kitchen When Preparing Food

With Your Oven

- Use a meat thermometer when cooking
- Cook ground beef to 160 degrees; no pink in center; Poultry should be cooked to 180 degrees

In Your Refrigerator

- The freezer compartment setting should be zero
- The refrigerator's temperature should be kept below 40 degrees
- Put raw meat on a plate so it does not drip and contaminate other items
- Eggs should be stored in their carton in the main portion of the refrigerator
- Condiments, jellies, salad dressing may be stored on the refrigerator door
- Leftovers should be discarded after 2-3 days.
- Never taste food that has a strange odor; if it smells bad, it is bad

But Be Sure to Rinse All Fruits and Vegetables Thoroughly. Rinsing all fruits and vegetables with clear water will remove harmful pesticide and dirt residues.

Prepare Food Safely. Follow instructions for refrigeration and food preparation to avoid sickness and disease.

Support Equal Access to Healthy Food. Contact your local government officials to let them know you think it is important that economic development issues in the District include affordable food access for all residents. Also let them know that you support local food producers and access to locally grown food. In 1996, Congress authorized \$2.5 million per year to support community food security projects. See the Government Officials fact sheet for contact details.

Buy Local Food, Buy Organic Food. Look for locally grown produce at your grocery store. If they don't stock local produce, ask them to start. Farmers markets, farm stands, and food co-operatives often offer organic food at affordable prices. Eating organic foods that are in season and grown locally will help you save money. See the **Get Informed** section of this fact sheet for a list of farmers markets in Washington, D.C. The GoodFood DC website (www.goodfooddc.net) has a complete list of food cooperatives, farmers markets and health food stores in the D.C. area.

Participate in Community-Supported Agriculture (CSA). CSAs are farms that sell you a "share" of their yearly harvest. For a lump sum up front, a CSA will deliver produce to a designated spot near your home weekly during the growing season. Not only do CSAs directly link producers with consumers, but they're also a great way to spread the word about the necessity of preserving both farmers and farmland. In the process, they foster a greater sense of security and self-reliance throughout the region. The GoodFood DC website (see above) lists CSA farms in the Washington area.

Grow Your Own Food at home or in a community garden. **Community Gardens** are public gardens set up in vacant lots, city parks, or empty fields. Community gardens work to improve the quality of life in urban communities by beautifying neighborhoods, providing recreational opportunities and open space, and providing opportunities for residents to grow their own food. To find out about community gardens in your neighborhood, contact Judy Tiger at Garden Resources of Washington, 202/234-0591, or grow19@aol.com.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's **Farmers Market Nutrition Program** offers families receiving WIC (Women, Infants, and Children) benefits vouchers and coupons good for buying produce from farmers markets. Contact the WIC program at 703/305-2746 for information. Access the United States Department of Agriculture website at www.fns.usda.gov/wic/ for a complete list of farmers markets participating in the program.

Eat at Restaurants that Buy from Local, Organic Growers. Encourage restaurants, churches, schools and others to buy local produce. The GoodFood DC website (www.goodfooddc.net) lists restaurants that buy from local, organic growers.

Avoid Unsafe Restaurants. Some restaurants in Washington, D.C. have been cited by the Department of Health for violations of health code laws. The listing of restaurants that have been closed for health code violations is listed weekly in the Thursday edition of the *Washington Post*. The list is also presented on Channel 7-WJLA news programs each Thursday at 11:00 p.m. and Fridays at 5:00 p.m. Contact the D.C. Department of Health Food Protection Division at 202/535-2530.

Support Strong Organic Safety Standards. The USDA is in the process of developing quality and safety standards for a national organic food label. Contact the Pure Food Campaign to receive more information and get involved (www.purefood.org/index.htm).

Host a Dinner at Your Home. Ask all your guests to bring a dish which uses locally grown food.

Resources

Local Contacts

The **D.C. Environmental Health Administration** can give you more information about pesticides, food and toxic substances, food safety and other issues highlighted in this fact sheet. Call 202/535-2299.

Community Harvest has information about food security issues in the D.C. area. Call 202/667-8875. The Good Food DC website (www.goodfooddc.net) lists farmers markets, restaurants, community gardens, food coops, and other organizations working on healthy and affordable food access in D.C.

Garden Resources of Washington (GROW) has information on community gardens in the D.C. area. Call 202/234-0591 or e-mail: grow19@aol.com

Farmer's Markets in Washington, D.C.

Adams Morgan Farmers Market (seasonal)
18th & Columbia Rd.
Washington, D.C.
814/448-3904
This market accepts WIC Coupons

Anacostia Farmers Market
From the Ground Up
(202) 526-5344, ext. 242
Contact: Jodie Steiner
Website: <http://www.goodfooddc.net>

D.C. Farmers Market (year-round)
1309 Fifth Street NE
Washington, D.C. 20002
Contact: Al Kinney at 202/547-3142

continued

Washington, D.C. Farmer's Markets *continued*

D.C. Open Air Farmers Market (seasonal—Tues./Thurs./Sat.)

Oklahoma Avenue & Benning Road
RFK Stadium
Washington, D.C. 20002
This market accepts WIC Coupons

Eastern Market (year round—Sat./Sun.)

225 Seventh Street, SE
Washington, D.C. 20032
Contact 202/546-2698
WIC coupons accepted

Fresh Farm Market (seasonal—Sun.)

Dupont Circle
20th Street, NW
Washington, D.C.
Contact Bernie Prince
e-mail bprince@farmland.org
This market accepts WIC Coupons

Union Temple Farmers Market (seasonal—Wed.)

Union Temple Baptist Church
1225 W. Street, SE
Washington, DC
Contact Community Harvest at 202/667-8875 or 202/526-5344, ext. 242

U.S. Department of Agriculture Farmers Market (seasonal—Fri.)

