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# STRONG WOMEN. THRIVING FUTURE.

Dear Friends,

Imagine for a moment that we live in a world where the earth is taken care of, the workers who make products are paid well and treated fairly, and where toxic chemicals aren't in the products we use in our homes, in our communities, or in our environment. In this world, every point in the cycle of production and consumption – from extraction, to processing, to use, to disposal – contributes to a thriving world.

**Because of you, this dream is becoming reality.**

Just this past year, you helped eliminate the toxic fragrance ingredient, Galaxolide, from SC Johnson's products. You brought the need for safe feminine care to the halls of Congress. You moved the world's largest consumer products manufacturer, P&G, to institute the most far-reaching ingredient transparency policy in the industry. You called upon the California legislature to pass a bill requiring cleaning product makers to disclose ingredients and now it's headed to the Governor's desk for signing!

**You continue to move mountains.**

Here at Women's Voices for the Earth, we have been doing intensive planning, plotting our organization's course for the next several years. Our vision towards the just future we imagine will take our continued collective persistence to call out companies and demand health-protective laws.

**But it will take even more.**

It will take working across issues and movements in a much deeper way, connecting on shared values and building programs that uphold these values through real change on the ground. That's why we are forging profound relationships with reproductive justice and environmental justice allies. It will take more women across the country leading with their own hearts, ideas, and values. That's why we're investing in the leadership of women through our new Actionista Leadership Institute.

**It will take you.**

We know what women can achieve when we work together. We are building a women-led movement for a thriving, toxic-free future with you. Together, we will stop the toxic assault on women's health!

**Thank you for joining us.**



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Ann Blake  
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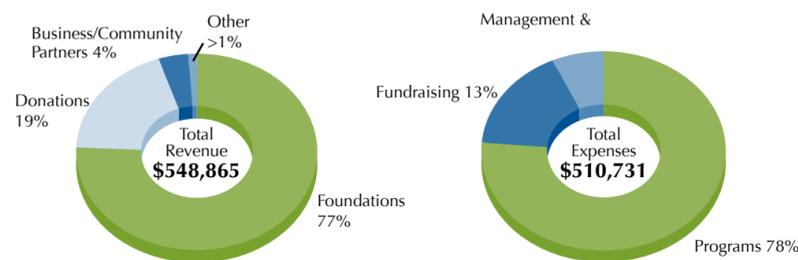
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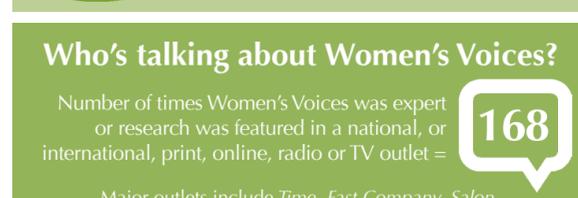
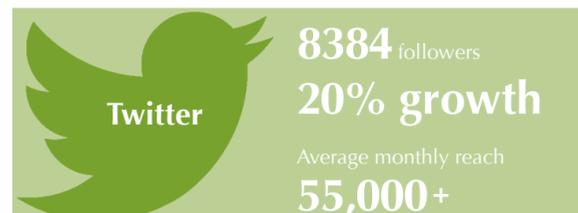
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## Our Reach - 2016



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# THE VOICE

## FDA SUED FOR FAILURE TO ACT ON FORMALDEHYDE IN SALONS

With your help, for the last six years, Women's Voices has been amplifying the stories of salon workers whose health has been severely harmed by exposure to formaldehyde in hair straightening products like Brazilian Blowout. Women like Rebecca, who was forced to leave her job after her boss created a hostile work environment when she expressed concerns about her health. And Jennifer, who has developed chemical sensitivity as a result of formaldehyde exposure. And Beth, who has difficulty breathing and gets severe headaches and nausea whenever these products are used in her salon. And women like Natalija, who had to abandon her career as stylist because of health problems related to chemical exposure.

Despite numerous meetings, phone calls and press releases over the years, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has not responded to your concerns about these dangerous products which are still widely available in the United States, even though they have been banned in other countries. In December 2016, Women's Voices for the Earth joined forces with the Environmental Working Group to sue the FDA for unreasonable delay to act on this issue. We hope that this lawsuit will result in real action from the FDA to ensure safer products.

Until then, we will continue to educate salon workers and their customers on how to protect themselves and avoid exposure.



## VICTORY! SC Johnson to Eliminate Toxic Fragrance Ingredient

In a major victory for ingredient safety, SC Johnson (makers of Windex, Glade) agreed this year to transition away from their use of toxic fragrance ingredient, Galaxolide. This good news follows a multi-year campaign, thousands of emails and calls (from you!) to the company, 20,000 petition signatures and an open letter signed by numerous prominent scientists across the country.

