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WHITE HOUSE CORRESPONDENCE TRACKING WORKSHEET

☐ O - OUTGOING☐ H - INTERNAL☐ I - INCOMINGDate Correspondence
Received (YY/MM/DD) 1 / 1 / 1Name of Correspondent: Edwin S. Rothschild☐ MI Mail Report

User Codes: (A) _____ (B) _____ (C) _____

Subject: Unleaded Gasoline Containing Benzene
Exposes Public to Unnecessary Cancer Risks**ROUTE TO:****ACTION****DISPOSITION**

Office/Agency	(Staff Name)	Action Code	Tracking Date YY/MM/DD	Type of Response	Code	Completion Date YY/MM/DD
	<u>Cuofc</u>	ORIGINATOR	<u>89/11/89</u>			<u>1</u> / <u>1</u> / <u>1</u>
	<u>Cuat 17</u>	Referral Note: <u>A</u>	<u>89/11/89</u>		<u>S</u>	<u>89/11/89</u>
	<u>Cuat 02</u>	Referral Note: <u>A</u>	<u>1</u> / <u>1</u> / <u>1</u>			<u>1</u> / <u>1</u> / <u>1</u>
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FOR OUTGOING CORRESPONDENCE:

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Clean
Air

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Facsimile Transmission Sheet

1300 Connecticut Avenue, N.W.
Suite 401
Washington, DC 20036
(202) 857-5153

TO: C. BOYDEN GRAY

Fax Number: 456-6279

FROM: EDWIN S. ROTHSCHILD

Fax Number: _____

Number of Pages to Follow: 4

As per your discussion with FRED
Potter, it is agreed that this release
is not to be shared until it is
officially released at 1:00 PM tomorrow.

SSR

Citizen Action

P.O. Box 33304
Washington, DC 20033-0304
(202) 857-5168

EMBARGOED!!

Hold for release:

**Thursday, November 19, 1989
1:00 PM**

Cleveland Office:
P.O. Box 14694
Cleveland, OH 44114-0694
(216) 694-6931

For further information
Contact: Ed Rothschild
(202) 857-5153

UNLEADED GASOLINE CONTAINING BENZENE EXPOSES PUBLIC TO UNNECESSARY CANCER RISKS SAYS NEW REPORT

Washington: Citizen Action, a national consumer organization, today released a report - *Cancer at the Pump* -- that warns that consumers who use self-service gasoline face much greater cancer and health risks than the general population.

The 50-page report blames major oil companies for deliberately increasing the level of cancer-causing benzene and other aromatic hydrocarbons in unleaded gasoline, despite the known health risks.

The report, prepared by Citizens Fund, Citizen Action's research and education arm, also sharply criticizes the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for completely abdicating its legal responsibility to protect the public from exposure to benzene, listed by the EPA as a toxic air contaminant for the last 13 years.

The report ranked U.S. oil refiners by their capacity to manufacture the health-threatening aromatic hydrocarbons (which produce benzene during combustion) and labeled those companies with the largest capacity **THE TOXIC TEN**. In order, **THE TOXIC TEN** are: Exxon, Chevron, Amoco, Shell, Mobil, BP America, Star Enterprises (a 50-50 joint venture between Texaco and Saudi Arabia), ARCO, Sun and USX.

Among the reports key findings are:

- * Gasoline contains benzene which is a known cancer-causing agent. It can cause leukemia and birth defects;
- * Gasoline contains substantial amounts of aromatic hydrocarbons, including benzene, toluene and xylene (BTX). Benzene is emitted from automobile tailpipes when aromatic hydrocarbons are burned. Eighty percent of airborne benzene is emitted by vehicles burning gasoline and is not regulated by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency;
- * Motorists who use self-service gasoline pumps and gasoline station attendants face greater cancer and health risks than the general population because of increased exposure to benzene and other harmful chemicals contained in gasoline fumes.
- * Premium unleaded gasoline usually contains substantially more benzene and other aromatic compounds than other unleaded grades. Moreover, premium unleaded costs \$0.15 to \$0.20 per gallon more than regular unleaded, is more polluting and requires increased oil imports.
- * Despite increased cancer and other health risks associated with self-service gasoline, major oil companies have not adequately informed motorists of these dangers via pump labels. On the contrary, they have lobbied for pump labels to warn consumers about ethanol or other components, although these components are far less toxic than benzene.
- * Oil companies have the technology and capability of substantially reducing benzene in gasoline by using standard process techniques.
- * There are many alternatives to continued use of high-aromatic content gasoline. They include cleaner-burning fuels such as natural gas and ethanol and cleaner-burning fuel additives such as ETBE and MTBE; production and sale of more efficient automobiles and much greater reliance on public transportation.

"This report should be of great concern to all citizens, especially to motorists who regularly use self-service pumps and gasoline station attendants," said Edwin S. Rothschild, Citizen Action's Energy/Environment Policy Director and author of the report.

"Furthermore," added Rothschild, "people who are employed as policemen, toll collectors, and crossing guards or who commute by bicycle are also obviously more at risk."

"This report should also be looked at closely by members of Congress who are considering new Clean Air legislation, because it demonstrates a clear need for vapor recovery systems, restrictions on benzene and aromatics in gasoline, the need for expanding the production and use of cleaner fuels and the need for promoting fuel efficient automobiles," Rothschild said.

"By promoting lower-priced self-service and continually increasing the benzene and aromatic level of their unleaded gasolines, major oil companies are luring millions of unwary citizens into a secret and deadly game of Russian Roulette," said Rothschild.

"Except in a few areas where the law requires vapor recovery systems, consumers who use self-service are exposed to an average benzene level of 1 part per million. At this level of exposure during an entire lifetime, recent estimates conclude the average lifetime chance of getting cancer ranges between 7 and 53 per million," said Rothschild.

"The facts clearly show that the major oil companies have for years fought against government efforts to regulate benzene emissions. They even used their power to pressure an official of the National Cancer Institute to alter a benzene risk assessment at a time when the Occupational Health and Safety Administration was considering lowering worker exposure to benzene," Rothschild stated.

"There is also evidence to suggest that EPA has allowed the oil companies to increase benzene and aromatics in gasoline in exchange for lowering lead levels. Otherwise it is difficult to explain why EPA has sat on its hands the last 13 years and has done nothing to regulate mobile sources of benzene," continued Rothschild.

"We know that there are a number of alternatives to cancer-causing benzene and aromatics, which produce benzene when burned in a car's engine," said Rothschild. "These include ethanol, natural gas, ETBE and MTBE. Moreover, ARCO has already demonstrated that oil companies have the capability of removing a large percentage of benzene and aromatics," he said.

"Given the toxicity and carcinogenicity of benzene and other gasoline components, Congress would be derelict in its duty if it does not take immediate action to require sharp reductions in benzene and aromatics in gasoline in the context of pending Clean Air legislation," said Rothschild.

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

November 10, 1989

MEMORANDUM FOR THE FILE

FROM: JEFFREY R. HOLMSTEAD *JRH*
ASSISTANT COUNSEL TO THE PRESIDENT

SUBJECT: Side-by-Side of Alternative Fuels
Provisions of H.R. 3030 and Fields/Hall
and Richardson/Sonar Amendments

I have reviewed the above-referenced document, which will be used in on-going discussions regarding the President's proposed amendments to the Clean Air Act. No further action is necessary.