12th Street and Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250
Contact Arthur Burns at 800/384-8704
e-mail arthur.burns@usda.gov
Web: www.ams.usda.gov/farmersmarkets
This market accepts WIC Coupons

U.S. Department of Labor (seasonal—Thurs.)
200 Constitution Avenue, NW

Washington, D.C. 20210
Contact Violet Graham at 202/219-5710, ext. 163;
e-mail graham-violet@dol.gov
This market accepts WIC Coupons

U.S. Department of Transportation (seasonal—Tues.)

400 7th Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20590
Contact Eileen Dyer at 202/366-0674,
e-mail eileen.dyer@tasc.dot.gov
This market accepts WIC Coupons

Ward 8 Farmers Market (seasonal—Sat.)

Old Congress Heights
School
3100 block of Martin Luther
King Avenue, SE
Washington, DC

EARTH CONSERVATION CORPS

National

The **U.S. Department of Agriculture** has information on organic foods, farmers markets, pesticides, food safety, and more. Call the Information Access Line at 202/720-2791.

The **Community Food Security Coalition** can provide general information on food security issues and organizations around the country. Call 310/822-5410.

The **Food and Nutrition Information Center** has information on proper nutrition and nutritious food. Call 301/504-5719.

The **Pesticide Action Network** monitors local and national efforts to reduce the use of dangerous pesticides on food. Call 415/981-1771 for more information.

The **Vegetarian Resource Group** provides general information on vegetarianism and vegetarian issues. Call 410/366-8343.

Full mailing addresses and contact details of organizations listed mentioned in this fact sheet are available in this Guide's **Resource Directory of Organizations**.

The Sustainable Washington Environmental Health Action Guide is an environmental health and information tool for Washington, D.C. residents compiled and maintained by the Sustainable Washington Alliance.

The Guide was developed in partnership with the D.C. Department of Health, Environmental Health Administration and Environmental Defense. Together, the Sustainable Washington Alliance, the Environmental Health Administration, and Environmental Defense undertook this project to create a resource tool that expands D.C. residents' awareness of environmental issues that affect individual and community health and the quality of life in D.C. neighborhoods.

This fact sheet is also available on the Sustainable Washington Alliance website: <http://www.swampnet.org> and the Environmental Health Administration website: <http://www.enviro.state.dc.us/>

For more information contact: Sustainable Washington Alliance c/o Concern, Inc. 1794 Columbia Rd. Washington, D.C. 20009 202.328.8160

Disclaimer: The information in this guide has been compiled from recognized sources and is accurate to the best of our knowledge. The information presented should not be considered as medical advice and is not a substitute for care by a licensed health professional. The Sustainable Washington Alliance is not responsible for any errors or inaccuracies presented.

Your Elected Officials

There are numerous websites that have extensive information about your elected officials, neighborhood commissions and the myriad civic activities of the city.

The official website for the Government of the District of Columbia is:

<http://www.washingtondc.gov> or www.dc.gov

Various other resources exist online, such as DCWatch, an online magazine (<http://dcwatch.com/>), and individual pages for neighborhood associations, Council members and Delegate Eleanor Holmes Norton which can be found on either of the above listed sites.

Advisory Neighborhood Commissioners

There is a commissioner for approximately every 2000 D.C. residents. To find out who your commissioner is, check your voter registration form or call the Board of Elections and Ethics at 202/727-2525.

You can also find information about your neighborhood commissioners and associations on the official District of Columbia website at:

<http://neighborhoods.washingtondc.gov/>

You can e-mail a service request to the Department of Public Works through their website at:

<http://www.publicworks.ci.washington.dc.us>

You can also go to the Department of Health website for Environmental Health Hotline information:

<http://www.dchealth.com/hotlines/eh.htm>

Mayor's Office

Mayor Anthony Williams

441 4th Street, N.W.

Washington, DC 20004

Ph: 202/727-2980 and 202/727-1000

Fax: 202/727-0505

E-mail: mayor@washingtondc.gov

Web Page: <http://washingtondc.gov/mayor/index.htm>

D.C. City Council Members

The address for all City Council Members is: 441 4th Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20001.

Their e-mail addresses are their first initial, followed by their last name@dccouncil.washington.dc.us

Their page on the Washington, D.C. website is:

<http://www.washingtondc.gov/ccouncil.exlinks/main1.htm>

Council members have separate pages at that web address.

Linda W. Cropp

Chairman

At large

Room 704

Ph: 202/724-8032

Fax: 202/724-8085

Democrat

current term 1999–2003

Harold Brazil

At large

Room 701

Ph: 202/724-8174

Fax: 202/724-8156

Democrat

current term 1997–2001

Phil Mendelson

At large
Room 720
Ph: 202/724-8064
Fax: 202/724-8099
Democrat
current term 1999–2003

Carol Schwartz

At large
Room 706
Ph: 202/724-8105
Fax: 202/724-8071
Republican
current term 1997–2001

David Catania

At large
Room 720
Ph: 202/724-7772
Fax: 202/724-8087
Republican
current term 1999–2003

Jim Graham

Ward 1
Room 718
Ph: 202/724-8181
Fax: 202/724-8109
Democrat
current term 1999–2003

Jack Evans

Ward 2
Room 703
Ph: 202/724-8058
Fax: 202/724-8023
Democrat
current term 1997–2001

Kathleen Patterson

Ward 3
Room 709
Ph: 202/724-8062
Fax: 202/724-8118
Democrat
current term 1999–2003

Adrian Fenty

Ward 4
Pro Temp
Room 708
Ph: 202/724-8052
Fax: 202/724-8120
Democrat
current term 1997–2001

Vincent Orange, Sr.