Galaxolide is a chemical which is highly toxic to aquatic life and is persistent in our environment -- meaning it doesn't break down easily. Galaxolide is detected in water and fish, as a result of products like cleaners and cosmetics washing down the drain and contaminating water sources like the Great Lakes. Galaxolide is also known to disrupt

hormones, which can lead to numerous negative health effects.

Importantly, this move by SC Johnson represents a turning of the tide against industry-produced science which had previously supported use of Galaxolide as safe. Together, we pointed out the clear weaknesses the claims of Galaxolide's safety, and helped to prevent current and future harm from this chemical. We hope for a ripple effect into the world of cosmetics and personal care products, where Galaxolide use in fragrance is still, unfortunately, quite common.



## Women Take Feminine Care Safety to Capitol Hill

On May 23, 2017, women from across the nation gathered in Washington, DC to rally, lobby and raise awareness of the serious gaps in feminine care product safety. Women's Voices for the Earth partnered with Seventh Generation and members of the Detox the Box Advisory Committee to convene at the Capitol and take a stand for women's health and against unwanted and undisclosed chemicals in feminine care products. We were there in solidarity with all women, but we all had our own reasons for standing up. Amber Garcia of the Colorado Organization for Latina Opportunity and Reproductive Rights (COLOR) said, "Women of color deserve better, as do all women, than to have dangerous products pushed on us that negatively impact our health -- especially when too many of us struggle to afford quality health care to prevent or treat issues stemming from these products." Tenya Steele of WE ACT for Environmental Justice echoed, "Why is it that we have regulations on the things that we put in our mouths -- regulations on what goes into our air and water -- but we don't have regulations on things we put on and in our vaginas?"

Representative Grace Meng was the lead speaker at the rally on Capitol Hill; she is championing legislation that requires ingredient disclosure for chemicals used in all menstrual products, including pads, tampons, and menstrual cups. Veteran lawmaker Carolyn Maloney also spoke at the rally to raise support for her bill, which would require the National Institutes of Health to conduct more research into the additives used in menstrual and feminine cleansing products. After the rally, 30 advocates met with the staff of 18 different U.S. Congressional Representatives on both sides of the aisle to educate and ask for support of the two bills. The successful day of action brought menstrual safety into the spotlight, garnering a story in the *New York Times*, signed on co-sponsors for the bills and made it clear to Congress, it's time they care about feminine care. Period.



## TAKING ON TOXIC CHEMICALS, MARKETING IN FEMININE CLEANSING PRODUCTS

This year, WVE officially launched the 'Summer's Deceive' campaign, aimed at the toxicity of feminine wipes--both in ingredients and advertising. Summer's Eve is a popular feminine cleansing brand that markets wipes, washes and more as 'must haves' for women's health and self-image. They capitalize on the blatant underlying message that vaginas are dirty and in need of cleansing, and that women's bodies are unacceptable as they are. Their cleansing products have names like 'Sheer Floral' and 'Island Splash,' which may sound benign and even refreshing, but they actually contain hidden toxic chemicals that disrupt hormones and cause allergic reactions and other health issues.

We know what's really up. That's why we launched the 'Summer's Deceive' campaign aimed at convincing the makers of Summer's Eve to move the feminine cleansing marketplace toward safer products. Earlier this year, we released a fact sheet on feminine wipes and launched a series of spoof videos, which have already been viewed over 37,000 times. One video discusses hidden spermicides, while another jokes about the 'convenience' of hiding toxic chemicals in a portable wipe, while one takes on body shaming head on. With your help, we'll reach more than 50,000 women with this important information, and move thousands of women to voice their concerns to the company. Our hope is that the company will agree to a dialogue and work with us toward greater transparency and safety in their ingredients.

## VICTORY! Procter & Gamble Discloses Fragrance Ingredients

P&G recently announced that they will disclose all product ingredients down to .01%, including fragrance ingredients. Thousands of synthetic chemicals are used to create modern day fragrances for everyday products from tampons to detergent. For decades, manufacturers have kept fragrance ingredients -- even those linked to allergies and other serious health issues like cancer and birth defects -- a secret from their customers. This move by Procter & Gamble solidifies the notion that keeping ingredients a secret is simply unacceptable -- not in personal care products, not in cleaning products, not anywhere!

Just a few short years ago, our conversations with manufacturers almost always led to the same conclusion -- discussing fragrance ingredient disclosure was simply off the table -- because the fragrance houses wouldn't allow them to give up their 'trade secrets.'

This announcement makes it clear that disclosing fragrance ingredients is in fact do-able.

And they did it because you demanded it. You have never stopped pushing major companies to disclose fragrance ingredients. Your voices are LOUD, and it's not just Procter & Gamble who is heeding them. Earlier this year, Unilever announced that they would disclose fragrance ingredients in their personal care products. Clorox and RB have disclosed fragrance allergens in their cleaning products, and SC Johnson now lists the majority of their fragrance ingredients online. This is all happening because of YOU. You took action and moved the biggest consumer products companies in the world to respond to your demands!