Cleanair. 1

11/10

pls make copy for
subject file



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WHITE HOUSE CORRESPONDENCE TRACKING WORKSHEET

☐ O - OUTGOING☐ H - INTERNAL☐ I - INCOMINGDate Correspondence
Received (YY/MM/DD) _____Name of Correspondent: Don Zinger☐ MI Mail Report

User Codes: (A) _____ (B) _____ (C) _____

Subject: Side - by - Side of Alternative Fuels
Provisions of H.R. 3030 and Fields/Hall
and Richardson/Spyer Amendments

ROUTE TO:

ACTION

DISPOSITION

Office/Agency	(Staff Name)	Action Code	Tracking Date YY/MM/DD	Type of Response	Code	Completion Date YY/MM/DD
	<u>Cuope</u>	ORIGINATOR	<u>8/10/20</u>			<u>1 1</u>
	<u>Cuat 17</u>	Referral Note: <u>R</u>	<u>8/10/20</u>		<u>S</u>	<u>8/10/30</u>
	<u>Cuat 18</u>	Referral Note:	<u>1 1</u>			<u>1 1</u>
	<u>Cuat 02</u>	Referral Note:	<u>1 1</u>			<u>1 1</u>
	<u>Cu Gray</u>	Referral Note:	<u>1 1</u>			<u>1 1</u>

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**SIDE-BY-SIDE OF ALTERNATIVE FUELS PROVISIONS
OF HR 3030 AND FIELDS/HALL AND RICHARDSON/SYNAR AMENDMENTS**

	<u>HR 3030</u>	<u>FIELDS/HALL</u>	<u>RICHARDSON/ SYNAR</u>
<u>Definition of clean fuels</u>	Methanol, ethanol, nat'l gas, propane, electricity, others fuels with similarly low emissions; reformulated gas can be added to list if EPA finds has similarly low emissions.	Adds reformulated gas to list of clean fuels; substitutes LPG for propane.	Substitutes LPG for propane; EPA to decide whether reformulated gas is a clean fuel w/i 18 mos.
<u>Performance (or emission) standards for clean-fuel vehicles</u>	Clean-fuel vehicles must meet emission standards that require substantially lower VOCs and air toxics	Clean-fuel vehicles must "comply" with program performance standard (based on M85)	Same as HR 3030
<u>Performance standard for program</u>	Based on clean fuels "formulated to provide maximum [ozone-producing hydrocarbon and toxic] emissions reductions"	Based on M85; arguably permits standard to be met by use of reformulated gas in all vehicles.	Same as HR 3030
		<u>ADM'N POSITION:</u> Phase I (1995-99) standard based on M85; after study, EPA to set Phase II (2000-2004) standard by 12/31/98 based on M100 <u>unless</u> EPA finds such standard not needed, not technologically feasible and not cost effective.	

Vehicle Requirement

Mfrs must sell clean-fuel vehicles according to specified schedule

Mfrs must certify they have "capacity to produce, subject to fuel availability"

Same as HR 3030

ADM'N POSITION:

Mfrs required to produce, distribute and offer for sale

Fuels Requirement

EPA to require fuel availability based on carmakers' projections and state/local consultations

Same as HR 3030, but EPA also to consider capacity to produce autos, fuels in rulemaking

Same as HR 3030; EPA can also require use of reformulated gas where appropriate.

EPA authorized to require fuel availability along national transportation corridors

No authority to require nationwide fuel availability

Same as HR 3030

ADM'N POSITION:Opt-in

States can opt into program, so long as reasonable to do so

State's ability to opt in tied to carmakers' sales projections and fuel availability

Same as HR 3030

Timing of EPA, state, industry action on program design

Program performance standards within 12 months;

program requirements w/i 18 mos;

opt-in/opt-out requests w/i 24 mos; EPA action on requests w/i 30 mos.

Program performance standards within 18 months;

program requirements w/i 26 mos;

same as HR 3030

Same as HR 3030;

same as HR 3030;

same as HR 3030

Timing of
program
requirements

Vehicle sales
and fuel availa-
bility require-
ments begin 1995

Vehicle produc-
tion capacity
and fuel availa-
bility req'ts
begin no sooner
than 3 model years
after regulations
(1996 earliest
start date)

Same as
HR 3030

Alternative
Controls

Mfrs and fuel
refiners can
opt-out of
clean-fuel pro-
gram if come up
with equivalent
emission reduc-
tions; EPA has
discretion to
permit (or not
permit) reformu-
lated gas program
as substitute.