Ward 5
Room 707
Ph: 202/724-8028
Fax: 202/724-8076
Democrat
current term 1999–2003

Sharon Ambrose

Ward 6
Room 710
Ph: 202/724-8072
Fax: 202/724-8054
Democrat
current term 1999–2003

Kevin P. Chavous

Ward 7
Room 705
Ph: 202/724-8068
Fax: 202/724-8097
Democrat
current term 1997–2001

Sandra Allen

Ward 8
Room 707
Ph: 202/724-8045
Fax: 202/724-8055
Democrat
current term 1997–2001

Congressional Delegate for the District of Columbia

Eleanor Holmes Norton
Delegate Norton's website is:
<http://www.house.gov/norton/>

N.W. District Office

815 15th Street, N.W.
Suite 100
Washington, D.C. 20005
Ph: 202/783-5065
Fax: 202/783-5211

S.E. District Office

2041 Martin Luther King Ave.
Suite 300
Washington, D.C. 20020
Ph: 202/678-8900
Fax: 202/678-8844

Capitol Hill Office

U.S. House of Representatives
2136 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515
Ph: 202/225-8050
Fax: 202/225-3002

General Department of Health Contact Numbers

Unless otherwise noted, the numbers below are staffed Monday through Friday from 8:15 a.m. to 4:45 p.m.

Air Pollution Regulation	(202) 535-2250
Anacostia River Restoration	(202) 535-1603
Animal Control	(202) 535-2500
Aquatic Resources Education	(202) 535-2276
Asbestos Complaints and Inspections	(202) 535-2250
Chemical Dumping and Spill Complaints	(202) 535-2270
Environmental Education	(202) 535-2239
Erosion and Sediment Control	(202) 535-2240
Fishing Licenses and Regulations	(202) 535-2272
Food Protection/Inspections	(202) 535-2500
Lead Poisoning Screening	(202) 535-2690
Pesticides Complaints	(202) 535-2270
Hazardous Waste Complaints	(202) 535-2290
Poison Control Center Hotline	(202) 625-3333 (24 hours)
Rodent Control	(202) 535-1954
DC Radon Hotline	(202) 535-2250 (24 hours)
Soil Quality Regulations	(202) 535-2240
Testing of Drinking Water.....	(202) 535-2190
To Report Dead Fish	(202) 535-2260
Water Quality Laws and Regulations	(202) 535-2190
Water Quality of DC Streams and Rivers	(202) 535-2190

Resource Directory of Organizations

NOTE: Any D.C. government office can be accessed through the D.C. Call Center: 202/727-1000.

Asthma (page M-1)

Allergy and Asthmatics Network/Mothers of Asthmatics, Inc. (AAN/MA)

2751 Prosperity Avenue, Suite 150
Fairfax, VA 22031
Ph: 800/878-4403; 703/641-9595
Fax: 703/573-7794
E-mail: aanma@aol.com
Website: <http://www.aanma.org>

American Lung Association

1740 Broadway
New York, NY 10019
Ph: 800/586-4872
Website: <http://www.lungusa.org>

American Lung Association of the District of Columbia

475 H Street, NW
Washington, DC 20001
Ph: 202/682-5864
Fax: 202/682-5874
E-Mail: info@aladc.org
Website: <http://www.aladc.org>

Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America (AAFA)

1233 20th Street, NW, Suite 402
Washington, DC 20036
Ph: 202/466-7643
800/7-ASTHMA
Fax: 202/466-8940
Website: <http://www.aafa.org>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

1600 Clifton Rd
Atlanta, GA 30333
Ph: 800/311-3435
Website: <http://www.medofficeinc.com/f-set3.html>

National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute

Health Information Center
P.O. Box 30105
Bethesda, MD 20824-0105
Ph: 301/592-8573
Fax: 301/592-8563
E-Mail: NHLBInfo@nhi.nih.gov
Website: <http://www.nhlbi.nih.org>

Physicians for Social Responsibility

1875 Connecticut Avenue NW, Suite 1012
Washington, D.C. 20009
Ph: 202/667-4260
Fax: 202/667-4201
E-Mail: psrnatl@psr.org
Website: <http://www.psr.org>

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Region 3

Air Protection Division
1650 Arch Street
Philadelphia, PA 19103-2029
Ph: 800/438-2474
Website: <http://www.epa.gov/region03>

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Office of Radiation and Indoor Air
Mail Drop 6601 J
501 3rd Street NW
Washington, DC 20001
Ph: 202/564-9320
Website: <http://www.epa.gov/oar>

Hotlines

Allergy and Asthmatics Network: 1/800/878/4403
American Lung Association: 1/800/586/4872
Asthma & Allergy Found. of America: 1/800/727-8462
U.S. EPA Air Quality Information: 1/800/438/4318

Clean and Healthy Homes (page G-1)

District of Columbia

Department of Public Works
Solid Waste Management Administration
Sanitation Information Line
2750 South Capitol Street, SE
Washington, DC 20032
Ph: 202/727-4600
Fax: 202/645-3131

National Capital Poison Center

Ph: 202/625-3333 (Hotline)
Ph: 202/362-3867 (for informative pamphlets)

University of the District of Columbia

Cooperative Extension Service
Community Outreach
4200 Connecticut Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20008
Ph: 202/274-7166 or 202/274-7115
Fax: 202/274-7130

Hotlines

U.S. Dept. of Housing & Urban Development,
Healthy Home Program: 1/800/HUDS-FHA
U.S. EPA—Indoor Air Quality
English: 1/800/438-4318
Español: 1/800/725-8312

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

Healthy Home program
Ph: 800/HUDS-FHA
Website: <http://www.montana.edu/www.cxair>

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Indoor Air Quality Information Hotline
Ph: 800/438-4318
Ph: 800/725-8312 (en español)

Environmental Justice (page B-1)

African American Environmentalists Association

9903 Caltor Lane
Ft. Washington, MD 20744
E-Mail: africanamericanenvironmentalist@msn.com
Website: <http://communities.msn.com/aaea>

