

## Clean Fuels Bill Tops OEC's 2005 Agenda

While many Oregonians are worried that a second Bush administration will put at risk three decades of national environmental protections, the 2005 Oregon Legislature, which begins this month, provides an opportunity forward progress in protecting our environment.

The 2004 elections saw the election of a pro-environment majority in the Oregon Senate for the first time in a decade. Although the Oregon House is still dominated by advocates for rollbacks of Oregon's environmental protections, the new balance of power should be conducive to progress on some issues.

Even in recent years, with conservative lawmakers in control in the State Capitol, the Oregon Environmental Council (OEC) was able to pass our top priority bill in each of the past three state legislative sessions, adding to a long history of progress in Salem that includes the Bottle Bill, curbside recycling and other landmark programs.

When the Legislature convenes, economic and state budget issues will again loom as major concerns. That's why OEC's top legislative priority is designed to help our economy prosper, while making our environment healthier. With bipartisan support, we'll be introducing legislation to promote clean, safe "biodiesel" fuels in Oregon (see pg. 3).

We'll also be introducing a phase-out of toxic flame retardants (also known as PBDEs), which have been linked to learning disabilities and other disorders (see pg. 4). Our third bill in Salem will help protect kids from toxins by ensuring that the landmark pesticide

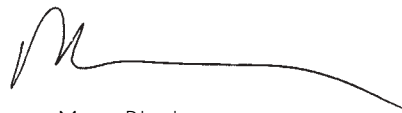
right-to-know law that OEC helped pass in 1999 (see pg. 2) is fully implemented.

OEC also has helped develop, and will be supporting, legislation to foster recycling of computers and other electronic gear, as well as a bill that is designed to reduce the state's backlog of expired water pollution permits. As a member of the Oregon Conservation Network (OCN), OEC also supports OCN's "Common Agenda" which includes greater funding for natural resource protection, and other measures.

I hope you'll get involved in our efforts by signing up for email alerts that will provide timely information about key opportunities to write, call

or testify on behalf of specific bills. Just check the box on the enclosed envelope and return it to us. With your help, OEC can advance the cause of protecting our environment.

Sincerely,



Matt Blevins  
Legislative Affairs Director

**The Oregon Environmental Council was able to pass our top priority bill in each of the past three state legislative sessions.**

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# Pesticide Perils Are Close to Home

If you think farmers are the most extravagant users of pesticides, think again. On a per-acre basis, homeowners use more pesticides than do farmers, according to several studies.

And if you think you're safe from pesticide contamination because you don't use them, think again. A recent study by the University of Washington found traces of common home and garden pesticides in the urine of pre-schoolers, including kids from households that didn't even use pesticides.

From an environmental perspective, pesticides commonly used in and around urban and suburban households are showing up at unhealthy levels in several of Oregon's creeks and rivers. Recent U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) studies have indicated that Beaverton Creek, Pringle Creek (in Salem), and the Clackamas River and several of its tributary creeks all have levels of pesticides that are unhealthy for fish and other aquatic life. Similar problems may well exist in other urban areas of Oregon, such as Eugene, Medford and Bend, but the USGS hasn't studied them.

On a per-acre basis, homeowners use more pesticides than farmers, contributing to growing environmental and health concerns.



Joe Walicki

## Your "Right to Know"

In 1999, the Oregon Environmental Council and its allies successfully pushed a pesticide "right-to-know" law through the State Legislature (by an 88-2 margin!). The law requires reporting of pesticide use by commercial and government agency users, and better data collection on residential pesticide use.

**Five years after the "right-to-know" law passed, we're still in the dark about pesticide use.**

Unlike some communities that have banned pesticides outright, a "right-to-know" program promised to enable policy makers to address pesticide contamination in a more thoughtful way.

Unfortunately, under heavy pressure from the pesticide industry, state lawmakers have not kept this promise to Oregonians. In both the 2001 and 2003 sessions, they failed to adequately fund the pesticide use reporting

system, even though it would cost the average Oregon taxpayer less than one dollar annually. As a result, five years after the "right-to-know" law passed, we're still in the dark about pesticide use.

