

Annual Meeting Highlights

by Erin O'Hare, AICP

“DIRTY AIR AND PESTICIDES: THE EFFECTS ON OUR HEALTH AND STATUS OF LEGISLATION”

State Representative Patricia Widlitz, Chair of the Environment Committee, addressed her recent legislative successes in the air quality area, the passage of the Clean Cars bill and the Climate Change bill. She indicated that, in terms of air quality, New Haven County is rated as one of the 71 filthiest counties in the nation and Hartford is one of the ten worst asthma capitals. She praised the study completed by CFE and Environmental Defense that advocated Connecticut adopt the health standards of Vermont and California. NY, NJ, and MA have already adopted new emission standards. By 2008, hybrid car sales are expected to be 350,000 units with allocations of cars going to the “Clean Car States”. She stated the legislative debate was 2 hours long and centered on the decision for Connecticut to adopt federal standards or California’s standards. California’s were finally selected. DEP will prepare regulations and down the road, as California standards may change, the Legislature can consider these changes to the regulations.

Connecticut has joined with the Northeastern Governors and Eastern Canadian Premier Group to significantly reduce gas emissions while not inhibiting growth of industry. Mean

annual temperature has increased 1.7 degrees Fahrenheit every hundred years with an increase of 3.5 degrees along the shore—a doubling. Connecticut’s increase is greater than the rest of New England’s. The Act sets targets and assesses targets. The Clean Cars bill was one element of the “Climate Change Action Plan” which was released in January 2004. Collaborative efforts in CT can make a difference. The Act requires emissions to be at 1990 levels by 2010, by 2020 to go 10% beyond that, and to work with the region to achieve these goals.

THE ENVIRONMENT AND HUMAN HEALTH

Nancy Alderman, Executive Director, Environment and Human Health, Inc. (EHHI) was the featured speaker. Ms Alderman received her MES degree from the Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies in 1997 and upon graduation founded EHHI, a non-profit organization composed of nine doctors, public health professionals and policy experts, dedicated to protecting human health from environmental harms. EHHI’s research, education, and promotion of sound public policy is supported by foundations. Recent issues that EHHI has addressed were discussed: exposures from the school bus diesel exhaust to school children, asthma tracking



among the students of Connecticut, pesticide uses in schools, health risks of lawn-care pesticides, and the most recent research effort, just completed, a study of the state of nutrition and physical activity in our schools.

Cancer and diabetes are diseases known to have environmental components with major exposures being air pollution and pesticides. The rate of incidence of cancer is rising 2% a year since 1980 in the US. In 2004, there were 212,000 new cases of breast cancer. Testicular cancer has increased 68% since 1980 and 100% since 1950. There are 56,000 new cases of Non-Hodgkin's lymphoma per year in the US. Connecticut has the highest rate of breast cancer in the nation. Ms Alderman showed a Connecticut map depicting the correlation between breast cancer and traffic corridors. Our state is third in US for urinary bladder cancer and Non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, both of which have an environmental link.

Asthma kills 5,000 a year in US; one of four children in Harlem has it. EHHS's 1999 study indicated one in 11 children in Connecticut have asthma and its 2004 study indicated one in 10. A large environmental trigger is idling buses. There is a law against idling but it is not enforced. EHHS's Stam-

ford study indicated 32% are obese or at risk for obesity which leads to Diabetes II. One in 20 Connecticut adults has diabetes. EHHS's studies, including "The State of Nutrition and Physical Activity in Our Schools", are sent to Legislators.

Recognized environmental causes of cancer include idling cars, diesel exhaust (EPA lists it as a carcinogen), formaldehyde (the World Health Organization declared it as a known carcinogen), benzene, and pesticides (such as 2,4-D implicated in Non-Hodgkin's lymphoma). Pesticide use is on the rise due to promotional activities of the new "lawn care industry", which, along with the chemical industry, has a strong lobby. Pesticide bags have no warnings and the effects of some pesticides on humans are unknown. Organophosphates and pyrethrins have yet to be addressed by regulators. EHHS's study of 53 wells in Woodbridge revealed 11% are contaminated by pesticides. Canada has banned use of pesticides in 60 municipalities. EHHS has embarked on a study of community well systems.