D.C. Environmental Network

Friends of the Earth
1025 Vermont Avenue NW, 3rd Floor
Washington, D.C. 20005-6303
Ph: 202/783-7400 ext. 183
Fax: 202/783-0444
E-Mail: foe@foe.org
Website: www.foe.org/pto/dc/index.html

D.C. Dep't of Health Environmental Health Administration

51 N Street NE
Washington, D.C. 20002
Ph: 202/535-2500
Website: <http://www.environ.state.dc.us>

Environmental Defense

1875 Connecticut Avenue, Suite 1016
Washington, D.C. 20009
Ph: 202/387-3500
Fax: 202/234-6049
Website: <http://www.edf.org>
Website: <http://www.scorecard.org>

Friends of the Earth

1025 Vermont Avenue NW, 3rd Floor
Washington, D.C. 20005-6303
Ph: 202/783-7400
Fax: 202/783-0444
E-Mail: foe@foe.org

Nat'l Ass'n for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)

Washington Bureau
1025 Vermont Ave. NW, Suite 1120
Washington, D.C. 20005
Information Hotline: 410/521-4939
Website: <http://www.naACP.org>

National Environmental Justice Advisory Council

c/o Office of Environmental Justice
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Mail Code 2201A
Washington, D.C. 20460
Ph: 202/564-2599
Website: <http://www.epa.gov/oeca/ej>

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Interagency Task Force on Environmental Justice
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue NW (Ariel Rios Building)
Room 2226 Mail Code 2201A
Washington, D.C. 20460
Ph: 202/564-2515
Website: <http://www.es.epa.gov/oeca/ore/med>

Healthy and Affordable Food (page N-1)

Anacostia Farmers Market

From the Ground Up
(202) 526-5344
Contact: Claire Tyrpak
Website: <http://www.clagettfarm.org>
E-mail: Typakc@foodbank.org

The Organic Consumers Association

(formerly Campaign for Food Safety)
6101 Clift Estate Road
Little Marais, MN 55614
Ph: 218/226-4164
Fax: 218/226-4157
E-Mail: alliance@mr.net
Website: <http://www.purefood.org>

Capital Area Community Food Bank

645 Taylor St. NE
Washington, D.C. 20017
Ph: 202/526-5344
Website: www.capitalareafoodbank.org

Community Food Security Coalition

P.O. Box 209
Venice, CA 90294
Ph: 310/822-5410
E-Mail: asfisher@aol.com
Website: <http://www.foodsecurity.org>

Community Harvest

2437 15th St. NW
Washington, D.C. 20009
Ph: 202/667-8875
E-Mail: goodfood4@aol.com
Website: <http://www.goodfooddc.net>

Congressional Hunger Center

229½ Pennsylvania Avenue, SE
Washington, D.C. 20003
Ph: 202/547-7022
Fax: 202/547-7575
E-Mail: nohungr@aol.com
Website: <http://www.ghn.org/chc/>

D.C. Department of Health Environmental Health Administrator

Food Protection Division
51 N Street NE, 6th Floor
Washington, D.C. 20002
Ph: 202/535-2530

D.C. Department of Health

Environmental Health Administrator
Information on Pesticides
Ph: 202/535-2299

D.C. Department of Health

Office of Nutrition Programs and Services
2100 Martin Luther King Jr., Ave., SE
Room 409
Washington, D.C. 20020
Ph: 202/645-5663 **Hotline:** 800/345-1WIC
Website: <http://www.dchealth.com/ns/overview.stm>

Food and Nutrition Information Center (of USDA)

301/504-5719

Garden Resources of Washington (GROW)

1419 V Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20009
Ph: 202/234-0591
E-Mail: grow19@aol.com

Pesticide Action Network North America (PANNA)

49 Powell Street, Suite 500
San Francisco, CA 94102
Ph: 415/981-1771
Fax: 415/981-1991
E-Mail: panna@panna.org
Website: <http://www.panna.org/panna/>

U.S. Department of Agriculture

Food Safety and Inspection Service
Room 2932-South Building
1400 Independence Ave. SW
Washington, DC 20250
Ph: 202/720-7943
E-Mail: fsis.webmaster@usda.gov
Website: <http://www.fsis.usda.gov/>

U.S. Department of Agriculture

Food, Nutrition, and Consumer Services
14th & Independence Ave. SW
Washington, D.C. 20250
Ph: 202/720-2791
E-Mail: webmaster@fns.usda.gov
Website: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/fncs/>

Vegetarian Resource Group

P.O. Box 1463
Baltimore, MD 21203
E-Mail: vrg@vrg.org
Website: <http://www.vrg.org>

Healthy Rivers and You (page C-1)

Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay

6600 York Road
Baltimore, MD 21212
Ph: 410/377-6270
Fax: 410/377-7144
E-mail: mail@acb-online.org
Website: <http://www.acb-online.org>

American Heritage Rivers

Website: <http://www.epa.gov/rivers>

American Rivers

1025 Vermont Ave., N.W. Suite 720
Washington, DC 20005
Ph: 202/347-7550
Fax: 202/347-9240
E-mail: amrivers@amrivers.org
Website: <http://www.amrivers.org>

Anacostia River Business Coalition

c/o Interstate Commission on the Potomac River Basin
6110 Executive Blvd.
Rockville, MD 20852
Ph: 301/984-1908, extension 120, or 703/750-5558
E-mail: cschultz@potomac-commission.org
Website: <http://www.potomacriver.org>

Anacostia Watershed Society

4302 Baltimore Avenue
Bladensburg, MD 20710-1031
Ph: 301/699-6204
Fax: 301/699-3317
Website: <http://www.anacostiaws.org>

