



Oregon
Environmental
Council
It's Your Oregon

One*

*One Oregon One Environment Winter 2011–2012

Leaving our mark

How Oregon Environmental Council is accomplishing real, lasting change in Oregon

By Andrea Durbin

It's been a year of curveballs for Oregon's environment. Faced with a steady stream of political and economic challenges, OEC was forced to pivot to defend environmental protections that were being challenged while simultaneously going on the offensive to further our vision for clean air and water, an unpolluted landscape, and healthy food produced by local farmers.

I'm happy to report that we've emerged more nimble and effective than ever, as demonstrated by OEC's recent accomplishments on issues like exposing toxics in our everyday lives, such as those in personal care products and cosmetics.

Reflecting on 2011, OEC fought hard during the legislative session to successfully fend off efforts to weaken Oregon's water quality standards and minimize cutbacks to state agencies that protect our environment. On the offensive side, we were key supporters of legislation that put Oregonians back to work across the state building healthier, more energy-efficient public schools. Stymied by chemical industry lobbyists in the Oregon legislature, we turned to Multnomah County Commissioners who

stepped up to protect children from the toxic chemical bisphenol A on a local level, and we're ready to work with other local governments to do the same. OEC

"We're dedicated to tackling programs and policies that have a tangible impact on the well-being of Oregonians."

is also helping to ensure more abundant water for the good of our health and the vitality of our economy through partnerships with farmers and irrigators.

What do all of these issues have in common? Green jobs, healthy places for children to learn, secure water resources, and fewer toxics in our everyday products affect each and every one of us. At OEC, we're dedicated to tackling programs and policies that have a real, tangible impact on the well-being of Oregonians. Read on to learn how OEC is confronting these and other issues that matter most in your life.

In 2012, we'll vet and adopt OEC's new

10-year strategic plan, a roadmap to achieve our mission of promoting innovative solutions to Oregon's environmental challenges. Throughout this process, we've been continually amazed by your passion for OEC and dedication to a better future for Oregon. Thank you for your support—in all its forms—which makes our work possible.

Curveballs are a fact of life. But when it comes to protecting our environment, OEC will do whatever it takes to make this a place that is healthier for our children and grandchildren. That's the kind of mark we're happy to leave on Oregon's landscape.



OEC staff during annual retreat at L.L. Stub Stewart State Park.

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What's in your Makeup Bag?!

By Renee Hackenmiller-Paradis

Shampoo

{43% use daily}

May contain parabens, chemicals with links to breast cancer.

Mascara

{39% use daily}

Colors may be made from fossil fuels with toxic impurities.

Styling products

{28% use daily}

May be contaminated with formaldehyde, a cancer-causing chemical.

Moisturizers

{59% use daily}

May contain oxybenzone, a hormone disruptor.

Lipstick

{28% use daily}

Found to carry lead, which builds up in the body and can harm brain function.

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Soap, shampoo, conditioner, deodorant, lip balm and hand lotion: if these products are part of your morning routine, you might have inhaled, ingested or absorbed dozens of chemicals and contaminants before you've even started your day.

Cosmetics and personal products are the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's least-regulated items. Too often, they contain small amounts of chemicals linked to cancer, hormone disruption, nervous system damage and more. When we use multiple products each day, little exposures add up.

OEC teamed with Metro to learn more about the cosmetic habits of Oregon women of childbearing age. Women typically use more products than men, and they risk passing toxic exposure along to infants in utero. As a result, they have the

greatest ability to prevent the most harm from these toxic ingredients.

For our *What's in My Makeup Bag?!* report, OEC surveyed undergraduate women at Portland State University. The 1,000 women who responded use on average ten products every day, listing a

"It's a scary thing when you don't know what you're putting on your body."

PSU Student Corey Castelow

dizzying array of 8,000 total items. While 91% say that ingredients are important to their purchasing decisions, results revealed that labels don't always give them the information they need to avoid exposure to toxic chemicals. "It's a scary thing when you don't know what you're putting on your body," says PSU student Corey Castelow.

