

Butte Environmental Council would like your students to create their next 30-second Public Service Ad (PSA)!

The Butte Environmental Council has been serving the people and environment of Butte County for 35 years.

Funded by grants from The California Wellness Foundation, BEC has been educating the community about reducing exposure to toxics since 2006. The Foundation's mission is to improve the health of the people of California by making grants for health promotion, wellness education and disease prevention.

This project can fit into many different teaching rubrics: health, science, social science, government, critical thinking. We are working with Brian Peterson, a local videographer with 20 years in the profession, as well as experience working with HS students on similar projects. Brian has produced all of BEC's PSAs; he will help guide the students through the creative process and show them how the actual PSA is made.

This will be particularly exciting for students who have an interest in media and video production.

We are focusing on four areas of toxics awareness:

- 1) Proper disposal of compact fluorescent lightbulbs (CFLs). CFLs contain small amounts of mercury and must be disposed of properly, or dropped off to a local business that has a CFL takeback program.
- 2) Household cleaning products. There is a growing awareness that chemicals in household cleaning products can be a factor in many adverse health impacts. Ingredient listings are often incomplete (manufacturers often refuse to disclose ingredients, citing the legal protection of 'trade secrets'), and many of the chemicals used are known toxics. The potential health hazards of cleaning products needs to be common knowledge so people can make informed choices about the products they use.
- 3) Lawn and Garden care products. This includes pesticides and herbicides. Homeowners want to enhance the beauty and value of their home, but using harmful chemicals on their property can be unsafe - particularly for pets and children—and can have far-reaching consequences when those chemicals enter the watershed, or impact the pollinators that are so essential to our local economy.
- 4) Personal care products. These are similar to cleaning products in that ingredients can also be 'trade secrets', and many personal care products contain ingredients known to be harmful to human health.

Refining the Message

Keep in mind:

- What is meaningful to you?
- How has the topic affected you, your family, pets, friends?
- Know anyone with asthma, cancer, other illness?
- What makes people question something/think more deeply?
- Diversity important (cultural, age, socioeconomic status, etc)
- Need for overall positive message

Use humor when possible

Topics with key words

1. CFL's
 - Mercury (problems associated with exposure)
 - How/where to recycle
 - Proper disposal
2. Household Cleaning Products
 - Petroleum-based vs Plant-based
 - Clean home
 - Rethink clean (do chemicals in your home make it clean?)
 - Read labels
 - Access to kids
 - Adverse effects from use?
3. Pesticides/Herbicides/Lawn & Garden products
 - Petroleum-based vs Plant-based/mineral-based
 - Dead zones from nutrient overload
 - Kills beneficial insects
 - Reduces biotic activity of soil
 - What are inert ingredients & are they safe?
 - What alternatives? I.e: Integrated Pest Management (IPM), organic, etc.
4. Personal Care Products
 - Contain lead & other toxic chemicals
 - How are they tested?

Key Words/Concepts That Apply to All Topics:

Regulated by what agency?
Slick advertising can be misleading
Quantity used (more is not better)
What testing is done & by who?
Health risks (Asthma Cancer COPD During pregnancy Other illnesses)
Toxic chemicals
Reduce exposure
Less toxic
Safer
Better for the environment
Alternatives
Infant health
Pregnant women
Weakened immune systems
Educate
Body burden
Importance of reading the label
Does label contain all ingredients?