C&O Canal National Historical Park

1057 Thomas Jefferson St. NW
Washington, DC 20007
Ph: 202/653-5190
Website: <http://www.nps.gov/choh>

Chesapeake Bay Program

410 Severn Avenue, Suite 109
Annapolis, MD 21403
Ph: 800/YOUR-BAY
Fax: 410/267-5777.
Website: <http://www.chesapeakebay.net>

Clean Water Network

1200 New York Avenue, NW, Suite 400
Washington, DC 20005
Ph: 202/289-2395
Fax: 202/289-1060
E-mail: cleanwaternt@igc.org
Website: <http://www.cwn.org>

District of Columbia

Department of Health, Environmental Health
Administration
Fisheries and Wildlife Division
51 N Street NE, 5th Floor
Washington, DC 20002
Ph: 202/535-2260
Website: <http://www.environ.state.dc.us>

District of Columbia

Dep't of Health, Environmental Health Administration
Watershed Protection Division
51 N Street NE, 5th Floor
Washington, DC 20020
Ph: 202/535-2240

General information:

Hamid Karimi, Project Manager
E-Mail: hkarimi@mail.environ.state.dc.us.

Educational programs:

Gilda Allen
E-Mail: gallen@mail.environ.state.dc.us.
Website: <http://www.environ.state.dc.us/watershd>

District of Columbia

Dep't of Health, Environmental Health Administration
Pesticide Program
Ph: 202/535-1952

District of Columbia Department of Public Works

Energy Office, Weatherization Program
2000 14th Street, Suite 300E
Washington, DC 20009
Ph: 202/673-7797

District of Columbia Department of Public Works

Solid Waste Management Administration
Sanitation Information Line
2750 South Capitol Street, SE
Washington, DC 20032
Ph: 202/727-4600
Fax: 202/645-3131
E-mail: linda_grant_at_~dpw1-reeves@ccmail.dcgov.org
Website: <http://www.publicworks.ci.washington.dc.us>

D.C. Government Agencies

Health, Fisheries and Wildlife: 202/535-2260
Health, Watershed Division: 202/535-2240
Park Services: Nat'l Capital Parks East: 202/690-5185
Public Works: 202/727-4600
MPD Environmental Crimes: 202/645-7196
or 202/645-7320
Recycling: 202/727-1000
UDC Cooperative Extension: 202/274-7115
Water and Sewer: 202/787-2609

Earth Conservation Corps

1st Street & Potomac Avenue SE
Washington, DC 20003
Ph: 202/554-1960
Fax: 202/554-2040
Website: <http://www.earthconcorps.org>

Fort Totten Transfer Station

4900 Bates Road NE (corner of McCormick Dr. and
Michigan Avenue)
Washington, DC 20011
Ph: 202/576-6803

Friends of the Potomac

1730 K Street NW, Suite 300
Washington, DC 20006
Ph: 202/467-4000
Fax: 202/467-4007
E-mail: info@potomacfriends.org
Website: <http://www.potomacfriends.org>

George Washington Memorial Parkway

(includes Turkey Run and Great Falls Park, among others)
c/o Turkey Run Park
McLean, VA 22101
Ph: 703/289-2500
Website: <http://www.nps.gov/gwmp>

Interstate Commission on Potomac River Basin

6110 Executive Blvd., Suite 300
Rockville, MD 20852
Ph: 301/984-1908 x120
Fax: 301/984-5841
E-mail: info@potomac-commission.org
Website: <http://www.potomacriver.org>

National Capitol Parks East

(includes Anacostia Park, Fort Dupont and Kenilworth
Aquatic Gardens, among others)
1900 Anacostia Drive
Washington, DC 20020
Ph: 202/690-5185
Website: <http://www.nps.gov/nace>

Pesticides in Surface Water of the Mid-Atlantic Region

Web: <http://md.water.usgs.gov/publications/wrir-97-4280/>

Potomac Conservancy

P.O. Box 9121
Arlington, VA 22219
Ph: 703/276-2777
Fax: 703/276-1098
E-mail: info@potomac.org
Website: <http://www.potomac.org>

River Network — Eastern Office

4000 Albemarle St., NW, Suite 303
Washington, DC 20016
Ph: 202/364-2550
Fax: 202-364-2520
E-mail: dc@rivernetwork.org
Website: <http://www.rivernetwork.org>

Rock Creek Park Nature Center and Planetarium

5200 Glover Road NW
Washington, DC 20015
Ph: 202/426-6828
Website: <http://www.nps.gov/rocr>

University of the District of Columbia

Cooperative Extension Service
Pesticide Education Programs and Natural Resources
4200 Connecticut Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20008
Ph: 202/274-6900
Fax: 202/274-7130

Water Environment Federation

601 Wythe Street
Alexandria, VA 22314-1994
Ph: 800/666-0206 (U.S. and Canada)
703/684-2452 (outside U.S. and Canada)
Fax: 703/684-2492
E-mail: public_education@wef.org; **Web:** www.wef.org

WETA Public Broadcasting Service

Website: <http://www.weta.org/potomac>

Indoor Air Quality (page K-1)

American Lung Association

1740 Broadway
New York, NY 10019
Ph: 800/586-4872
212/315-8700
Website: <http://www.lungusa.org>

American Lung Association of the District of Columbia

475 H Street, NW
Washington, DC 20001
Ph: 202-682-5864
Fax: 202-682-5874
E-Mail: info@aladc.org
Website: <http://www.aladc.org>

D.C. Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs

Housing Regulations Administration
941 North Capitol Street N.E.
Washington, D.C. 20002
Ph: 202/442-4610

D.C. Dep't of Health Environmental Health Administration

Division of Air Quality
51 N Street NE
Washington, D.C. 20002
Ph: 202/535-2250
Website: <http://www.envrion.state.dc.us>

D.C. Department of Public Works

Division of Solid Waste
Sanitation Information Line
2750 South Capitol Street SE
Washington, D.C. 20032
Ph: 202/727-4600

