

PFAS: New England Perspective

Sylvia Broude, Executive Director, Toxics Action Center

Photo: Staff



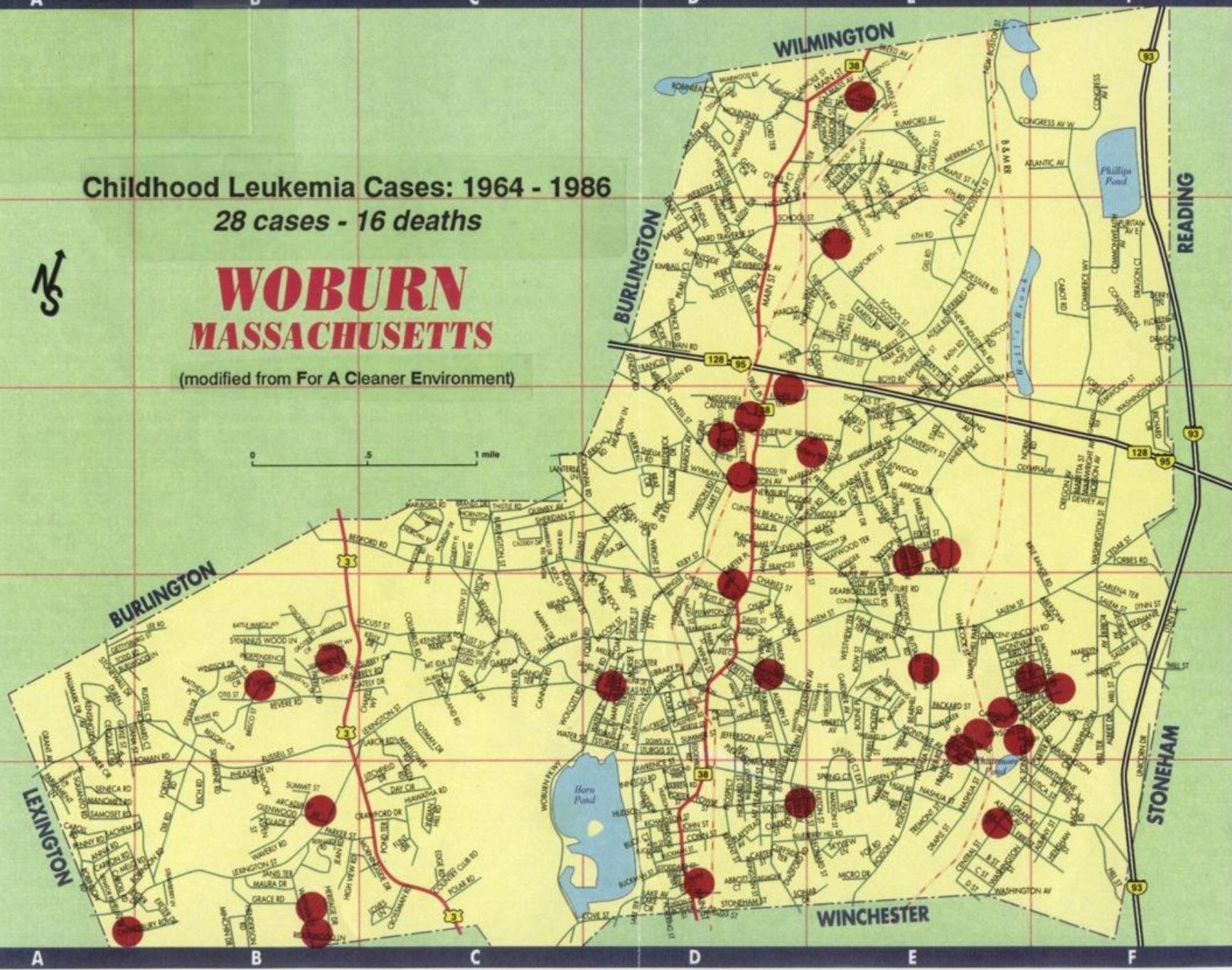
Childhood Leukemia Cases: 1964 - 1986

28 cases - 16 deaths

WOBURN MASSACHUSETTS

(modified from For A Cleaner Environment)

0 0.5 1 mile



Leukemia linked to well water near waste dump

BOSTON (AP) — Drinking water from wells near one of the nation's worst chemical dumps apparently caused childhood leukemia, birth defects and other children's diseases, researchers said Wednesday.

Their discovery of "a consistent pattern of positive associations" in suburban Woburn results from the largest study ever conducted on the effects of industrial poisons in a single geographic area.

They found that the more bad water people drank, the more likely they were to get sick. The wells were closed five years ago.

