

# People for Less Pollution

Working together for a safe and healthy environment in the Champlain Valley

Newsletter 1 — August 2005

www.lesspollution.org

## Vermont Agency of Natural Resources to Hold Important Meeting Regarding

### International Paper Company Proposed Tire Burn

**Thurs., August 18, 2005,  
Rally: 6:30 pm • Meeting: 7:00 pm  
VFW Hall, Middlebury, VT  
530 Exchange St.**

We expect the New York Department of Environmental Conservation (NYDEC) to issue a draft permit by mid-August giving International Paper Company of Ticonderoga permission to test burn 72 tons of tires a day this fall. Once the draft permit is issued there will be a 30-day comment period for citizens to express their concerns about the health hazards of burning tires for fuel in a plant that lacks adequate pollution controls to burn tires. International Paper Company's representatives will be at this meeting to present an overview of their plan to burn tires and answer questions from the public. **IT IS IMPORTANT TO ATTEND THIS MEETING TO EXPRESS YOUR CONCERNS!** Show our Governor and the Governor of NY State and IP Executives that we will not allow IP's irresponsible actions to harm us.

## Why not let IP do a test burn?

- 1 Test burns are performed under ideal conditions, for short periods of time, releasing the least pollution, and will not reflect real world operating conditions. The transition from burning fuel oil to burning tires (before steady state is reached) will no doubt spew out the most pollution. No measurements are taken during this period. During the test burn IP may NOT operate their equipment normally but will pull out all the bells and whistles to get the results they want.
- 2 IP will not test for the hundreds of organic compounds released. The composition of tires varies and each lot will contain different compounds. Many of these are carcinogens.
- 3 IP's testing for small particulates is inadequate to measure the most dangerous, very small (<2.5 micron) particles. These are the particles that settle deep in the lungs and cause the most harm.  
  
They will assay the exhaust stream without obtaining a breakdown of chemical composition vs. particle size. (Such an analysis is very difficult and expensive). But that is the essential information. A mg of lead carried on 2 micron particles is MUCH more hazardous than a mg of lead on 10 micron particles.
- 4 The test burn itself will be a toxic threat to those living downwind, particularly during the start up and shut down of the boiler.

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### IP needs an ESP!

If a new paper mill were built today, the plant would be required to install an electrostatic precipitator (ESP) pollution control device. An ESP is essential for removing toxic fine particulates. Fine particulates are significantly more hazardous to human health than larger particulates.

by **Bob Murray, PhD**

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### Workers, residents should both breathe easier

An investment in an electrostatic precipitator by International Paper Company at the Ticonderoga mill is an investment that will ensure both the health of people who live in New York and Vermont and the jobs of the workers at the mill.

by **Bill McKibben**

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### Children are uniquely susceptible

to the multiple toxins released from burning tires. Of special concern are the particulates that will be released. These are tiny particles, similar to tobacco smoke, which are easily inhaled and deposit toxic organic and inorganic chemicals deep in the lungs.

by **Jack Mayer, MD, MPH**

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# IP needs an ESP!

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**I**nternational Paper is currently one of the largest polluters in the Champlain Valley reporting toxic releases of over 400,000 lbs. of hazardous pollution every year. This is more than twice the total reported toxic releases for all of Vermont. Part of the reason why IP Ticonderoga has such a poor environmental record is because the antiquated wet scrubber pollution control device on the plant's power boiler is insufficient to remove fine particulate matter and heavy metals from combustion gases.

If a new paper mill were built today, the plant would be required to install an electrostatic precipitator (ESP) pollution control device. An ESP is essential for

removing toxic fine particulates. Fine particulates are significantly more hazardous to human health than larger particulates. Toxins collected on the surface of fine particulates are breathed into the lungs and lead to lung disease. If International Paper is granted a permit to burn 72 tons of shredded tires a day the plant will release even larger amounts of pollution.

International Paper Company's application to the NYDEC for a permit to conduct a test burn of tires at the Ticonderoga plant states that burning tires will increase emissions of toxic metals from the plant including chromium, arsenic, zinc, barium, cobalt, copper, iron,

aluminum, manganese and vanadium. IP maintains that the company can not afford to buy an electrostatic precipitator for the power boiler at the Ticonderoga plant. The IP parent company had \$25 Billion in sales in 2004. Former International Paper CEO John T. Dillon was paid \$8,965,055 in 2002 including salary, bonuses, and stock options. The IP Ticonderoga plant needs strategic pollution control investments from the parent corporation to create a sustainable paper making facility coupled with sustainable Adirondack forestry management practices that will provide local employment opportunities and not degrade the environment.

*by Bob Murray, PhD*

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## Workers, Residents Should Both Breathe Easier

**I**nternational Paper's Ticonderoga plant is an example of how perception and reality are at odds in so many environmental disputes.

