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### More information

- » Governor Inslee's clean water policy brief: [http://www.governor.wa.gov/documents/2014\\_clean\\_water\\_policy\\_brief.pdf](http://www.governor.wa.gov/documents/2014_clean_water_policy_brief.pdf)
- » Chemical action plans: [www.ecy.wa.gov/PROGRAMS/SWFA/pbt/caps.html](http://www.ecy.wa.gov/PROGRAMS/SWFA/pbt/caps.html)
- » Department of Health biomonitoring: [www.doh.wa.gov/DataandStatisticalReports/EnvironmentalHealth/Biomonitoring](http://www.doh.wa.gov/DataandStatisticalReports/EnvironmentalHealth/Biomonitoring)
- » Persistent, bioaccumulative toxics: [www.ecy.wa.gov/PROGRAMS/SWFA/pbt/](http://www.ecy.wa.gov/PROGRAMS/SWFA/pbt/)

## Reducing Toxic Pollution

No single source, no single solution

*For more than 40 years, the federal Clean Water Act has been the primary law protecting our waters from toxic chemicals. Although the United States has made great strides in reducing pollution since then, the Clean Water Act alone cannot address the threats to people and the environment that we face today. We need a new set of tools to deal with emerging sources of toxic pollution.*

Much of the toxic chemical pollution that enters Washington's environment comes from everyday products such as the brakes on our cars, flame retardants in our furniture, softeners in plastics, and building and roofing materials. As we use and dispose of these products, the toxics they contain can enter rivers, streams, lakes, bays and Puget Sound.

Exposure to these toxic chemicals can cause harm to human health and the environment. Infants and children are especially at risk. For example, the National Academy of Sciences estimates that 3 percent of developmental disorders are solely attributed to a toxic environmental exposure and another 25 percent result, in part, from environmental factors.

We cannot protect people and the environment with only the tools and technology we have now, nor can we identify and prevent additional problems. Governor Jay Inslee is proposing a comprehensive new approach to dealing with these priority chemicals in Washington. As part of his plan to update Washington's water quality standards to comply with the Clean Water Act, the Governor is proposing both new legislation and additional funding for current efforts to help the state tackle the concern of toxics in products.

His toxics reduction effort will allow Washington to address the most problematic chemicals, find safer alternatives when possible and channel more resources to preventing pollution and monitoring the health of our environment.



## Proposed legislation

The proposed toxics reduction legislation would provide a process to address the most problematic toxic chemicals. It would build on Washington's well-established system for developing chemical action plans by:

- » Identifying the most problematic toxic chemicals.
- » Developing chemical action plans, in conjunction with multi-stakeholder advisory committees, to recommend actions to reduce or eliminate the use of a toxic chemical.
- » Restricting use of a chemical only if a safer alternative is available.
- » Taking steps to reduce the impact of a chemical's use when no viable alternative is available.
- » Ensuring the state buys safer products.

## Helping communities already impacted by toxic chemicals

Toxic chemicals are already affecting the health of Washington communities. We need to increase support to local communities to reduce effects at the local level.

Toxic chemicals pollute stormwater, streams and lakes in Washington. Exposure to these chemicals affects people's health and the health of the environment. Increasing support to local communities is key to reducing toxics at the local level.

One example of this approach is the Local Source Control Partnership. Since 2007, pollution prevention specialists from local governments have visited more than 14,000 businesses. In 75 percent of these visits, they have found and fixed potential issues with hazardous waste disposal, stormwater or spill prevention.

The toxics reduction budget package would:

- » Expand the Local Source Control Partnership to major population centers across the state.
- » Support efforts to protect pregnant women and young children from exposure to toxics through outreach activities and education.

- » Increase biomonitoring to measure chemical exposures in Washington residents.
- » Find pollution sources affecting our rivers, lakes and waterways, and provide tools to help local communities reduce those impacts.
- » Investigate toxics in stormwater from sources such as roofing materials and tires, and find ways to mitigate those toxics through techniques such as rain gardens and permeable asphalt.

## Assisting businesses and finding safer chemicals

Preventing pollution is smarter, healthier and cheaper than cleaning up toxic spills or treating resulting health issues. By developing safer chemicals and improving the efficiency of manufacturing processes, we can make Washington manufacturers more competitive and protect our environment.

One example of this approach is a collaborative partnership between the Department of Ecology and Impact Washington to offer Lean manufacturing assistance to Washington businesses. So far, this work has saved businesses more than \$2.1 million a year, improved energy efficiency and cut chemical use.

The toxics reduction budget package would:

- » Accelerate private-sector efforts to develop and market safer chemicals through a competitive grant process.
- » Expand technical assistance and Lean programs to help Washington manufacturers reduce their use of water, electricity, natural gas and toxic chemicals.
- » Identify potential alternatives to some of Washington's most toxic chemicals such as polychlorinated biphenyls, commonly known as PCBs, and phthalate plasticizers.

The Governor will include funding for this work in his December budget submittal, and will introduce toxics reduction legislation in the 2015 session.