

EXHIBIT

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DATE

2.16.05

HB

582

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Missoula, MT 59801

Feb. 15, 2005

Members
House Natural Resources Committee
Montana State Legislature
Helena, MT

Dear Natural Resources Committee Members:

I am writing to urge you to pass and support HB582, to ban PVC plastic burning in Montana. This completely unnecessary practice puts citizens at risk of cancer, because it creates dioxin, one of the most carcinogenic chemicals.

I am especially concerned about Western Montana, where I have lived for over 30 years. (I have been interested about air quality, and have served on volunteer local advisory councils for many years.) As you know, in this part of the state our pollution does not disperse to the next county or state. We breathe it day after day, as it builds up in the valleys. Missoula is one of the few remaining places where PVC plastic is currently being burned, but the problem would be the same in any of the valleys of Western Montana.

The PVC burned in Missoula is waste from a paper mill's recycled cardboard process,, which it chooses to burn rather than to landfill. It is not burned in a special toxic waste incinerator, with special permitting and controls. Because of a legal loophole, it is burned in one of the regular boilers as though it were a standard fuel.

It is important that you realize the boxes being recycled are not primarily local garbage, they are imported trash from around the country. Only the cardboard itself is recycled. The plastic tape and other plastic on the boxes is not recycled. It is imported garbage disposed of here. It is also important to realize, that even though this process takes place at a paper mill, this is not part of our forest industry. The used boxes are actually a substitute for local timber products.

No one's industrial process, energy production, or livelihood depends on burning PVC. It is an economic choice to burn rather than landfill plastic waste. It is a choice that puts the whole population (men, women and children) at risk

Please protect us for this unnecessary cancer risk. Burning PVC is a practice that should not be allowed by any new or existing facility. (I would hate to die because someone did not want to pay his garbage bill. I am sure if a private citizen decided to save money or heat by burning old bleach bottles and plastic pipe, it would be obvious that it was a bad idea. I think it is an equally easy and obvious decision to support this bill.

Sincerely,

