



**WVE**

Women's Voices for the Earth

EXHIBIT 8  
DATE 2.16.05  
HB 582

## **SAY YES TO HB 582! PROTECT PUBLIC HEALTH FROM PLASTIC BURNING**

### **WHAT IS PVC (POLYVINYL CHLORIDE)?**

Polyvinyl chloride, commonly known as "PVC" or "vinyl," is a common synthetic material. Piping, vinyl siding and vinyl flooring are the largest and most familiar uses of PVC. PVC is also found in windows, gutters, shower curtains, furniture, product packaging and many other plastic items.

### **PVC INCINERATION GENERATES TOXIC POLLUTION**

PVC plastic is not designed to burn safely. PVC is engineered with numerous chemicals and metals to provide the desired strength, flexibility, color and other properties. When burned, these chemicals and metals are emitted from the stack or concentrated in the remaining ash. **Incineration of PVC is known to release a wide variety of pollutants into the air, such as dioxins and furans, lead, mercury, cadmium and organotins.** Waste incineration has been identified by EPA to be one of the top sources of dioxin-emissions in the country.

### **WHAT ARE THE HEALTH HAZARDS?**

Emissions of hazardous air pollutants from PVC incineration can have serious adverse consequences on worker safety, public health and the environment. Dioxins, furans and heavy metals such as mercury, lead and cadmium are classified as persistent bioaccumulative toxins (PBTs). These pollutants degrade slowly or persist in the environment and tend to build up over time in humans and animal tissue, potentially to dangerous levels.

Dioxin and furan exposure has been linked to several types of **cancer, immune system disorders, diabetes, birth defects** and other health effects.

Mercury exposure is associated with **nervous system effects, delayed cognitive development and kidney dysfunction.**

Lead exposure can lead to **nervous system effects in children, miscarriages, birth defects, immune system dysfunction, and blood pressure problems.**

Cadmium exposure has been linked to **obstructive lung disease, kidney stones, kidney failure, prostate cancer and low birth weight.**

Organotins adversely affect the **central nervous system, skin, immune and reproductive system.**

### **INCINERATOR ASH IS ALSO POTENTIALLY HAZARDOUS**

**Incinerator ash can contain concentrated levels of heavy metals, dioxins and furans.** If the ash is disposed of improperly, these toxins will leach into the environment.

### **INCINERATION OF PVC IS UNNECESSARY**

Fortunately, very few facilities in Montana currently burn PVC. Community health concerns and increased costs associated with new regulations have contributed to this decline. Those facilities that continue to burn PVC have readily available alternatives for disposal. **We can prevent future potential contamination by prohibiting the burning of PVC today.**

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