Not enough information: that's why we need to reform the way chemicals are managed. We need to know the basic toxicity of every chemical we're exposed to—including the 10,000 or so ingredients used in cosmetics (more than 1,000 of which are already banned in Europe).

When testing shows that a chemical can cause harm, exposure should be controlled and alternatives developed. OEC is working to make these reasonable expectations a reality, so your morning routine won't put your health at risk.

Sign our petition

It's your makeup, your marketplace and your laws. If you believe in the right to risk-free health and beauty, join our campaign and insist on safer products.

oeconline.org/safemakeup

GUYS: Your health matters, too!

Shaving cream, deodorant and cologne contain ingredients banned in other countries due to their links to cancer and other chronic health problems. Harvard University researchers found that even a single spritz of cologne can raise body levels of diethyl phthalate, a chemical linked to sperm damage in adult men.

TIP: Skip the scent

Fragrance—what exactly is it? There's no way to know. Fragrance ingredients hidden as "trade secrets" may interfere with hormones, harm the nervous system and trigger allergies. Cut fragrance out of just a few products you use daily, and you'll reduce the chemical burden on your body.

Beliefs about personal care products

Survey participants were asked to rate statements on a four-point scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree.

Manufacturers should be responsible for testing all ingredients in personal care products for health impacts.

Agree or strongly agree:
87.6%

Product labels should be required to list all ingredients.

Agree or strongly agree:
92.5%

BPA ban: People protecting people

by Jen Coleman

In a Multnomah County Commission hearing room on October 27, Rachel Allen made her way through the crowd with her young son and daughter to testify in support of the county's proposal to ban toxic bisphenol A (BPA) from baby bottles and sports water bottles. I'd first met her a year ago at a meeting for parents of preschoolers, where I talked about the risks posed by BPA leaching into food and drink. As a former chemist, Rachel could decipher chemical names in order to choose safe products for her family. But as she told the Commission, "most parents can't, and frankly, shouldn't have to do that" when shopping for their children.

The standing-room-only hearing room that day was filled with parents, kids, health experts, community leaders and others who believe strongly in protecting the health of all Oregonians from toxic chemicals. They were rewarded with a unanimous vote in favor of a county-wide BPA ban. It's a small victory against one in a large number of hazardous chemicals—but it shows that Oregon's elected officials can, and will, act to protect people when federal regulations fail and when compelled by enough voices. With the power of outspoken Oregonians on our side, OEC will keep working to reduce toxic exposures and promote the use of safer, green alternatives all across Oregon.



Oregon families joined together earlier this year in "stroller brigades" to support the regulation of toxic chemicals in everyday products.

Making water work for Oregon

By Teresa Huntsinger

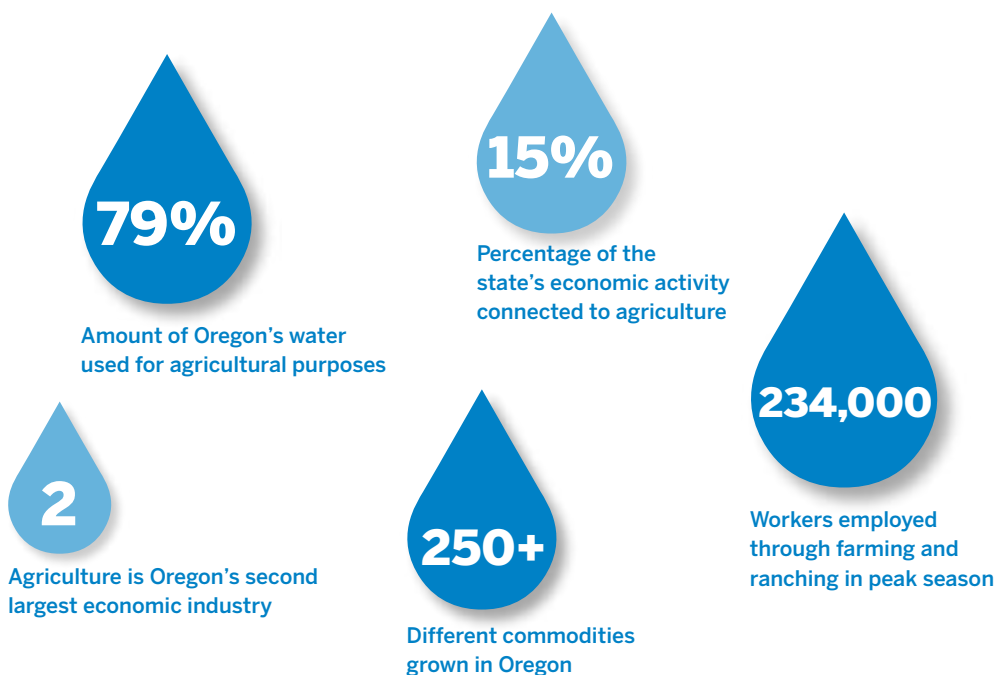
Admit it, you take water for granted. It's easy to do, especially if you live on Oregon's rainy side.