Opt-out limited
to fuel refiners;
but performance
standard could
possibly be met
by reformulated
gas program.

Same as
HR 3030

Private fleet
requirements

No separate
fleet require-
ments

As partial sub-
stitute for
program, some
percentage of
1995 and later
vehicles pur-
chased for cen-
trally-fueled
fleets must be
clean-fueled;
what percentage
left up to
states.

As offset
to vehicle/
fuels req'ts,
90 percent of
1994 and later
vehicles in
fleets that
could be cen-
trally-fueled
must be clean-
fueled and
must be run on
clean fuels.

Government
fleet
requirements

No separate
fleet require-
ments

In serious and
severe areas,
fed'l, state &
local fleets
to operate spec-
ified percentage
of fleet on
clean fuels
(not a new vehi-
cle, but a total
fleet requiremt).

Same as Hall/
Fields, except
a federal (as
opposed to
State SIP)
requirement and
no opt-out (if
obtain equiva-
lent reduc'ns)

Req't may be waived
if fleets cannot be
centrally fueled or
if costs more.

Same as
Hall/
Fields

Oxy fuels

State CO SIPs must require use of fuel with oxygen content sufficient to show attainment

Moderate CO areas above 12.7 must require at least 2% oxygen content; serious areas at least 2.7%.

Same as Hall/Fields except requirement applies to broader geographic area,

Requirement may be waived if will interfere with other NAAQS.

Requirement may not be waived.

Conversions

No credit available for conversion of existing vehicles to clean-fuels

Bus and government fleet requirements can be met with converted vehicles

EPA to set standards for converted vehicles w/i 18 mos; EPA may grant credits toward vehicle sales req't for conversion of existing vehicles.

REVIEW & OUTLOOK

Hermetically Sealed Law

12/15/89 WJS

"Keep going, keep going." That's what Senator Max Baucus was urging last month as the Senate environment committee marked up its clean air bill. The result is a testament to the modern legislative process.

In one day, the committee considered at least 40 amendments. Senator Baucus unveiled his acid rain provision and had it passed unanimously within hours. Smog, ozone, acid rain, permits and enforcement, greenhouse, toxics—the committee rammed it all through, almost without debate. Amid the chaos, something got lost—parts of the bill itself.

Different parts of the scrawled bill were spread out on the desks of different staffers. The staff couldn't retrieve all the pages in time for the final vote, so the committee ended up passing a major bill with key pages missing.

Business groups were frantic, wondering if their firms were getting gored. They still can't get a look at the bill. The committee staff hasn't finished writing it.

The contentious acid rain issue will no doubt be settled in some back room with Senator Byrd running interference for West Virginia's coal miners. But how did it get out of the committee so easily? There are no Senators from the big midwestern states on the panel. There are six Senators from Western states that could face severe compliance costs. The answer: Four of those Senators—Burdick, Baucus, Durenberger and Simpson—got special exemptions for their states, leaving most of the country to fend for itself with the burden. Senator Symms of Idaho was the only member of the panel who fought the rush to passage; his state got no special treatment.

The gale force wind behind this effort is Senate Majority Leader George Mitchell. For 12 years he has been pushing for a clean air bill. It looks as if he's figured out a way to get it: blow over everything in his path, including serious hearings, science, economic analysis, even regional politics. Senator Mitchell promises that it will be the first bill the Senate votes on when it reconvenes in January. At least 31 Senators have asked the three congressional research arms to evalu-

ate 100 specific effects of the bill, but the researchers will be able to produce only cursory results by the time Mr. Mitchell wants to put it up for full vote.

Of course some interests will be well served by Senator Mitchell's work. The EPA bureaucrats are especially interested in the permits and enforcement section of the bill. Mr. Mitchell's bill layers an entire new permit-issuing bureaucracy on top of the one that already exists. Not only would businesses have to get an EPA approval for new construction, a permit would be required simply to operate. As the bill stands, every gas station, dry cleaner, body shop or any other chemical-emitting business would have to hold public hearings and get a permit to stay in business.