Ms. Alderman concluded her remarks telling the group that we are raising the first generation of children to be less healthy than their parents. ■

Water Planning Council

As a response to Connecticut's political climate, the Water Planning Council suspended activities until this fall when a new Commissioner of the Department of Environmental will be appointed by Governor Rell. The scheduled retreat for the Council and Advisory Group was rescheduled for October.

Commissioner Gyle from the Department of Public Health has identified WUCCs (Water Utility Coordinating Councils) for legislative action in the 2005 session. She stated that unless changes are made the WUCC program will be abandoned. Legislation introduced in 2004 was unsuccessful as many of the constituents of the program were unconvinced the proposal would correct the problems identified in the report to the Council in 2003.

Commissioner Betkoski has called the Endangered Lands Coalition proposal for tightening up on the abandonment of reservoirs a success. He has also stated that the legislation that addressed the sale of Class III lands by utilities was a plus for conservationists and water companies.

Commissioner LaVasseur will be pushing for the approval of the State Plan of Conservation and Development that was put off from the 2004 session of the General Assembly.

Commissioner Stahl believes the Water Allocation Policy Planning Model will provide the framework for an allocation policy. Funding for the program will remain a critical issue. ■



Stormwater Quality Manual Available Online!

The DEP is thrilled to announce that the 2004 Stormwater Quality Manual is now available on the DEP's website:

www.dep.state.ct.us/wtr/stormwater/strmwtrman.htm

The Connecticut Stormwater Quality Manual provides guidance on the measures necessary to protect the waters of the State of Connecticut from the adverse impacts of post-construction stormwater runoff. The manual focuses on site planning, source control and pollution prevention, and stormwater treatment practices. The manual is intended for use a planning tool and design guidance document by the regulated and regulatory communities involved in stormwater quality management.



Hard copies of the manual are currently being printed and should be available by November. The DEP will distribute copies of the manual to each municipality once they are available. Training sessions on how to use the manual will be scheduled and announced within the next few months as well. The DEP will provide updated info on the website regarding the availability of printed manuals and training sessions, so check back often.

If you have any questions or comments, please e-mail Cheryl Chase at the DEP Inland Water Resources Division, cheryl.chase@po.state.ct.us or telephone her at (860) 424-3860. ■



NRCC's New Directors

Penni Sharp, noted land use specialist, has joined the Board of the Council. She brings expertise not only in her field but as a naturalist and an expert in a wide range of environmental issues.

Penelope Forman, of Penn Gardner, will serve a term on the Council. Ms. Forman is a highly competent communications specialist and will be a valuable addition to the Board.

Future Programs

We solicit input on the kinds of programs you would like to see us sponsor. In the past we have held state-wide conferences on the topics of water, land-use and air quality. We have had bus tours of interesting areas of the state such as a trap rock quarry and an adjacent reservoir or an in depth look at all aspects of a river basin.

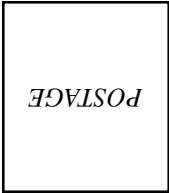
We are planning for 2005 now. Likely there will be a spring tour. Do you have any ideas for our annual meeting? Let us know.

LISWA Conference

The 13th Annual Long Island Sound Summit will be held on Saturday, November 13th at the New York Botanical Gardens, Bronx, NY.

The topic of this year's LISWA Conference will be Ocean Zoning in Long Island Sound: An exploration of the concept and effectiveness of ocean zoning as a tool for integrated management of marine resources and activities in LIS.

Please mark your calendars and plan to attend this important conference, including an exploration of what we know about the underwater areas of the Sound, examples of zoning applications in other areas, and a panel discussion about the use of zoning as a tool for Long Island Sound.



Natural Resources Council of Connecticut
57 North St., Suite 407
Danbury, CT 06810

*We in Connecticut have a unique state. It is more crowded than most,
richer than most, more urbanized than most and yet wilder than most.
The quick alternation of town, farm, forest and water is a pleasure and a
stimulation to all of us.*

— Josepy

The Natural Resources Council of Connecticut will provide a forum for reasonable and balanced discussion on the conservation and use of our natural resources. We will work to develop an appreciation of the value of our natural heritage, will encourage cooperation between the public and private sectors and will support the broadest possible participation in the development of public policy relating to our natural resources.

Natural Resources Council of Connecticut

57 North St., Suite 407 • Danbury, CT 06810 • Tel. 203-481-0661 • Fax 203-744-0915 • www.engr.edu/environ/nrcc/index.htm

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Large Organization or business \$100.00
Statewide non-profit organization or small business 50.00

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