"The evidence seems pretty compelling to us that the adverse health effects are tied directly to the wells," said Dr. Stephen Lagakos, who directed the research at the Harvard School of Public Health.

The researchers cautioned the absolute increase in sickness attributable to the wells is small, and

many would have occurred anyway. Even when the incidence of an uncommon ailment doubles, that may mean only one extra case each year in a single town.

Environmentalists have long feared effects of toxic waste dumps on neighbors, but actual evidence of harm is scarce since population studies proving a link are expensive and time-consuming.

For instance, the consequences of Love Canal, the much-publicized chemical dump in Niagara Falls, N.Y., have never been clearly set. Initial reports of chromosome damage were later discounted.

This study was done by Harvard researchers for a Woburn citizens group called For A Cleaner Environment, FACE. In 1982, 321 volunteers got data on 3,257 Woburn families — 54 percent of the population.

The study linked the ailments to water drawn from two city wells downstream from the sprawling in-

dustriplex dump. For 130 years it was a dumping ground for wastes from chemical plants and tanneries.

The wells were closed in 1979 after being found to be tainted with an industrial solvent. It is still unclear if it was the dump that actually tainted the water, but Lagakos said, "It is contamination from the dump site that is the obvious suspected culprit."

The study found a link between the amount of well water drunk and the incidence of childhood leukemia, stillbirths, birth defects and childhood disorders of the lungs, kidneys and skin. It did not investigate whether the well water contributed to adult diseases.

The dump was listed by the Environmental Protection Agency as the fourth-worst such site in the nation. Among substances there were

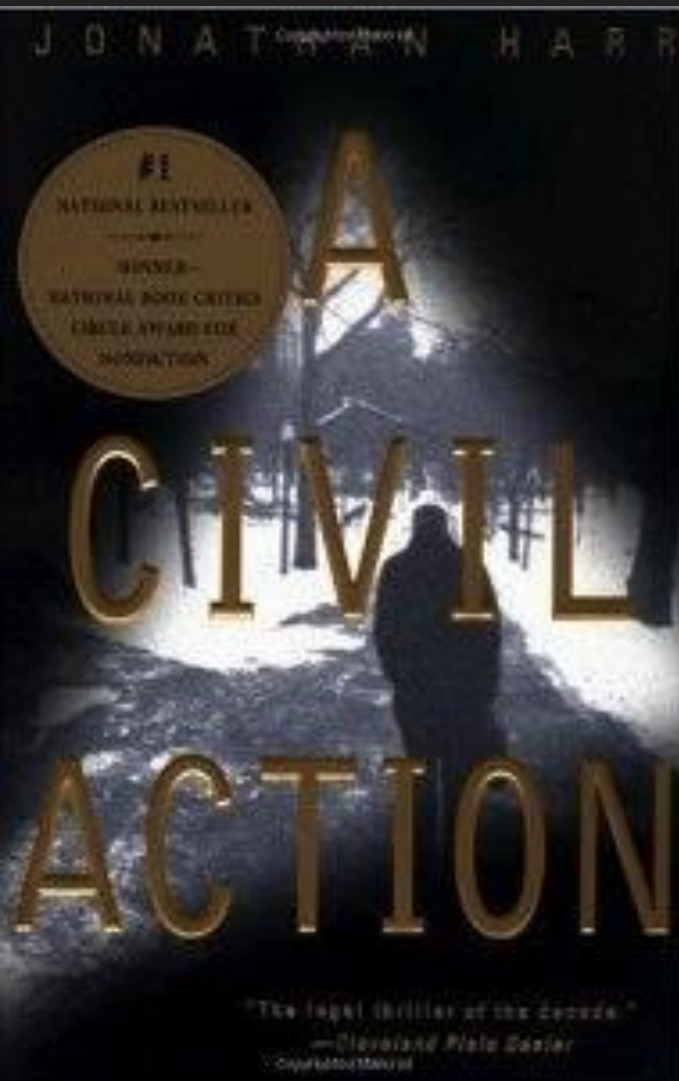
arsenic, lead, chromium, zinc and rotting animal hides.

FACE was formed over of concern for the unusual number of children with leukemia in the suburb Woburn, a city of 37,000 people 12 miles north of Boston, has the highest overall cancer rate in the state.

The study "was much more precise, explicit and uncompromising than we had expected," said the Rev. Bruce Young, a FACE organizer and pastor of Trinity Church in Woburn.

Between 1960 and 1983 it found 16 cases of childhood leukemia, more than double the national average. Six of the 22 cases of eye and ear birth defects in the survey also were linked to water from the wells.