The perception is: this battle pits people who don't want to breathe pollution from the plant against workers who don't want to lose their jobs. The owner says, as owners always do in these situations, that it can't afford to make the investments necessary to clean up the plant. When People for Less Pollution and Moms for Safe Milk demand that IP install an electrostatic precipitator—for many years now the standard best practice in smokestack emissions control—the company tries to paint their reasonable fear of particulates and heavy metals as an assault on workers.

But in reality, the interests of Vermont farmers who have to breathe the factory's exhaust, and the factory crew that mans the plant, are actually closely aligned. Those are good jobs, and they are desperately important to the town of Ticonderoga and the surrounding parts of Essex County. But they're not going to be there long unless someone forces IP to modernize the plant.

Look around. What happens when companies allow manufacturing plants to age, when they stop investing, when

they fall behind the technological curve? What happens is, they shut down. Sure, for a few more years the owner may try to milk the last cheap profit off its old capital investment—but eventually, and invariably, the plant becomes less competitive instead of more. Aging equipment breaks down; inefficiencies mount (and mount expensively in an era of pricey fuel). Why do you think they call the Midwest the Rust Belt?

On the other hand, if IP decided to install modern pollution control equipment, that capital investment alone might be enough to spur further improvements at the plant—to make it a mill of the future, not of the past. There's no guarantee: the paper industry has been shifting inexorably south and overseas for a generation. But IP still has extensive (and environmentally well-managed) forest lands in the Adirondacks. Time and again they've figured out how to do the environmental and economic

right thing on those lands—selling easements and lakefront to the state of New York, minimizing taxes, maximizing good publicity. The Ticonderoga mill represents such an opportunity for the manufacturing side of the company: if it turned into a clean and sustainable operation with a real future, it's hard to imagine a better symbol for the corporation. (Not many mills can claim quite such a gorgeous lakefront location).

It's crucial that Vermonters campaigning for less pollution not insist that their air is more important than the jobs that support hundreds of families on the other side of the narrow lake. Instead, they need to stress that their campaign for plant modernization is the best chance those families have that those jobs will still be there a generation hence. Together it's possible they have enough clout, and moral authority, to persuade IP to do the right thing.

*by Bill McKibben*

**Paper Mills can do the right thing**—Paper mills have a long history of adverse effects on the environment—but that is changing. Mohawk Paper Co. has 2 mills located near Albany, NY and produces a line of 100% post-consumer recycled papers using 21% wind power. George Milner, a company spokesperson said: "There is a misconception that choosing the environmentally correct path costs a lot more but with the technological advances in windmills, the cost of wind power is within range of traditional energy sources. And our customers find it a tangible way to express their own commitment to sustainability." —**So IP why not install an ESP?**

# Children Are Uniquely Susceptible

**A**s a pediatrician I have studied environmental toxicology at Columbia University School of Public Health. I am especially concerned about the health effects of International Paper Company burning tire derived fuel without adequate pollution controls. Installation of an Electrostatic Precipitator (ESP), a standard pollution control device, would reduce these hazards.

Children (and pregnant women and adults with asthma, heart disease, immune disorders, etc.) are uniquely susceptible to the multiple toxins released from burning tires. Of special concern are the particulates that will be released. These are tiny particles, similar to tobacco smoke, which are easily inhaled and deposit toxic organic and inorganic chemicals deep in the lungs. From the lungs this material is easily absorbed into the bloodstream and distributed throughout the body, or it exerts its toxic effects in the lung tissue itself, as with asthma.

International Paper admits that its current, outdated pollution controls only capture 76% of particulates, mostly the larger particulates. That means that at least 24% of the particulates, most of them the most dangerous small particles, will be released.

The EPA concedes that its standards for particulate pollution need to be revised downward because of research

indicating harm at much lower levels than are permissible now. The American Academy of Pediatrics Committee on Environmental Health (December 2004) concluded that fine particles cause excess mortality and hospitalizations for heart and lung disease, including cancer. In March 2005, acknowledging new evidence of increased health risks from small particles, the EPA announced the Clean Air Interstate Rule to lower particulate emissions from power plants. The research group I worked with at Columbia University just published a landmark study documenting chromosomal damage in fetuses from air pollution (most of it particulate in nature), damage linked to increased risk of cancer.

Breast milk (and cow's milk) will become contaminated. Organic pollutants on the particles released from burning tires will be transferred from a nursing mom's body into the fat in her breast milk and into her baby. After 6 months of breast feeding, approximately 20% of fat-stored pollutants in a mother's body have been transferred to her infant. In fact, during breast-feeding, infants are exposed to higher concentrations of organic pollutants than at any subsequent time in their lives. Burning tires only adds to that toxic burden. (For all its other health advantages it is still preferable to breast feed, but we should be vigilant.)

There is abundant evidence to suggest that particulates and the toxins associated with them are of greater concern than once thought. Warning flags are up. The strong probability of harm should cause us to take necessary precautions. Vermont's children should not become the cautionary tale for the next generation. It is our responsibility to protect our most vulnerable citizens.

