

“EDF used its scientific expertise to expose critical flaws in America’s chemicals policy. They’re now leading the way toward real reform.”

**Beth Jordan, M.D.**, Medical director  
Association of Reproductive Health Professionals

A young girl in a floral dress is sitting on a driveway, looking towards the camera. In the background, another girl is jumping rope on the same driveway. The driveway has hopscotch drawings on it, including the word "HOME" and numbers 10, 8, 6, and 4. The scene is outdoors with trees and a white building in the background.

# HEALTH



## WHY WE WORK ON HEALTH

“Pollution and toxic chemicals take a heavy toll on public health, particularly with children. We have an opportunity to ensure the safety of chemicals and cut smokestack pollution.”



**Vickie Patton**  
EDF general counsel

## EDF MILESTONES

**1977** Our campaign curbs the use of the hazardous flame retardant TRIS in children’s sleepwear.

**1985** EDF helps convince federal regulators to phase lead out of gasoline.

**1990** The Clean Air Act incorporates our market approach to cut power plant pollution. Acid rain is reduced faster and more cheaply than predicted.

**2002** Top U.S. poultry suppliers cut the use of medically important antibiotics by 90% following our partnership with McDonald’s and Compass Group.

**2008** EDF leads a campaign to clean up diesel trains and ships.



## PROTECTING FAMILIES FROM UNSAFE CHEMICALS

Public outrage over lead paint in toys prompted Congress to ban the use of lead in children's products in 2008. Since then, some foreign manufacturers have been substituting cadmium—another highly toxic metal—in charm bracelets and pendants sold across the United States.

Why, one might ask, would the U.S. government permit one chemical that can hinder brain development in the young to be replaced by another that poses similar risk? Cadmium ranks No. 7 on the Center for Disease Control's priority list of 275 hazardous substances.

The answer lies, in part, in the patchwork of weak consumer protection regulations. The Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA), the nation's principal chemicals law, is so riddled with loopholes that EPA could not even ban asbestos, which has been outlawed in more than 50 countries.

EDF biochemist Dr. Richard Denison told that story to members of Congress in a July hearing about reforming the 34-year-old law.

When Congress passed TSCA in 1976, there were roughly 62,000 chemicals in use. Of those, EPA has required fewer than 300 to be tested for safety. Meanwhile, some 20,000 additional chemicals have been introduced into the marketplace. Chemicals that we know too little about are in baby bottles, pet food, toys, even our bodies.

Troubled by the low priority EPA had given to chemical safety, Denison last year began posting detailed critiques of EPA's program on his blog. This served as a catalyst for the agency's decision shortly thereafter to replace it with a much

stronger chemical safety initiative that mirrors many of Denison's recommendations.

But much more needs to be done. Currently, EPA must prove a chemical is harmful before regulating it. We helped shape legislation this year that would shift the burden of proof to industry. It would require manufacturers to provide health information for chemicals and show they're safe before using them.

To build support for strong new legislation, we helped found a coalition of 250 health and environmental groups called *Safer Chemicals, Healthy Families* and started a grassroots campaign called "I Am Not a Guinea Pig."

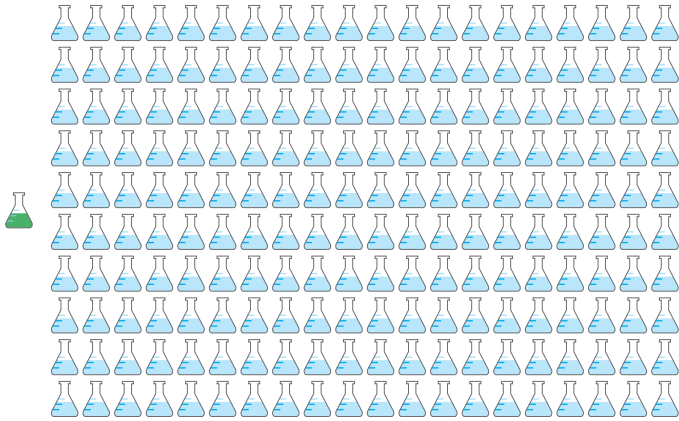
"This marks the first time in more than three decades that Congress is seriously considering legislation that can lead to comprehensive chemical safety reform," says Denison.

**VIDEO** [What the chemicals in your house can do to your family:   
edf.org/chemicalsandyou](https://www.edf.org/chemicalsandyou)

**"EDF's leadership has been terrific. It's a voice that never stops."**

**Judi Shils**, Founder and director  
Teens Turning Green, a campaign partner

## THE CHEMICALS DATA GAP



EPA has required testing on fewer than one in every 200 chemicals that were in use when the nation's chemicals law passed in 1976.

## SOOT AND THE CITY

In New York City, it's not uncommon to see plumes of thick, black smoke rising from some of the city's most prominent office and apartment buildings. They burn the dirtiest grade of heating oil (No. 6), which is essentially sludge.

EDF pinpointed 9,500 buildings that burn No. 6 or the next dirtiest oil, No. 4, and produced an interactive online map that reveals their addresses, [edf.org/dirtybuildings](http://edf.org/dirtybuildings). Burning these fuels creates more particulate matter, or soot, than all the city's cars and trucks combined. Soot is a major asthma trigger, and New York hospitalizes twice as many children with asthma as the national average.

When EDF learned that Mayor Bloomberg's administration was considering a cleanup plan that would take decades, our attorney Isabelle Silverman appealed to the mayor directly. She handed him a test tube filled with No. 6 oil and urged him to lead on the issue. Our campaign also unleashed a thousand emails calling for strong action.

In 2010, we scored an interim victory that cut sulfur levels in half for No. 4 oil, and the administration is now considering a phaseout of No. 6 oil. "This campaign unites science and public activism," says our regional director Andy Darrell. We're now working on incentives to speed the transition to cleaner fuels.

**\$30** Health and productivity benefits received for every \$1 invested under the Clean Air Act



## HEALTH GOALS

EDF seeks to safeguard human health by reducing environmental threats, including toxic chemicals and pollution.

- Reform U.S. toxic chemicals policy
- Safeguard human health through innovation in retail supply chains
- Cut air pollution from coal plants and ships by 75%

## CLEANING UP DIRTY POWER PLANTS

Dirty coal-fired power plants in 31 Eastern states could soon be a lot cleaner, thanks to strict new limits on pollution that EDF is helping bring into effect. In response to a Court of Appeals ruling, EPA proposed stricter limits that would cut sulfur dioxide by 71% and nitrogen oxides by 52%. The regulations would save up to 36,000 lives a year.

"Power plants are the nation's single largest emitter of these harmful pollutants," says EDF general counsel Vickie Patton. "Stronger action to cut power plant pollution will mean healthier, longer lives for millions of Americans." Patton helped guide EPA in setting the tough new standards.