



CACC CLEARINGHOUSE NEWSLETTER –

Working to Protect Our Environment Since 1978

SPRING 2006

Mark your calendars for ECO 2006!

THE BACKYARD ECO-CONFERENCE GREAT LAKES AT THE CROSSROADS - PROTECTING THE COMMONS MAY 12-14, 2006

The Future of The Earth

Is in Our Hands!

Editor's Notebook:

Defining the Commons

Humans live on a unique planet, our Mother Earth. We are utterly dependent on the air, the water, the life in the soil, and the flora and fauna of the lands and the seas for the health of our communities.

Drastic change is occurring around us: global warming, the poisoning of the entire food chain- even in uninhabited places. These changes are in large part due to industrialization, war, overuse of resources, greed. The heavy footprint of humankind threatens the Earth's ability to sustain complex life.

I submit that the Commons are the air, the water, the earth that all life depends on. Without clean air and water, and healthy soil, we cannot exist. While earlier definitions of the Commons are narrower, including water bodies such as the Great Lakes, aquifers, oceans, the atmosphere, public lands, coastal areas - GAIA is all one body.

"A nuclear accident anywhere is a nuclear accident everywhere." (Substitute any persistent toxin for "nuclear".) New horrors, i.e. nanotechnology, genetically modified seeds, arise daily and spell disaster to life as we know it.

It's time to admit we are all connected.

A memory from ECO 2002



Photo Credit: Karen Freel-Locey

Come join us May 12- 14, Mother's Day weekend, as we honor our Mother the Earth!

ECO is a celebration of our grassroots ECO-community as we learn together how to better protect our neighborhoods and our Sweetwater Seas.

We have a wealth of knowledgeable speakers, amazing cooks with food to live for, a great youth program that teaches respect for the Earth and engages young people in learning.

Holly White of Lansing brings her many talents to the Youth Program this year.

Victor McManemy and Tim Joseph bring Great Lakes activist music to the campfire.

Hope to see you there!

More from ECO 2002



Photo Credit: Karen Freel-Locey

CACC's ECO brochure will be posted on our website by mid-April—www.caccmi.org

Partial list of Speakers—ECO 2006

"Guarding the Legacy for the Seventh Generation:" Robert Shimek, **Keynote Speaker, Indigenous Environmental Network –**

Great Lakes Water Issues— Jim Olson, Michigan Citizens for Water Conservation

Dioxin Issues —Terry Miller, Michele Hurd-Riddick -Lone Tree Council and Sue Cameron– Citizens Against Toxic Substances

Environmental Justice— Guy Williams—Detroiters Working for Environmental Justice

Nuclear Energy issues— Paul Gunter—Nuclear Information and Resource Service

Mining issues—Alexis Raney– Save the Wild U.P.

...and others!

PALISADES UPDATE

By Kevin Kamps, Nuclear Waste Specialist, Nuclear Information and Resource Service, Takoma Park, Md.

On March 7th, the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission's (NRC) Atomic Safety Licensing Board (ASLB) ruled against interveners opposing the 20 year license extension at Palisades nuclear reactor in Covert, MI. Although agreeing that embrittlement and pressurized thermal shock (PTS) of the reactor pressure vessel is a "very serious topic," the ASLB dismissed the contention on legalistic and bureaucratic technicalities, denying a full hearing on the merits of the concern.

Terry Lodge of the Toledo Safe Energy Coalition, serving as attorney for Don't Waste Michigan, the Green Party of Van Buren County, Michigan Land Trustees, Nuclear Information and Resource Service (NIRS), West Michigan Environmental Action Council, and over 50 concerned citizens within 50 miles of Palisades, filed an appeal of the ASLB ruling to the five member NRC Commission on March 17th.

Also in response to the ASLB ruling, a dozen groups, including CACC, wrote to U.S. Senators

**NEWS FROM OUR CHAPTERS-REPORT FROM HEAL
HURON ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVIST LEAGUE - ALPENA, MICHIGAN**

**HEAL TAKES ON MERCURY
EMISSIONS IN THE HEART OF
THE GREAT LAKES!**

By Bill Freese, Director, Huron Environmental Activist League (HEAL)

You earn the reputation that you have to live with. I, like many of my friends, have earned the title of tree hugging radical environmentalist. For a 70 year old grandfather, it's a little flattering. I am not the oldest in our organization and those who are older feel the same. When did showing concern for our environment, for the health of our children, our grandchildren and our neighbors become radical? We do what we do in many cases because of inaction by both those officials elected to represent us and agencies that are supposed to protect us. We work cheap, too. We have to because we do not have a \$250,000.00 budget to try and buy our reputation.

The above amount is what our so called CLEANER AND GREENER good neighbor Lafarge cement plant uses for gifting and advertising each year. They keep trying to buy their way into our club. No matter how much they spend telling us how much they are doing for us, we have a hard time forgetting what they have done to us. Lafarge sponsors the news and does ads on our local TV station. We see the smiling face of their plant manager stating how concerned Lafarge is for our environment while suing the MDEQ to have mercury emission limits removed from the permit that they agreed to. It's like shooting yourself in both feet after getting them unstuck from your mouth.