International Paper lacks the basic pollution control device, an ESP, needed to minimize these pollutants. Saving money on fuel by burning tires should not take precedence over public health. Industries have a social responsibility to be good corporate citizens and good neighbors.

*by Jack Mayer, MD, MPH*

**IP Says—  
“Let's do the test and see  
what happens...”**

**P**roposing to do a test that is unsafe and does not follow proper safety precautions is irresponsible. No one would do a lab experiment without goggles or precautionary safety equipment – yet IP wants to test without using an ESP and refuses to test for the most harmful fine particulates and toxins.

## We need your help to continue our work!

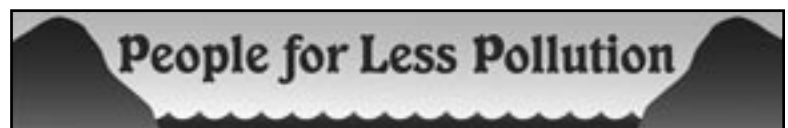
Please join us in our efforts to stop International Paper Company from burning tires. Help us protect the air and water of both New York and Vermont.

- \$25. (Suggested Contribution)  
 \$50.  \$100.  \$500.  \$1,000.  
 Other \_\_\_\_\_

Any size contribution is appreciated

- I would like to contribute time helping out

Please make your checks out to: People for Less Pollution



Send your contribution to: People for Less Pollution  
P.O. Box 1350  
Middlebury, Vermont 05753

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

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- I prefer to receive information by Email to save paper (provide info above)

**IP MEETING: Thurs. August 18, 2005 7:00 pm ► RALLY AT 6:30 pm ◀**

**B**URNING TIRES releases substances that cause cancer and presents serious health risks to Addison Co. residents. The burning of tires will harm fish, birds, plant life, livestock and humans. Just because we can't see these fine particulates doesn't mean they don't exist. They are highly toxic and dangerous. To burn tires without proper pollution control is an irresponsible and unsafe act on the part of this multi-billion dollar corporation.

**Attend IP informational meeting  
Thursday, August 18, 2005  
7:00 pm (rally at 6:30pm)  
VFW, Middlebury**

IP plans to burn over 2 million tires a year. We know of no other plant in the U.S. burning this number of tires without an electrostatic precipitator (ESP).

We don't want to shut down IP. We just want them to install an ESP like the other plants have. Is that so much to ask?

**10 minutes of time can save 10 years  
of pollution by International Paper**

- Call 5 friends and bring them to the meeting and rally. The whole community will be there!
- Call Governor Douglas: 800-649-6825. Thank him for his support opposing the tire burn and ask him to take stronger action. The health risks are proven.
- Call Rep. Bernie Sanders: 800-339-9834 and Sen. Pat Leahy: 800-642-3193. Get them to take a stand on the tire burn and help now that Sen. Jeffords: 800-835-5500 who has been most vocal on this issue is retiring.
- Demand that IP test for Fine Particulates (PM 2.5). If IP refuses, ask that Commissioner Wennberg: 802-241-3808 (VTDEC) install more than 2 testing stations. No one can predict which way the wind will blow during the test. We need 10 to 15 to get an accurate sampling.
- See our website to learn more. [www.lesspollution.org](http://www.lesspollution.org) – Follow the TAKE ACTION link and send comments to Governor Pataki, Governor Douglas and The NYDEC.

**The Solution is Simple: NO ESP=NO TEST BURN**

- The Commission for Economic Cooperation (CEC) of North America (made up of Canadian and US Scientists) in a February 2005 report states: "Research has indicated that the use of ESPs has been the ONLY SOLUTION to particulate control of tire-fueled flue gas."
- IP does not have an ESP on its 35-year-old power boiler. IP has a wet scrubber (not designed for catching fine particulates), which by their estimates catches only 76% of emissions. The 24% of the emissions that escape the IP Ticonderoga plant are the finest, most hazardous and toxic particles that have the ability to lodge deep in a person's lungs. An ESP is estimated to be ten times better at catching these fine particles, which means an ESP might capture up to 99% of these toxic emissions.
- IP will save \$3 million on fuel a year burning tires. An engineer has estimated an ESP for IP's power boiler would cost approx. \$5 million (a 2-year pay back).

**People for Less Pollution**

People for Less Pollution, Inc.

*a non-profit corporation established for public benefit*

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**More information  
is on our website:**

**[www.lesspollution.org](http://www.lesspollution.org)**

**IMPORTANT MEETING**

Vermont Agency of Natural Resources  
to hold informational meeting

**INTERNATIONAL PAPER CO.  
WILL PRESENT PLAN  
TO BURN TIRES THIS FALL**

**Thursday  
August 18, 2005; 7pm**

**VFW Hall  
Middlebury, VT  
530 Exchange Street**

**Strong public turnout needed to oppose  
draft permit to be issued by NYDEC  
mid-August to allow Fall 2005 tire burn**

**Rally at 6:30 pm**



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HELP US SAVE PAPER —  
PASS THIS INFORMATION ALONG!