Enough is enough. In the 2005 Legislature, OEC will be working with lawmakers, particularly those from urban and suburban areas, to encourage them to stand up for the health of Oregonians, instead of the pesticide lobby.

OEC will be forwarding legislation to ensure that pesticide use reporting is finally implemented by creating a dedicated funding source (an increase of approximately 10% on pesticide registration fees) and extending a "sunset" clause that would otherwise end the program in 2009.

If you'd like to help ensure that your right to know about pesticide use becomes a reality, please contact OEC's Laura Weiss at 503-222-1963 x. 111 or [lauraw@oeconline.org](mailto:lauraw@oeconline.org).



# “Flower Power” Promises Economic, Environmental Gains

Imagine running your car on a fuel that's 10 times less toxic than table salt and can be produced right here in the Northwest, instead of in the volatile Middle East or on sensitive wildlife habitat in Alaska.

This vision may soon become a reality for more Oregon drivers if the 2005 State Legislature adopts OEC's proposed “Diesel Solutions Package” legislation that promotes “biodiesel” fuel and cleaner school buses (see box at right).

Biodiesel fuel can be made from flowering crops, such as canola and mustard seed, which are already grown by Oregon farmers. It can be blended with petroleum diesel or burned straight in any diesel engine, including cars, trucks, buses, construction equipment, generators and more, with only minor modifications to gaskets and hoses at blends greater than 20%.

Biodiesel promises a true “win-win” for our environment and economy.

The *environmental* benefits of biodiesel fuel are many:

- It reduces demand for imported oil or drilling in sensitive habitats, such as the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (70% of Oregon's oil comes via the Alaska pipeline).

- It burns much more cleanly than petroleum diesel, which emits several known carcinogens, as well as tiny exhaust particles that contribute to asthma and other respiratory illnesses.

- It generates far fewer global warming gases.

The *economic* advantage of biodiesel is that it provides a boost for Oregon's farmers by creating a new market for crops. OEC's legislation will also focus on incentives to bring a biodiesel refinery to Oregon, creating jobs.

Currently, access to gas stations that offer biodiesel is limited to a handful of locations in Oregon. If you have a diesel-powered car, we hope you'll patronize those stations to reduce your impact on the environment. But don't run out and buy a diesel-fueled car just yet. The limited number of biodiesel fueling stations means that you'll usually end up burning petroleum diesel, which is far more harmful to the environment.

That's why OEC's legislation is critical: it will encourage greater use, production and availability of biodiesel fuels here in Oregon. If you'd like to learn more about the Diesel Solutions Package, please contact OEC's Chris Hagerbaumer at 503-222-1963 x. 102 or [chrish@oeconline.org](mailto:chrish@oeconline.org).



A Family Car That's Also Eco-Friendly: The McIntyre family of Portland burns biodiesel in their family car. Biodiesel is 10 times less toxic than table salt and runs on true “flower power” – it can be made from canola, a flowering crop, that can be grown by farmers right here in Oregon.

## A Clean School Bus Grant Fund

If you've ever sat in traffic behind a school bus, you know they're among the dirtiest vehicles on the road. Nearly 5,000 diesel school buses operate in Oregon, exposing over 200,000 students to some 40 toxic substances every day.

Stretched for dollars, many school districts have not replaced their oldest and dirtiest school buses. As part of our efforts to reduce diesel pollution, OEC aims to help school districts clean up their school bus fleets by asking state lawmakers to create a Clean School Bus Grant Fund that would provide funding to replace old school buses or retrofit them with pollution control equipment. Retrofits used in combination with ultra low-sulfur diesel fuel cut emissions by 60% to 90%.