On March 8, a visiting judge heard the case of Lafarge vs.



From the air - Lafarge's operations in Alpena.

Photo credit: Mark Hunter

MDEQ. Lafarge has one of the best attorneys money can buy. He has represented them for many years. We have to admit that the lawyer from the Attorney General's office was a little outclassed. To some it seemed as though that is what the AG's office wanted. The judge gave the MDEQ every chance he could to let the MDEQ make its position known and was heard to comment later that he was a little disappointed in the MDEQ. He stated there were many things to consider and he would not make a hasty decision. He said he would still accept additional comments.

Just after the hearing we received two FOIA responses. One was for the analysis of the materials used in the stack, which are required for the Lafarge permit 15-05. The other was for a comparison of criteria pollutants comparing the City of Detroit to the City of Alpena. With the latter was also the comparison of pollutants for Wayne County & Alpena County. The importance of these documents were reason enough to be included in a second letter that we hand delivered to the judge's office.

The first FOIA showed that the probable reason for the 581.36 pounds of mercury that Lafarge has been emitting can be attributed to the Canadian fly ash they are using to make cement.

Half of the mercury they emit is from that ash. It is not the same ash that they were permitted to use in 1992. Since Lafarge started using it, the Canadian power plants have installed dry scrubbers. Those scrubbers remove 95% of the pollutants and metals and they end up in the ash. This is a process change—and as such, new permits should have been applied for, before it could be used. This was brought to the judge's attention in our last letter. If they stopped using the Canadian fly ash, Lafarge could cut their mercury emissions in half. It would be a cold day in you know where before that happens.

In 1992, their Paulding, Ohio plant was the first to use that ash. They were paid \$17.00 per ton delivered to take it. The Lafarge Alpena plant manager was excited about using it and said they would use 440,000 tons at this plant. \$17 x 440,000. You do the math. They said that they were not paid to take it. We showed them the article in their own stockholders report and they stopped denying it.

The other FOIA compares four criteria pollutants for the City of Alpena and the City of Detroit. They are nitrous oxide (NOX), sulphur dioxide (SO2), small particles (PM10) and volatile organic chemicals (VOCs). The City of Alpena, with a population of just over 11,000, has more of

these pollutants except for the VOCs, than the city of Detroit. That is why scorecard.org has us rated in the top ten percent of the dirtiest counties in the United States. For our size, Alpena County has about 1/3 as much of these pollutants as Wayne County. It's nothing for us to brag about, but reason enough to be a radical environmentalist.

"If [Lafarge] stopped using the Canadian fly ash, they could cut their mercury emissions in half."- Bill Freese, Director, HEAL

Contacts for Great Lakes environmental concerns:
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Steven Chester
 Dept. of Environmental Quality,
 Constitution Hall
 535 W. Allegan St.
 Lansing, MI 48913
MDEQ Toll-free 1-800-662-9278
 The MDEQ Calendar is on-line:
www.michigan.gov/deqcalendar
 — or contact: Ruth N. Hartwig
 (517)-373-0347



ECO-CALENDAR

March 27– April 12—Spring Training for Adopt-a-Beach – Evening sessions train volunteers to collect data, monitor water quality and more. More information:

www.greatlakes.org/adopt/

April 22—Earth Day—Many events worldwide. Check local media for events not listed here!

April 22—9am – 12:30pm – Sierra Club's "ENVIRONMENT" - 4 Mile Run/ 2 Mile Walk, Scavenger Hunt and Clean-up Kensington Metro Park – East Boat Launch Registration fee • \$18 before April 14 • \$25 after April 14 **More info:**

www.sierraclub.org/community/oakland/run/

April 22—10am -8pm - Michigan Healthy Living Earth Day Expo at the Shotwell-Gustafson Pavilion on Oakland University Campus in Rochester Hills, near I-75 and M-59. Sponsored by Upland Hills Ecological Awareness Center, Natural Awakenings Magazine, Simple-Nature's Alternative, and Oakland University. **More info:**

www.michiganhealthylivingexpo.com or call Upland Hills EAC at 248-693-1021.

April 29—Mother Earth Water Walk –Send off at Niagara On the Lake, Ontario –HWY 87 **More Info:**

www.motherearthwaterwalk.com

May 2-3—Michigan Nonprofit Super Conference 2006—More info www.mnaonline.org or call 888-242-7075 toll-free in Michigan

May 12 –CACC's Annual Membership meeting. More info soon: www.cacc.mi.org

May 12—14 CACC's Backyard ECO – Conference, Camp Neyati. More info soon: www.caccmi.org—See article first page.

June 9-11 –Great Lakes United's 24th Annual General Meeting, Madonna University, Detroit, MI. More info www.glu.org or call 716-886-0142

June 16th-18th - Michigan Energy Fair, Portage Lake, Manistee County. Coordinators: Great Lakes Renewable Energy Association, Manistee County and volunteers. A state-wide event focused on sustainable living and energy use. More info: 517-646-6269 or see: www.gltre.org/events/MichiganEnergyFair2006/index.php

June 23-25 -Renewable Energy and Sustainable Living Fair Custer, WI More info: www.the-mrea.org/

CACC IS ON THE WEB!
WWW.CACCMI.ORG

Ongoing Events:

CACC Board Meeting—For time and place, call John Witucki at 989-892-6174.