But here's the real story: Oregon's water supply is limited. In many parts of the state, more water has been promised to water users than our rivers can deliver, and groundwater levels are declining as well. Taking too much water out of our rivers causes low stream flows that threaten native fish species. Experts predict these challenges will worsen in the coming decades due to climate change and population growth.

The good news is that there are practical ways to free up more water so our economy and ecosystems will be resilient as change comes our way. OEC is working with farmers and ranchers—Oregon's largest water users—as well as water suppliers to find out what motivates and deters them from adopting more efficient practices. Our forthcoming report, *Making Water Work*, includes recommendations to make financial and other incentives easier to navigate, and strategically expand water efficiency outreach and education.

We're also ensuring these priorities are adopted in Oregon's Integrated Water Resource Strategy—the state's first ever long-term water plan. By prioritizing efficiency solutions and getting smarter about water use, we can help shore up our state's most valuable resource before the situation becomes dire.

Promoting efficiency is just one of the ways OEC is working to protect water. Stay tuned in the coming months to learn how we're helping reduce pesticide use for cleaner rivers and groundwater.



Water tip

Don't be part of the problem: practice water-saving habits in your own home!

Your biggest water hog is typically the toilet. Make sure yours doesn't have a leak or run when it shouldn't. Even a small, silent leak can easily waste \$50 per year or more in water and sewer costs.

How to check for a leaky toilet

1. Remove the tank lid. Don't worry, this water is clean until it enters the bowl.
2. Add some food coloring or a dye tablet to turn the water a different color. Put the tank lid back on.
3. After about 30 minutes, look in the bowl. If you see colored water, you have a leak. If the water is clear, water is not leaking from the tank to the bowl.

If you have a leak, in most cases, you will simply want to replace the toilet flapper (the rubber thing at the bottom of the tank that keeps water in the tank) and/or the filling mechanism. These are available at hardware stores and home centers.

To save even more water and money, replace your old toilet with a WaterSense certified high efficiency toilet. Your municipal water provider may even offer a cash rebate.



OEC's top achievements for 2010-2011

Transportation is greener

OEC helped secure legislation that spurs climate-friendly urban planning and clears barriers to an innovative peer-to-peer car-sharing program in Oregon, which will decrease car ownership and pollution by allowing owners to rent their vehicles to their neighbors.



The agricultural community is reducing its carbon footprint

We partnered with 20% of Oregon's wineries and nurseries to adopt climate-friendly practices and helped establish the first certification program nation wide for carbon reduction in the wine industry.

We've moved upstream to prevent pollution

OEC catalyzed green chemistry initiatives by convening the Oregon Green Chemistry Advisory Group to develop and pursue safer, less toxic manufacturing practices.

Rivers are on the rise

We empowered Oregonians to take charge of water pollution through monthly Love Your River online challenges and educational workshops on stormwater solutions and rain garden management.