## Biofuels Lobby Day — March 2

Mark your calendar! On March 2<sup>nd</sup>, join us in Salem to learn about biofuels and help support legislation promoting its use in Oregon. OEC's “Biofuels Lobby Day” will showcase biofuel-powered vehicles and equipment on the Capitol Mall. Biofuel co-ops, producers, distributors and advocates will also have exhibits. To kick the day off, OEC will hold a Forum for Business and the Environment event (see pg. 7)

on the topic of biofuels at nearby Willamette University. OEC can also set up meetings with your legislators to ensure they hear directly from you about how important it is to kick the oil habit and substitute cleaner, renewable, homegrown fuels. If you'd like to attend, please call 503-222-1963 x. 102 for details.

# Infants At Risk?

A study released in September by Northwest Environment Watch and OEC found that levels of certain flame retardants are 20-40 times higher in the breast milk of Northwest women than in their European and Japanese counterparts.

In fact, Oregon women had a higher median level of contaminants than study participants in Montana, Washington and British Columbia.

The study tested flame retardants known as PBDEs (poly-brominated diphenyl ethers) that are chemically similar to PCBs which were banned decades ago. Like PCBs, PBDEs are long-lived pollutants that increase in concentration as they move up the food chain. Levels in North America have risen dramatically since the 1980s.

PBDEs are found in a wide range of consumer products, including furniture foams, textiles and consumer electronics.

Studies on lab animals have shown that PBDEs can result in learning disabilities and other developmental delays.

Experts concur that the way to reduce the health risks of PBDEs is not to stop breast feeding, which is still healthier than formula, but rather to remove PBDEs from the environment. The European Union and several states have already banned some of the most toxic forms of PBDEs, and levels in European countries like Sweden are already dropping.

OEC will pursue similar legislation in the Oregon Legislature. Alternatives to PBDEs already exist; in fact, companies including Ikea, Volvo, Epson, IBM, Apple and Panasonic have eliminated them from their products. OEC's bill will help accelerate this transition.

For more information, contact OEC's Sarah Doll at 503-222-1963 x. 110 or [sarahd@oeconline.org](mailto:sarahd@oeconline.org).

## OEC Healthy Environment Forum Gains OHSU, OMA Support

On January 20<sup>th</sup>, OEC will kick off the fourth season of our Healthy Environment Forum speaker series with new support from Oregon Health Science University (OHSU) and the Oregon Medical Association (OMA).

The Healthy Environment Forum series examines new research on health and environment linkages and is designed for health professionals, environmental professionals and citizens with a special interest in environmental health.

Our 2005 series features the following upcoming events:

- **Enduring Legacies:  
How Environmental  
Pollutants  
Shape Brain  
Development**  
January 20<sup>th</sup>



Research on lead and other heavy metals, pesticides, industrial byproducts and even food additives suggests that these may contribute to an apparent increase in learning and developmental disabilities among children. **Dr. Bernard Weiss, Ph.D.**, a nationally renowned researcher on this topic, and professor at the University of Rochester, will be our speaker.

- **Feminized Frogs, Herbicides and  
Human Health**  
February 9<sup>th</sup>



Provocative new studies from the laboratory and the field are showing that very low levels of the herbicide atrazine are having profound effects on the sexual development of frogs. What does this mean to humans, given that atrazine is the most widely used herbicide in the United States? **Dr. Tyrone Hayes, Ph.D.**, a professor and nationally recognized researcher at the University of California, will discuss his groundbreaking work.

- **Air Pollution:  
A Full Body  
Assault?**  
February 24<sup>th</sup>



Air pollution can trigger asthma attacks, but recent studies suggest that traffic pollution, especially diesel emissions, may also negatively impact fetal development. **Dr. Gina Solomon, M.D., M.P.H.**, Assistant Clinical Professor at U.C. San Francisco and Senior Scientist for the Natural Resources Defense Council, will discuss recent cutting-edge research on the impact of air pollution and implications of that research.

All three events are 6-8 pm at the Multnomah Athletic Club in Portland. Tickets are \$25 per event (\$20 for OEC members) and include heavy hors d'oeuvres. Call 503-222-1963 x. 100 or visit [www.orcouncil.org/healthforum.htm](http://www.orcouncil.org/healthforum.htm) to register.

The 2005 Healthy Environment Forum speaker series will conclude with additional events in both Portland and Eugene in April. Watch the next issue of this newsletter for details.