D.C. Housing Authority Control Center

1133 N. Capitol Street N.E.
Washington, D.C. 20002
Ph: 202/535-1044

D.C. Office of Occupational Health and Safety

77 P Street NW, 3rd Floor
Washington, D.C. 20002
Ph: 202/698-7520

Healthy Indoor Air for America's Homes

Website: <http://www.montana.edu/wwwcxair>

National Coalition Against the Misuse of Pesticides

701 E Street SE, Suite 200
Washington, D.C. 20003
Ph: 202/543-5450
Website: <http://www.beyondpesticides.org>

National Microbial Information Network

Oregon State University
333 Weniger Hall
Corvallis, OR 97331-6502
Ph: 800/447-6349
E-Mail: nain@ace.orst.edu
Website: <http://www.ace.orst.edu/info/nain/>

National Pesticides Telecommunications Network

Ph: 800/858-PEST

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Office of Pesticide Programs
Mail Code 7501C
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20460
Ph: 703/305-7090
Website: <http://www.epa.gov/pesticides/>

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Office of Radiation and Indoor Air
Mail Drop 6601 J
501 3rd Street NW
Washington, DC 20001
Ph: 202/564-9320
Website: <http://www.epa.gov/oar>
Indoor Air Quality website: <http://www.epa.gov/iaq/>

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Region 3

Air Protection Division
1650 Arch St.
Philadelphia, PA 19103-2029
Ph: 800/438-2474
Website: <http://www.epa.gov/region03>

U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission

4330 East-West Highway
Bethesda, MD 20814
Ph: 800/638-2772
Website: <http://www.cpsc.gov>

Washington Gas

Consumer Relations,
1100 H Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C., 20080-0001
Information: 703/750-1000
Gas Leak Emergency: 703/750-1400 or 800/752-7520
Website: <http://www.washgas.com/>

Hotlines

Poison Control Center: 202/625-3333
Radon
D.C.: 202/442-5919
National: 800/557-2366
U.S. EPA's Asbestos: 800/368-5888
U.S. EPA's Indoor Air Quality: 215/814-2100
Español: 800/725-8312
U.S. EPA's Public Access: 800/438-2474
U.S. EPA's Region 3 Air Protection: 800/368-5888
U.S. EPA's Safe Drinking Water: 800/426-4791

Lead Exposure and Your Children's Health (page I-1)

African American Environmentalists Association

9903 Caltor Lane
Ft. Washington, MD 20744
E-Mail: africanamericanenvironmentalist@msn.com
Website: <http://communities.msn.com/aaea>

Alliance to End Lead Poisoning

227 Massachusetts Avenue N.E., Suite 200
Washington, D.C. 20002
Ph: 202/543-1147
Website: <http://www.aeclp.org>

Centers for Disease Control

Environmental Health: Lead Poisoning Prevention Branch
1600 Clifton Road Mail Stop E25
Atlanta, GA 30333
Ph: 404/498-1420
Fax: 404/498-1444

Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program

1925 St. Clair Avenue
Cleveland, OH 44114
Ph: 216/664-2175
Fax: 216/664-3353

D.C. Dep't of Health, Environmental Health Administration

Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program
51 N Street N.E.
Washington, D.C. 20002
Ph: 202/535-2690

Environmental Defense

Lead-Safe China Brochure (in English, Spanish, or Chinese)
1875 Connecticut Avenue NW, Suite 1016
Washington, DC 20009
Website: <http://www.environmentaldefense.org/pubs/brochures/LeadinChina>

National Lead Information Center

Environmental Health Center
1019 19th Street NW
Suite 401
Washington, DC 20036
Ph: 202/833-1071
Ph: Brochure: 800/LEAD-FYI
Ph: Information Specialist, English or Spanish:
800/424-LEAD (5323)
Website: <http://www.epa.gov/docs/opptintr/lead/nlic.htm>

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Region 3

1650 Arch Street
Philadelphia, PA 19103-2029
Ph: 800/438-2474
Website: <http://www.epa.gov/region03>

U.S. Food and Drug Administration

Office of Consumer Affairs
Mail Stop MFE-88
5600 Fishers Lane
Rockville, MD 20857
Ph: 888/463-6332

Outdoor Air Quality (page L-1)

American Lung Association of the District of Columbia

475 H Street, NW
Washington, DC 20001
Ph: 202-682-5864
Fax: 202-682-5874
E-Mail: info@aladc.org
Website: <http://www.aladc.org>

D.C. Dep't of Health Environmental Health Administration

Division of Air Quality
51 N Street NE
Washington, D.C. 20002
Ph: 202/535-2250
Website: <http://www.environ.state.dc.us>

Environmental Defense

1875 Connecticut Avenue N.W., Suite 1016
Washington, D.C. 20009
Ph: 202/387-3500
Fax: 202/234-6049
Website: <http://www.edf.org>
Website: <http://www.scorecard.org>

Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments

Office of Environmental Programs
777 North Capitol Street N.E., Suite 300
Washington, D.C. 20002-4239
Ph: 202/962-3356
Fax: 202/962-3201
Website: <http://www.mwcog.org>

National Center for Environmental Publications and Information

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
11029 Kenwood Road, Building 5
Cincinnati, OH 45242
Ph: 800/490-9198
Website: <http://www.epa.gov/ncepihom/index.html>

PEPCO

1900 Pennsylvania Avenue N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20068-0001
Customer Service: 202/833-7500
E-Mail: environment@pepco.com
Website: <http://www.pepco.com>

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Office of Radiation and Indoor Air
Mail Drop 6601 J
501 3rd Street NW
Washington, DC 20001
Ph: 202/564-9320
Website: <http://www.epa.gov/oar>