The EPA, which has represented its own interests more than those of the White House recently, loves the permitting section. EPA's bureaucracy would swell, paid for by emissions taxes. EPA permit officers would have the power to shut down small businesses; they could revoke permits at any time. The EPA would even have the power to overrule state environmental offices, a blunt repudiation of federalism. And the penalties for businessmen would be tough: up to \$250,000 per individual and 15 years in jail if their company releases a hazardous air pollutant that places people in imminent danger. The distinction between malicious pollution and unintentional pollution also is eroded.

The U.S. already spends \$33 billion a year on clean air, more per capita than any of our trading partners. The President's bill would add at least \$25 billion to that. The Senate package is off the meter, and could double the costs of the existing act.

At the risk of intruding crude reality into the Senate's sealed world, there are real firms out there in America, with real employees, trying to compete. If Senator Mitchell is going to throttle entire industries, maybe it would be nice to have a bill that has withstood the scrutiny of an interested public, rather than being railroaded through a Senate whose members will barely understand the law on which they are voting.

California Air-Quality Plan Unveiled

New Cars' Emissions Would Be Cut to a Fraction of Current U.S. Standards Within 10 Years

12/15/89 WP

By Jay Mathews
Washington Post Staff Writer

LOS ANGELES, Dec. 14—California air-quality officials today revealed the nation's most far-reaching smog-control plan, saying that in 10 years emissions produced by almost all new automobiles should be cut to a fraction of current federal standards.

The plan to have 98 percent of cars sold in the year 2000 meet the new regulations and to require a much smaller percentage of even cleaner cars would take California far beyond standards being discussed in revision of the federal Clean Air Act.

The plan would force retooling of assembly lines to produce 1.5 million cleaner light vehicles for California and probably stimulate similar emission controls and sales of such vehicles elsewhere.

The staff of the state Air Resources Board (ARB) presented the plan in a "progress report" on drafting regulations due next September. Board officials said they expect the nine-member group to approve a final draft containing the severe emissions cuts. Board approval would make the changes law.

In a statement, the Western States Petroleum Association called the proposal "the most comprehensive, long-range and technology-forcing regulation ever proposed by ARB staff."

Like other industry groups at an ARB meeting here today, the association supported action to reduce the nation's worst smog in southern California but suggested that the board allow adjustments if technological advances in fuels and engines do not keep pace.

California air-quality officials contend that tougher standards will help to accelerate research on new fuels and engines and have promised to reconsider any regulations that prove technically impossible.

Richard Ayres, chairman of the National Clean Air Coalition called the proposal "a message to Congress, which has been vulnerable to the arguments of industry about the technological feasibility of those standards."

Hydrocarbons and nitrogen oxides released from tailpipes transform in sunlight to ozone, the main constituent of smog and a severe respiratory irritant. Carbon monoxide is produced by incomplete combustion of gasoline and causes pulmonary problems.

Current federal rules on exhaust emissions require that new automobiles put no more than 0.41 grams per mile (gpm) of hydrocarbons into the air. California has adopted standards for 1993 of 0.25 gpm for hydrocarbons and 0.4 gpm for nitrogen oxides.

On the federal level, a proposal awaiting House committee approval would require that standards of 0.25 gpm for hydrocarbons and 0.4 gpm for nitrogen oxides be phased in between 1993 and 1998.

A second phase again halving the standards for hydrocarbons and nitrogen oxides and halving current carbon-monoxide standards would take effect in 2003 unless the Environmental Protection Agency determined that the reductions are unnecessary or infeasible.

In the Senate, the Energy and Public Works Committee passed and sent to the floor a bill requiring the same reductions. But the first phase would go into effect for 1993 models and the second in 2000 without EPA analysis.

The Bush administration has proposed only one phase of reductions and a program of alternative fuels in the most polluted cities in the latter half of the decade.

According to the California plan, at least 10 percent of new vehicles in 1994 through 1996 would have to meet a hydrocarbon standard of 0.125 gpm when fueled with conventional gasoline. These are known as "transitional low-emission vehicles."