# Who Speaks for Oregon's Business Community?

For many years, the lone "voice" of Oregon's business community in the State Legislature was the Association of Oregon Industries (AOI), a huge trade association with thousands of members, more lobbyists in Salem than any other special interest, and a staff of nearly two dozen employees.

Today, AOI's monopoly in representing the business community's interest in public policy is no more, and in the eyes of many, it's about time.

About 250 of Oregon's businesses — as globally focused as Nike and as distinctively Oregonian as Powell's Books — have formed the Oregon Business Association (OBA) to "bring a powerful and balanced voice to Oregon's business and political landscape." OBA's membership reflects the diversity of Oregon with businesses small and large, urban and rural.

In the last decade, most observers would agree that AOI has increasingly swung to the right of the political spectrum. Though ostensibly a bipartisan organization, it endorsed only six Democrats for the State Legislature — and 49 Republicans — in 2004. AOI's PAC backs up those endorsements by spending more to elect their candidates than almost any other PAC in Oregon.

Nowhere is AOI's swing to the right clearer than on environmental policy. As AOI's own website reveals, AOI's "guiding principles" for environmental policy are now limited to "deregulation" and "protection of property rights."

The Oregon Business Association offers a refreshing contrast. Their web site clearly notes that, "Meeting the needs of the present without compromising the environment that future Oregonians will inherit is critical to ensuring the long term vitality of our economy." They've also demonstrated strong and visible support in Salem for public education and health care.

OBA's commitment to progressive ideas via bipartisan, state-wide solutions is visible at the top: OBA Executive Director Lynn Lundquist is familiar to most Oregonians as a moderate Republican rancher from central Oregon and

former Speaker of the House.

Many of the companies that are OBA's key members also show their support for sensible environmental policy by supporting OEC's Forum speaker series (see pg. 7). PacifiCorp, Northwest Natural, NIKE, Norm Thompson, PGE, Standard Insurance, CH2MHill, Stoel Rives, Bear Creek Corporation, Sokol Blosser Winery, and Hanna Andersson have all been Forum sponsors. OEC's former board member, Nik Blosser of the Celilo Group, was instrumental in OBA's founding.

OEC and OBA have been collaborating in a number of ways. Currently, we are partnering with the Oregon Economic and Community Development Department on a project to better

focus the state's economic development and business efforts in support of building Oregon's renewable energy sector.

If your business wants to demonstrate support for progressive, sound public policy, consider joining the Oregon Business Association. In less than five years, OBA has emerged as a voice for sensible and forward-looking action in Salem, giving business leaders a new choice of who speaks for them.

To find out more about the Oregon Business Association, visit their website at [www.oba-online.org](http://www.oba-online.org) or call Carol Robinson, OBA's Director of Public Relations and Development, at 503-641-0990.

**In less than five years, OBA has emerged as a voice for sensible and forward-looking action in Salem, giving business leaders a new choice of who speaks for them.**



*Hadley Akins and Chairman Antone Minthorn, recipients of one of OBA's 2004 Oregon Values Awards for their work on the Umatilla Basin Project.*

# OEC's Political Guru

Getting laws passed in the State Legislature can be sort of like brain surgery: one false move and bright ideas can suddenly turn comatose.

Fortunately, in our work in Salem, OEC's staff can count on sound advice from our volunteer board of directors. One board member, in particular, stands out as OEC's own "political guru."

The *Portland Tribune* described Steve Novick as a "lawyer, political activist, and smart as a goddamn whip." To that we'd add: "funny as hell, and one of the most dedicated people we know."

An Oregon native, Steve is a grad of the U of O and of Harvard Law School. He worked at law firms in San Francisco and New York, and for the U.S. Justice Department's environmental enforcement division where he was lead counsel in the Love Canal lawsuit.

When Steve came back to Oregon in the late 1990s,

OEC was lucky to snag him as a board member, and he's been a key board leader and adviser ever since.