Our air will be cleaner

We helped broker the closure of the Boardman coal-fired power plant—the state's single largest emitter of greenhouse gases—20 years earlier than originally planned. Closing Boardman by 2020 will prevent the release of over 80 million tons of carbon dioxide, the equivalent of taking 14 million cars off the road for an entire year!

OEC Overview Report, 2010-2011

View more OEC top accomplishments, program updates and financial information at: oeconline.org/overview-report

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Bringing Oregonians together

Business and Environment Forum



Returning by popular demand, OEC's Business and Environment Forum brought together business influencers, environmental champions and policy experts to discuss how Oregon can provide the momentum and incentives needed to be a global leader in promoting green technologies.

100-Mile Mix Off



OEC's Emerging Leaders Board know how to throw a party: all-star bartenders, local spirits and ingredients, and a great guest list!

#2 on the 100 Best list!



OEC is proud to receive the second-highest overall score in *Oregon Business's* "100 Best Nonprofits to Work For in Oregon" list for 2011!

Save the date and Celebrate Oregon with OEC!



No rubber chicken. No long-winded speeches. No award plaques. Come together over great local food, wine, cocktails and revelry in celebration of what we collectively love about Oregon at OEC's annual event. March 1, details at oeconline.org/annual-event.



Building a strong OEC

Oregonians are stepping up to support OEC in many different ways. Here are their stories:



“Our goal is to help our customers make responsible transportation choices. OEC literature has helped us educate our customers about the environmental impact of their vehicles and steps they can take to reduce the damage.”

Jim and Liz Houser, Hawthorne Auto Clinic

Small business owners Jim and Liz make an annual corporate gift to OEC through the environmentally-friendly Hawthorne Auto Clinic.



“We support OEC because it embodies everything we hold near and dear: our climate, the products we use, the water we play in and the food we eat. OEC is the voice that works to keep Oregon a place we love to call home.”

Shannon Buchanan and Katie Sengstake, Buchanan Realty Trust

Portland-based realtors Shannon and Katie give 10% of their earnings to non-profits, including OEC, and regularly share OEC's Eco-Healthy Home tips with their clients!



“We love that OEC is a strong, credible advocate for the issues that are important to us: things like climate change and future food sustainability that require flexibility to enact lasting change. We trust and support OEC, and are proud that this planned gift will allow them to continue doing great work for many years to come.”

Ann Wheeler

Former board member Ann and her husband Geoff Bartol have made a planned gift to OEC through their Charitable Remainder Trust.



“I've spent a lot of time with OEC, first working as an intern and now as a member of the Emerging Leaders Board. And the more I see, the more I'm convinced that Oregon needs smart, dedicated and effective advocates like OEC. I'm proud to be a part of ensuring a strong, healthy state for today and tomorrow.”

Mat Elmore

As part of our Evergreen Society donor program, Mat has pledged a monthly gift to support OEC's work.

Your donation matched dollar-for-dollar!

This holiday season, your investment in Oregon can have twice the impact! Our foundation partners have generously offered to match your donation for an entire year if OEC can raise \$10,000 in Evergreen Society monthly pledges before 2012. The Evergreen Society allows OEC to be

flexible and efficient thanks to a steady stream of dependable income. Your membership, for as little as \$5/month, will be doubled and immediately put to work protecting the Oregon we all love. Learn more at oeconline.org/evergreen.



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Get Involved

Got Prius?

OEC's Prius has provided nearly a decade of trusty transportation, allowing staff to travel cost effectively for our work across the state. Now, we're in search of a replacement. If you have an efficient hybrid vehicle with some life in it, consider donating it to OEC. We'll make sure you get a hefty tax deduction—and we'll put your car to great use!

oeconline.org/prius

Double your dollars

Help OEC meet our \$10,000 challenge by joining the Evergreen Society monthly donor program by December 31, 2011 at oeconline.org/evergreen.

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Join OEC to protect the things you love most about Oregon. Become a member today and be part of the positive change for our health, economy and environment. Join us online at oeconline.org

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