## CALIFORNIA COMES CLEAN!

This year, Women's Voices for the Earth co-sponsored SB 258, 'The California Cleaning Product Right to Know Act' which passed the California legislature! WVE, working with the Environmental Working Group, Breast Cancer Prevention Partners, and Natural Resources Defense Council, reached a compromise with major players in the cleaning product industry that allows companies to claim trade secrets for some ingredients, but they must disclose (on the label and online) all ingredients associated with negative health impacts, including those in fragrance. This bill is the first in the nation to require disclosure of ingredients in cleaning products and fragrance, and will set a national precedent for cleaning product ingredient disclosure. We intend to replicate this bill on the national level.

Thank you for all you did to make this happen! Activists in California supported the bill by hosting over a dozen green cleaning parties across the state, writing letters to the editor, testifying at hearings, and calling/tweeting/emailing their assembly members and senators. It made a difference!

ingredients gravely hazardous to health. WVE has had extraordinary success in informing the public about the presence of these toxins, lobbying Congress to ban them from our home, and putting public pressure on industry to remove them from their products. Serious business, right? And WVE takes it very seriously -- but with a killer sense of humor in their public information campaigns, as well. This is an incredibly effective tactic for having their campaigns go viral, and thereby informing consumers and citizen lobbyists.

**IF YOU COULD MAKE ONE SWEEPING CHANGE TO IMPROVE WOMEN'S LIVES TODAY, WHAT WOULD IT BE?** Make city councils, state and national legislatures at least 50% women. ■

*Our sustainers power our work year-round--we thank them for their support! You too can make a big difference for women's health. Sign up to give today:*

[www.womensvoices.org/give](http://www.womensvoices.org/give)

## MONTHLY DONOR SPOTLIGHT



Karen Weil, California

### HOW DID YOU FIRST GET TO KNOW WOMEN'S VOICES?

I first found out about Women's Voices for the Earth from my younger sister. 3 years ago, she

was exposed to mold in her home. As a consequence, she now is very chemically sensitive. She has educated me and many others on how chemicals can wreak havoc on our bodies. Seeing how certain chemicals made it hard for her to breathe had a huge impact on whether I used certain shampoos and cleaning supplies.

### WHY DO YOU GIVE TO WVE?

I give monthly to Women's Voices for the Earth, as their focus on toxins in our homes and communities are so very critical

to my family's health and the health of so many. We need their studies and their leadership. Without monetary support, trying to get laws implemented or changed is close to impossible. I fully believe that the work we do today will have a huge effect on tomorrow. ■



Secky Fascione, Wash., DC

### WHY DO YOU GIVE TO WVE?

The work is so important, and the approach so smart. As an organizer myself, I admire WVE's approach to real campaigns that are evidence based and prioritize activism and inclusion. I love an organization that can blend real organizing campaigns with skills development and easy DIY tips. The campaigns are always deeply

personal too, which motivates us to take action. And WVE wins!

### IF YOU COULD MAKE ONE SWEEPING CHANGE TO IMPROVE WOMEN'S LIVES TODAY, WHAT WOULD IT BE?

If women were paid their worth and compensated the same as men, especially women of color, it'd be game-changing. ■



Nancy McCourt, Gary Stein, & Yetta Stein, Montana

### WHY DO YOU GIVE TO WVE?

WVE uses science-based research, linking environmental activism to consumer education, advocacy and protection. The work is fierce but not conflictual. And the grassroots Montana-based origin of WVE has great appeal to us. Their focus on products that immediately impact women and environment makes this an organization and mission our entire family can get behind. The name of the organization literally allows us to put our money where our mouth is.

### WHAT DO YOU WISH EVERYONE KNEW ABOUT THIS CAUSE?

People need to know how authentic and devoted the WVE staff members are in amplifying women's voices. We wish everyone could become aware of the vast information WVE makes available to groups and individuals on their website about risks of exposure to toxic chemicals, easy ways to reduce exposure and how to connect personal action to political action. Thank you WVE. ■



Alison Dillon, Oregon

### WHY DO YOU GIVE TO WOMEN'S VOICES FOR THE EARTH?

I give to WVE because everyone should have access to environmentally safe household and personal products. By giving monthly, it aids in supporting research and advocacy for healthier and safer products for people and the planet.

### HOW IS THIS CAUSE PERSONAL TO YOU?

Some products, specifically for menstrual, personal hygiene, and household cleaning needs, are targeted toward women like myself. Advocating for companies to dump their toxic ingredients is vital to making safe products the norm and raising the standard for what is brought into the home, and put on and in our bodies. ■



Anita Doyle, Montana

### WHY DO YOU GIVE TO WOMEN'S VOICES FOR THE EARTH?

I give to WVE because they are at the vanguard in terms of monitoring industries for the reckless manufacturing and marketing of personal care and household products that contain