2nd Annual



MCSHW

I support the Massachusetts Campaign to Clean Up Hazardous Waste (MOCHW) in its efforts to clean up toxics in Massachusetts, to educate and organize citizens around dumpsite cleanups, to advocate fair funding for environmental programs and to protect the environment and public health of the Commonwealth.

Name _____

Amount

Address

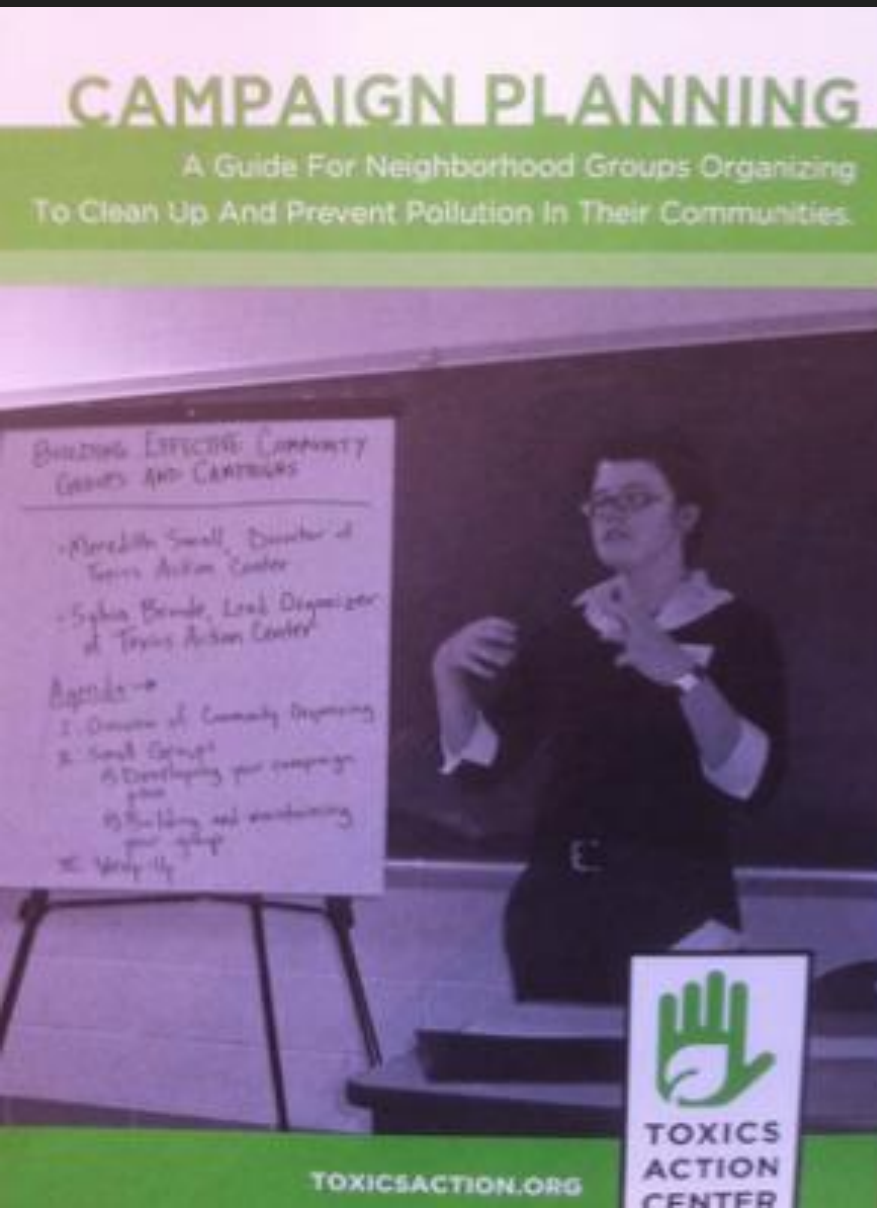
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Neighborhood Assistance Program

- Information and Education
- Organizing Assistance, Community Organizing Trainings and Leadership Development
- Expert and Activist Referrals
- Networking and Movement-building Events



Community Organizing Trainings



We work side by side local groups to develop strategic plans and tactics needed to tackle environmental problems. We provide consultations on:

- Campaign Planning
- Messaging & Materials Development
- Group Building & Recruitment
- Fundraising
- Planning for Public Hearings
- Winning Community-wide Votes
- Planning Media Events
- Interpreting Test Results

We also provide ongoing assistance and leadership development through phone conversations, individual meetings with group leaders and on-the-ground assistance, on everything from running effective meetings to how to build a leadership team and delegate.