Starting in 1997, these vehicles, which board staff members said probably would be sold mostly to businesses with automobile fleets, would be replaced with "low-emission vehicles" (LEVs) emitting only .075 gpm of hydrocarbons and 0.2 gpm of nitrogen oxides.

In 1997, 25 percent of new cars sold in California would have to be LEVs, with that number increasing by 25 percent each year until it encompasses a maximum of 98 percent of all new cars in 2000.

In 1995, manufacturers also would have to begin selling "ultra-low-emission vehicles" (ULEVs), which produce no more than .04 gpm of hydrocarbons. The proposal calls for ULEV sales to reach 2 percent in 2000 and 15 percent in

2003, with LEV sales declining to 85 percent.

The ULEV requirement, the plan said, "would help to facilitate greater production of electric vehicles or hybrid-electric vehicles."

Joseph C. Calhoun, assistant director of automotive emission control at General Motors, said his company will contend that the proposed standards are "infeasible" under current technology but said the industry "will make a major effort" to comply if the board passes the regulations.

The plan emphasizes incentives to encourage development of clean-

er fuels such as methanol, natural gas and liquefied petroleum gas and of better emission-control devices such as electrically heated catalysts.

The plan would allow a company to accumulate "credits" if it sold more LEVs than required and to sell these credits to other manufacturers who had not reached the LEV standard. A manufacturer who sold more ULEVs than required could use the credits to make up for deficient LEV sales.

Fuel suppliers would be required to provide improved forms of gasoline or other fuels. The report in-

dicated that the staff will propose immediate improvements in gasoline, including removal of benzene and other refinements being marketed here by ARCO as "EC-1," a cleaner gasoline for older cars.

Board spokesman Bill Sessa said tests on some Ford, Chevrolet and Nissan automobiles show many of the proposals are feasible. He said the staff is convinced that increasing environmental consciousness and skillful promotion would create a market for the cleaner cars.

Staff writer Michael Weisskopf in Washington contributed to this report.

E pluribus, plures

Without leadership from Washington, the states set the environmental agenda for the nation

Are you sick of inhaling the gasoline fumes wafting from service stations? You'll breathe easier in the Northeast, where eight states have decreed that only a new "clean" gasoline can be sold. Fed up with utility plants that spew out the ingredients of acid rain? Move to Wisconsin or Minnesota, which strictly limit such emissions. Worried about radiation leaking from a nuclear power station? You'll sleep easier in Illinois, where the nuclear monitoring program surpasses any federal effort.

A new age of environmental federalism has dawned. In a stunning switch, the states are no longer merely implementing federal standards but are setting the environmental agenda. Passing more—and more stringent—controls on pollution than Congress ever considered, states and cities are protecting ground water, recycling garbage, mandating "clean" fuels and reducing acid rain. Every state now regulates the emission of toxic chemicals into the air; the city of Philadelphia alone has set standards for 99 toxics, while the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has issued only seven. The states are forging ahead on their own because Congress and the White House can't or

won't champion meaningful environmental reform—even on issues such as the greenhouse effect that have causes and consequences far beyond any state's borders. "Congress and the executive branch have been totally paralyzed," says New York state environmental commissioner Thomas Jorling. "We simply can't afford to wait."

Although the Founding Fathers did not foresee global warming or toxic waste, their blueprint for power sharing allows states to green their piece of America. Amendment 10 of the Bill of Rights reserves to the states any powers not specifically assigned to the federal government. Many of the 50 are exploiting that authority to the fullest:

■ Since 1968 California has had stricter tailpipe-emission standards on vehicles than the national norm. In August the governors of New York, New Jersey and the six New England states agreed to adopt the current California standards by 1993. "This initiative reflects the complete sloth of the federal government," says Connecticut environmental commissioner Leslie Carothers. "It's a response to a vacuum at the federal level." Now carmakers will have to make more clean vehicles. Why haven't they done so voluntarily? The higher price tag would give manufacturers of cheaper, dirtier cars a competitive edge.