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Region 3

1650 Arch Street
Philadelphia, PA 19103-2029
Ph: 800/438-2474
Website: <http://www.epa.gov/region03>

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Region 3

Air Protection Division
Ph: 1/800/438-2474
Website: <http://www.epa.gov/region03>

Washington Metropolitan Transit Authority (METRO)

600 5th Street N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20001
Customer relations: 202/637-7000
Website: <http://www.wmata.com>

Pest Control (page H-1)

District of Columbia

Dep't of Health, Environmental Health Administration
Pesticide Program
Ph: 202/535-1952
Website: <http://www.enviro.state.dc.us>

District of Columbia

Dep't of Health, Environmental Health Administration
Rodent Control Program
51 N Street NE
Washington, DC 20002
Ph: 202/535-1954
Fax: 202/535-1425
Website: <http://www.enviro.state.dc.us>

District of Columbia

Dep't of Health, Environmental Health Administration
Toxic Substance Division
51 N Street NE
Washington, DC 20002
Ph: 202/535-2299
Website: <http://www.enviro.state.dc.us>

District of Columbia Department of Public Works

Abandoned and Junk Vehicles Branch
5000 Overlook Avenue SW
Washington, DC 20032
Ph: 202/645-5800

Hotlines

Air Quality: 202/962-3299
U.S. EPA
Region 3 Public Access Line: 1/800/438-2474
National Center for Environmental Publications:
1/800/490-9198

District of Columbia

Department of Public Works
Solid Waste Education and Enforcement Program (SWEEP)
1A DC Village Lane, SW
Washington, DC 20032
Ph: 202/645-9600
Fax: 202/645-6040
Website: <http://www.publicworks.ci.washington.dc.us>

District of Columbia

Department of Public Works
Solid Waste Management Administration
Sanitation Information Line
2750 South Capitol Street, SE
Washington, DC 20032
Ph: 202/727-4600
Fax: 202/645-3131
Website: <http://www.publicworks.ci.washington.dc.us>

University of the District of Columbia

Cooperative Extension Service
Office of Pesticide Education Programs
4200 Connecticut Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20008
Ph: 202/274-6900
Fax: 202/274-7130

Recycling, Litter and Illegal Dumping (page E-1)

Direct Marketing Association

Mail Preference Service
P.O. Box 9008
Farmingdale, NY 11735-9008

District of Columbia

Dep't of Health, Environmental Health Administration
Rodent Control Program
51 N Street NE
Washington, DC 20002
Ph: 202/535-1954
Fax: 202/535-1425
Website: <http://www.enviro.state.dc.us>

District of Columbia

Department of Public Works
Helping Hand Program
3220 Pennsylvania Avenue SE
Washington, DC 20019
Ph: 202/645-7190

District of Columbia Department of Public Works

Solid Waste Education and Enforcement Program (SWEEP)
1A DC Village Lane, SW
Washington, DC 20032
Ph: 202/645-9600
Fax: 202/645-6040
Sanitation Information Line: 202/727-4600
Website: <http://www.publicworks.ci.washington.dc.us>

District of Columbia Department of Public Works

Solid Waste Management Administration
Office of Recycling
2750 South Capitol Street, SE
Washington, DC 20032
Ph: 202/727-1000
Fax: 202/645-3131
Website: <http://www.publicworks.ci.washington.dc.us>

District of Columbia

Metropolitan Police Dep't, Environmental Crimes Unit
Ph: 202/645-7196 or 645-7320

Fort Totten Transfer Station

4900 Bates Road NE (corner of McCormick Drive and Michigan Avenue)
Washington, DC 20011
Ph: 202/576-6803

MACREDO (Mid-Atlantic Consortium of Recycling and Economic Development Officials)

1504 South Street
Philadelphia, PA 19146
Ph: 215/546-0724
Website: <http://www.libertynet.org/macredo>

Safe Drinking Water and Water Quality (page J-1)

African American Environmentalists Association

9903 Caltor Lane
Ft. Washington, MD 20744
E-Mail: africanamericanenvironmentalists@msn.com
Website: <http://communities.msn.com/aaea>

American Water Works Association

1401 New York Avenue NW, Suite 640
Washington, DC 20005
Ph: 202/628-8303
Website: <http://www.awwa.org>

Clean Water Action

Ph: 202/895-0420
Website: <http://www.amrivers.org>

D.C. Dep't of Health Environmental Health Administration

Water Quality Division
Ph: 202/535-2190
Bureau of Hazardous Materials & Toxic Substances
Ph: 202/535-2270
51 N Street NE
Washington, D.C. 20002
Website: <http://www.environ.state.dc.us>

D.C. Water and Sewer Authority (WASA)

5000 Overlook Avenue S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20032
Drinking water quality: 202/612-3400
Questions & reports about broken pipes: 202/612-3400
Information Line: 202/787-2000
E-Mail: info@dcwasa.com
Website: <http://www.dcwasa.com>

Friends of the Earth

1025 Vermont Avenue NW, 3rd Floor
Washington, D.C. 20005-6303
Ph: 202/783-7400
Fax: 202/783-0444
E-Mail: foe@foe.org
Website: <http://www.foe.org>

Interstate Commission on the Potomac River Basin

6110 Executive Blvd
Suite 300
Rockville, MD 20852-3903
Ph: 301/984-1908
Fax: 301/984-5841
Website: <http://www.potomacriver.org>

NSF International

Water filter information
Ph: 800/673-8010

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Washington Aqueduct Division
Ph: 202/764-2753

U.S. EPA Chesapeake Bay Program

Ph: 800/YOUR-BAY
Website: <http://www.chesapeakebay.net>

U.S. EPA Office of Ground Water and Drinking Water

Safewater Hotline
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Mail Code 4604
Washington, DC 20460-0003
Ph: 800/426-4791
Website: <http://www.epa.gov/ogwdw/>
Water Discharge Permits Database
http://www.epa.gov/enviro/html/pes/pes_query_java.html

U.S. EPA Region 3

1650 Arch Street
Philadelphia, PA 19103-2029
Ph: 800/438-2474
Website: <http://www.epa.gov/region03> or www.epa.gov/surg

WETA-TV

Educational Services & Community Outreach
Water Resource Division
2775 S. Quincy St.
Arlington, VA 22206
Ph: 703/998-2827

Sustainable Communities (page A-1)

CONCERN, Inc.