More info on CACC see: www.caccmi.org

Tittabawassee River Watch/Lone Tree Meetings, (Jan-Nov) 4th Monday of each month, 6:30 pm, Thomas Township Library, 8207 Shields Dr., Thomas Township. Map at: www.trwnnews.net/

Michigan Citizens for Water Conservation meets 10am, 2nd Saturday of each month at New Hope United Methodist Church, 7296 9 Mile Road, Mecosta, MI www.savemiwater.org/

Ongoing renewable energy seminars: www.gltre.org or call Great Lakes Renew-

International Conference "Chornobyl*+20: Remembrance for the Future" Kyiv, Ukraine, April 23-25, 2006 More info www.nirs.org Nuclear Information and Resource Service (301-270-6477)

More U.S. Chernobyl + 20 Remembrance events listed at www.nirs.org and www.neis.org

*Ukrainian spelling of Chernobyl

Groups Call for Water Protections in Michigan's State Constitution

Michigan Citizens for Water Conservation and Clean Water Action are leading the campaign to get protections against Great Lakes water withdrawals put into the Michigan state constitution. If you or your group would like to stay informed on this effort, please contact Terry Swier of Michigan Citizens for Water Conservation at 231-972-8856 or David Holtz Clean Water Action at 517-203-0754.

PALISADES UPDATE
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Levin and Stabenow, urging them to launch a General Accounting Office investigation on embrittlement/PTS, as well as on NRC inaction despite the risk of embrittled reactor pressure vessels (as at Palisades) fracturing like hot glass under cold water in an emergency, which could lead to melt down and catastrophic radiation release.

NRC reported in 1982 that 11,000 deaths, 7,000 injuries, and \$52 billion in property damage (adjusted for inflation to 2005 dollars, that would top 100 billion) could result from a reactor accident at Palisades.

On March 18, the Detroit Free Press ran an article about another near miss at Palisades last October, which had been kept quiet until Michael Keegan of Coalition for a Nuclear-Free Great Lakes unearthed a recent NRC inspection report.

Last October, a container fully loaded with high-level radioactive waste weighing 110 tons, became stuck on a crane and dangled over the irradiated fuel storage pool for 55 hours. Plant personnel mishandled the crane, risking a cask drop into the pool. The heavy load crashing down could have severely damaged the pool, draining the cooling water. The irradiated fuel would then have overheated, and ignited. The resulting radioactive inferno engulfing decades of waste accumulation in the pool could have caused fatal cancer in tens of thousands, as far as 500 miles downwind. Despite this, NRC dismissed the incident as of minimal safety significance. A daily event report or notice of occurrence was never filed, nor required by the NRC, thus keeping the incident "covert," the very name of the town where Palisades is located.

On April 4, the coalition opposing the Palisades license extension will hold a press conference at the Lansing State Capitol, calling for the reactor's closure at the end of its current license in 2011. On April 5, NRC will hold two public comments sessions in South Haven on its Environmental Impact Statement on running Palisades till 2031. The sessions are at 1 pm and 7 pm. Contact Kevin Kamps at NIRS for specific location and more information: phone 301.270.6477, Kevin@nirs.org. See <http://www.nirs.org/reactorwatch/licensing/palisades.htm> for info on stopping the 20 year license extension.

SAVE THE DATE: MAY 12, 13, 14
ECO-CONFERENCE 2006

**CITIZENS FOR ALTERNATIVES
TO CHEMICAL CONTAMINATION**

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Our office is staffed irregularly. Mail and
phone messages are monitored however.
You may also email our chairperson, John
Witucki at jwitucki@allvantage.com

Heartfelt Thanks to Our Many
Volunteers, Contributors, and
Sponsors! - We couldn't do it
without you!

This newsletter is undergoing
change, so bear with us!!

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We encourage you to write us at:
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**TAKING PRECAUTIONARY ACTION: A ROAD-
MAP FOR SUCCESS**

**The First National Conference on Precaution
June 9-11 2006 in Baltimore, Maryland**

Find out how people are applying the precau-
tionary approach to toxic, nuclear and other
environmental hazards by focusing on how
we can we prevent harm instead of asking
“what level of harm is acceptable?”

Speakers include Lois Gibbs of CHEJ, Peter
Montague of Environmental Research Foun-
dation, Carolyn Raffensperger of Science &
Environmental Health Network and many
more environmental leaders from the U.S. &
Europe.

The conference features over 35 workshops
and strategy sessions, including:

- Trainings on community organizing,
fundraising, campaign strategies, advocacy,
media outreach, messaging and running for
political office;
- Sessions featuring over 50 model local,
state and national programs from Europe
and U.S;

More info: Contact anne@besafenet.com or
518-732-4538

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LIVE SIMPLY THAT OTHERS SIMPLY MAY LIVE.

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