■ In 1985 Oregon required communities of more than 4,000 residents to offer recycling of paper, glass and cans. In Minnesota, a bill passed in September calls for recycling between 25 and 35 percent of the state's garbage and for aggressive attempts to find markets for the recycled trash. Legislation to address the garbage crisis is moving nowhere fast in Congress.

■ Last year the eight Northeastern states mandated that only low-volatility gasoline, which does not cause as much air pollution, be sold within their borders. California did the same in 1971. After threatening to pre-empt the states' rule, the EPA announced that it would issue the same re-

Going for the green: Working an organic farm in California

SUDHIR-SIPA



Growing fruit the old-fashioned way: Spraying for insects in a Pennsylvania orchard

LARRY LEFEVER—GRANT HEILMAN





JOHN ELK III—BRUCE COLEMAN

Crossing boundaries: *North Carolina forest damaged by acid rain*

quirement nationally by next summer.

■ Vermont, Irvine, Calif., and Newark, N.J., have voted to ban CFCs, chemicals that destroy the planet's protective ozone layer. (CFCs are used in air conditioning, the manufacture of blown plastic foam and as solvents.) Austin, Texas, Minneapolis, Denver and Cambridge, Mass., are considering similar bans. The United States is committed to only a 50 percent cut in CFCs by 1998. That level will still eat away so much of the ozone layer that cases of skin cancer and immune disorders are expected to soar, say physicians.

■ To control acid rain, Wisconsin requires utilities to cut sulfur dioxide emissions 50 percent from their 1980 levels by 1993. Minnesota capped sulfur-dioxide emissions from its two main power plants in 1986, and Massachusetts just passed a similar law. "This bill is a direct result of the lack of EPA action," says Marjorie Malloy of the Massachusetts environmental-affairs department. An acid-rain bill may finally pass Congress next year—nearly a decade after a version was first introduced.

Now California has started on the most ambitious effort ever to protect the environment. If its backers collect the requisite 372,178 valid signatures, California voters will decide next November on a far-ranging initiative drafted by Assemblyman Tom Hayden and a coalition of environmental groups. The proposition would phase out cancer-causing pesticides by 1995, impose stringent health-based standards on the discharge of toxic pollutants into state waters and forbid oil-drilling leases in coastal

waters except in a national energy crisis. The proposition would also eliminate CFCs by 1997 and reduce emissions of carbon dioxide (CO₂) 20 percent by the year 2000, 40 percent by 2010.

The CO₂ provisions are the most dramatic example of how the states are taking more of a global view than Washington is. The greenhouse effect, a global warming caused by CO₂ and other gases in the atmosphere, may well be the single most serious environmental threat. Now, legislators more accustomed to passing sewer bills are signing on to the greenhouse campaign. New York has set a goal of reducing CO₂ emissions 20 percent by 2010, by mandating more energy-efficient buildings, cars and appliances and encouraging switching away from the fossil fuels that emit CO₂. New Jersey's Global Climate Initiative, announced last month by Gov. Thomas Kean, calls for reducing emissions of greenhouse gases through energy conservation and planting trees, which suck up carbon dioxide. In contrast, the White House remains skeptical that the greenhouse threat is real. In an echo of the Reagan administration's refusal to control acid rain, the Bush White House prefers merely to study the greenhouse threat, not act on it.

How is it that Trenton and Sacramento can lead the way on global environmental issues but Washington can't even start marching? Follow the money. In Congress, senators from states with high-sulfur coal block acid-rain bills; representatives from Detroit block controls on car emissions, since such reforms would cost their districts