Having served as the caucus administrator for the Senate Democrats in the Oregon Legislature and then as legislative coordinator for the Oregon Department of Education, Steve knows the politics of Salem like few others.

However, what really sets Novick apart from any other smart lawyer is his unshakeable dedication to the idea that government and taxes — far from being the evils that right-wingers rant about — are necessary and valuable elements of any civilized society.

For example, Novick has organized "birthday parties" to celebrate the anniversary of the creation of the Social Security system. He successfully took on anti-tax activist Bill Sizemore in more than one ballot fight, and created his own non-profit, the

Center for Constructive Citizen Action.

*Willamette Week* described Novick as having "a Howard Dean-like combativeness and the punchline skills of a sitcom writer." Novick doesn't hesitate to apply his wit to his own status as state politics' leading one-arm man.

In a recent interview with *WW*, Steve talked about having a hook for a left arm: "It's amazing how little it matters. Oh, it's hard to buy an ice-cream cone and get change — but it's convenient for pulling out an oven rack."

These days, when he's not helping OEC navigate our bills through the halls of Salem, Novick is working for Citizens for Oregon's Future, a new non-profit that aims to give Oregonians the straight scoop on taxes and government's fiscal challenges (see [www.fororegon.org](http://www.fororegon.org)). He's also a regular columnist for the online progressive journal, the *Zephyr* ([www.zephyr-magazine.com](http://www.zephyr-magazine.com)).

As OEC enters its 19<sup>th</sup> legislative session in Salem, we're awfully glad to have Novick on our side.



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# Sustainability: Oregon's Leading Brand?



As the New Year rolls around, the **10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Season** of OEC's Forum for Business and the Environment speaker series is getting ready to kick into high gear.

In this Anniversary Season, Forum events are looking ahead to new opportunities for Oregon businesses to serve as national models for "sustainability."

On **February 10** in Portland, Jeff Mendelsohn, CEO of New Leaf Paper, will share how his company is phasing out harmful chemicals and is an active participant in the city of San Francisco's pioneering efforts to take a more precautionary approach in protecting public health.

On **March 2 and 3**, events in Salem and Roseburg, respectively, will focus on how Oregon can use its ample base of farm and forest lands to create economic development opportunities related to bio-energy fuels (see pg. 3).

Our featured event on **March 15** in Portland will bring a global "big picture" perspective on business and sustainability when Svend Auken (see photo), a renowned Danish parliamentarian, will share his expertise in leading governmental and business efforts to invest in renewable energy and environmentally sound economic policies. "Denmark has one of the most ambitious global warming reduction targets."

Subsequent forum events will examine clean cars, green marketing and investing in "eco-entrepreneurs."

OEC members are welcome to attend Business Forum events, and receive a 20% discount on the \$25 ticket price, which also includes a complimentary meal. If you'd like to join us, please RSVP to 503-222-1963 x. 100, or visit our web site ([www.oeconline.org](http://www.oeconline.org)) where you can register electronically.



**The Forum for Business and the Environment speaker series is supported entirely by generous contributions from our sponsors. We'd like to take this opportunity to acknowledge our 2004-2005 Forum sponsors for making these educational and informative events possible!**

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# What's So Funny About Politics and the Environment?

After November's election, many people might answer: "not much." If your sense of humor needs a boost, mark your calendar for January 27<sup>th</sup>. OEC's annual event will feature Jack Ohman, editorial cartoonist for the *Oregonian* for over 20 years.

Jack's work also appears regularly in *The Washington Post*, *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, *The New York Times*, *The Boston Globe*, *Chicago Tribune*, *San Francisco Chronicle*, *The Seattle Times*, and scores of other major newspapers.

The OEC event will also give you an opportunity to learn more about our work, especially our agenda in the 2005 State Legislature.

The event will be held from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. at the Governor Hotel in downtown Portland. Tickets are \$75 per person and include complimentary hors d'oeuvres (\$60 is a tax-deductible donation to OEC).

Simply check off the box on the envelope inside this newsletter and include payment. Or call 503-222-1963 x. 106 to purchase reservations via credit card over the phone or to receive a paper invitation.



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