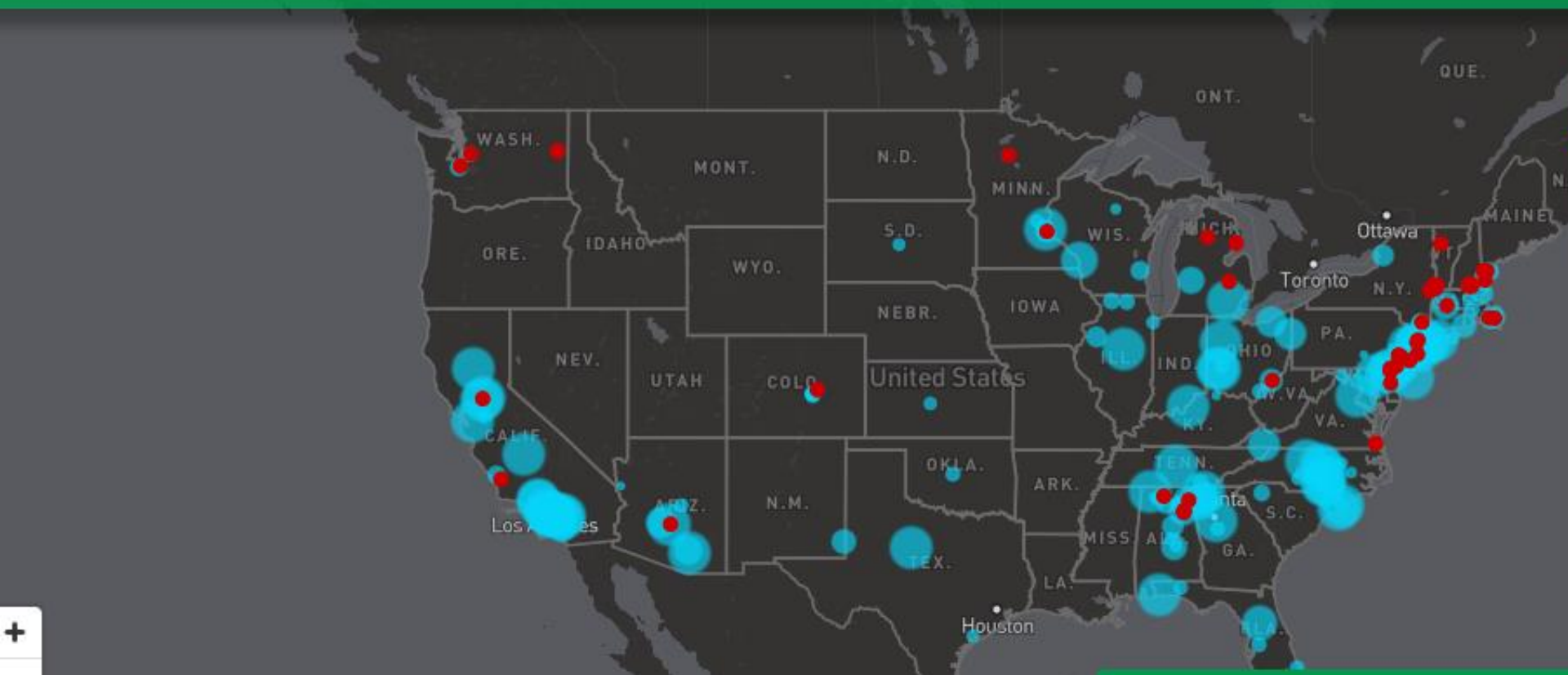


Map Info

Legend

Report

TOXIC FLUORINATED CHEMICALS IN TAP WATER AND AT INDUSTRIAL OR MILITARY SITES





TIMES UNION

State was notified of PFOA pollution in Rensselaer County in 2005

DEC says regulations in 2005 did not require action on chemical

By Brendan J. Lyons

Updated 12:55 pm, Monday, February 29, 2016



A plastics company in Petersburg first alerted the state Department of Environmental Conservation in 2005 about its discovery of a toxic chemical in the groundwater around its plant on Route 22.

At the time, the discovery of the hazardous man-made chemical, perfluorooctanoic acid or PFOA, did not result in any public notification or additional investigation by the state, officials said. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has no record that the company or state DEC notified the federal agency about the situation at that time.

The company, Taconic, installed a carbon-filter system on the wells at its plant along the Little Hoosic River in 2005 after it said low levels of the chemical were discovered

there. The company also provided alternative water treatment systems for nearby residents, a person briefed on the case said. Taconic's plant on Route 22 near the Little Hoosic River makes specialty products including silicone-coated fabrics and tapes.

Late last month, company officials met privately with state regulators because of the earlier discovery and also due to the recent heightened interest in the chemical after it was discovered in the Hoosick Falls village water system at levels the EPA said are not safe for human consumption. Following Taconic's meeting with state



Photo: Staff