1794 Columbia Rd., NW
Washington, DC 20009
Ph: 202/328-8160
Fax: 202/387-3378
E-Mail: concern@igc.org

Sustainable DC

441 4th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20001
Ph: 202/442-4019
E-Mail: sustainableDC@hotmail.com

DC Environmental Network

Ph: 202/783-7400 ext. 183

Sustainable Washington Alliance

c/o CONCERN, Inc.
1794 Columbia Rd., NW
Washington, DC 20009
Ph: 202/328-8160
Fax: 202/387-3378
Website: <http://www.swampnet.org>

Internet

Center of Excellence for Sustainable Development

www.sustainable.doe.gov

Environmental Defense

www.edf.org

Environmental Health Administration

www.environ.state.dc.us

Livable Communities

www.livablecommunities.gov

Sustainable Communities Network

www.sustainable.org

Smart Growth Network

www.smartgrowth.org

Sustainable Washington Alliance

www.swampnet.org

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

www.epa.gov/ecocommunity

Toxic Substances and Hazardous Waste (page F-1)

D.C. Dep't of Health Environmental Health Administration

Bureau of Hazardous Materials and Toxic Substances

51 N Street, NE

Washington, D.C. 20002

Chemical Dumping/Spill Complaints/Permit Hearings:

202/535-2290

Hazardous Waste Complaints: 202/535-2270

Underground Storage Tanks: 202/535-2270

Website: <http://www.environ.state.dc.us>

D.C. Department of Public Works Division of Solid Waste

Sanitation Information Line

2750 South Capitol Street S.E.

Washington, D.C. 20032

Ph: 202/727-4600

Environmental Defense

1875 Connecticut Avenue NW, Suite 1016

Washington, D.C. 20009

Ph: 202/387-3500

Fax: 202/234-6049

Website: <http://www.environmentaldefense.org>

Website: <http://www.scorecard.org>

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Office of Solid Waste and Emergency Response

USEPA Ariel Rios (5101)

1200 Pennsylvania Avenue NW

Washington, DC 20460

Website: <http://www.epa.gov/oswer>

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Toxic Release Inventory

Website: <http://www.epa.gov/tri>

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Region 3

1650 Arch Street

Philadelphia, PA 19103-2029

Ph: 800/438-2474

Website: <http://www.epa.gov/region03>

Hotlines: U.S. EPA

National Response Center: 800/424-8802

RCRA: 800/424-9346

Region 3 Response Center: 215/814-9016

Superfund: 800/424-9346

Toxic Release Inventory: 800/535-0202; www.epa.gov/tri

Vacant Lots and Brownfields (page D-1)

District of Columbia Department of Health

Environmental Health Administration

Bureau of Hazardous Waste

Clean Land Program

51 N Street NE

Washington, DC 20002

Ph: 202/535-1747

Website: <http://www.environ.state.dc.us>

District of Columbia

Department of Public Works

Solid Waste Education and Enforcement Program (SWEEP)

1A DC Village Lane SW

Washington, DC 20032

Ph: 202/645-9600

Fax: 202/645-6040

Website: <http://www.publicworks.ci.washington.dc.us>

D.C. Government Agencies:

Clean Land Program: 202/535-1747

Consumer and Regulatory Affairs: 202/442-4610

Department of Consumer & Regulatory Affairs,

Neighborhood Stabilization Program: 202/442-4610

EHA Rodent Control Program: 202/535-1952

Public Works/Metropolitan Police Dep', Environmental

Crimes Unit: 202/645-7196 or 202/645-7198

Environmental Finance Center

The University System of Maryland

0112 Skinner Hall

College Park, MD 20742-7640

Ph: 301/405-6383

Fax: 301/314-9581

E-mail: efc@mdsg.umd.edu

Website: <http://www.mdsg.umd.edu/EFC/Info>

GROW (Garden Resources Of Washington)

1419 V Street, NW

Washington, DC 20009

Ph: 202/234-0591

Fax: 202/234-0592

E-mail: grow19@aol.com

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Brownfields Economic Redevelopment Initiative

Website: <http://www.epa.gov/brownfields>

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Region 3

Brownfields Office

1650 Arch Street

Philadelphia, PA 19103-2029

Ph: 800/438-2474

Fax: 215/814-3001

Website: <http://www.epa.gov/reg3hwmd/brownfld/hmpage1.htm>



The Sustainable Washington Environmental Health Action Guide is an information tool for Washington, D.C. residents. Your feedback is important to us. Please let us know what you think about this guide, its ease of use, and how it can be improved. Use the form below to list your comments and suggestions. You may send us your completed form by mail or fax.

The Sustainable Washington Alliance
c/o CONCERN, Inc.
1794 Columbia Road, NW
Washington, DC 20009

Fax your comment form to:
202.387.3378

Trim form along this line to remove from book.



Fold along this line to mail your response form.

Trim form along this line to remove from book.

Fold along this line to mail your response form.

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stamp
here

**THE SUSTAINABLE WASHINGTON ALLIANCE
C/O CONCERN, INC.
1794 COLUMBIA ROAD, NW
WASHINGTON, DC 20009**

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To receive the latest information from the Sustainable Washington Environmental Health Action Guide, please go to the following websites:

www.swampnet.org

or

www.environ.state.dc.us

Information updates, downloadable fact sheets, and contact information are provided.