MICHAEL GRECCO—PICTURE GROUP

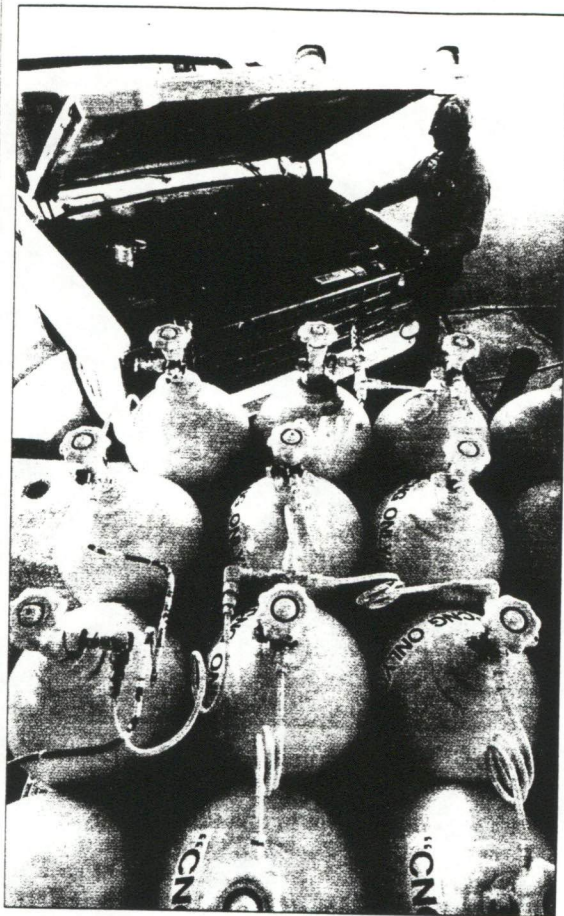
Export: *Pollution rides the winds*

jobs and dollars. In addition, industry lobbies such as the Motor Vehicle Manufacturers Association and the American Petroleum Institute are stronger in the halls of Congress than in state capitols. "The chemical industries don't have public opinion on their side," says Bruce Baker of Wisconsin's Department of Natural Resources. "State legislators are much more attuned than Congress to what the public is saying." Environmental politics is like other politics—local. "When people have a hazardous-waste dump in their backyard, they don't call the White House," says John DeVillars, head of the Massachusetts environmental department. "They call the statehouse."

The statehouses have become laboratories for creative approaches to preserving the planet. "We have been more innovative and taken more risks," says Texas Land Commissioner Gary Mauro, "coming up with solutions that could never have originated in Washington." Texas now requires that 90 percent of state vehicles, public buses and some school buses convert to compressed natural gas (CNG) by 1998. Compared with gasoline, CNG produces half the poisonous carbon monoxide, 40 percent of the hydrocarbons and 30 to 50 percent less carbon dioxide, the chief greenhouse gas. Converting your basic Chevy to burn CNG costs between \$1,200 and \$2,200 (about \$3,000 for a bus). A suitcase-size cylinder to hold CNG must be installed into the trunk of a car or underneath a bus; a converter that resembles a carburetor fits onto the engine. The vehicle performs as well on CNG as it does on gasoline. Don't expect to see a national CNG program any time soon, though. When Congress began considering Bush's proposal to require that several million new cars each year burn a "clean" fuel like methanol or CNG, the White House sent lawmakers mixed signals about whether the clean-fuels provision was expendable. Now Congress is mired in debates over alternative fuels.

Living lab: States have shown that environmental reform can be technically feasible and economically sound. Take pesticides. The conventional wisdom is that, without chemicals, the American farm will have the output of a Russian collective. Farm-chemicals groups warn that the pesticides section of the California initiative would cost the state \$10 billion in lost agricultural output as well as 200,000 farm jobs. Some farmers haven't gotten the message. Many are going natural, using bacteria to give tomato horn worms the flu, spraying copper and oil to combat peach-leaf curl and planting "cover crops" which, plowed under, replace chemical fertilizers. Last year brothers Glen and Ron Anderson turned their adjacent almond orchards into a living laboratory. Glen, 54, kept chemical use to a minimum; Ron spent thousands of dollars on the usual polysyllabic arsenal. Even so, there was virtually no difference in the amount of insect damage on the two farms, nor in the net return per acre after two harvests.

Now states may be victims of their own success. Pressured by industries frantic about having to meet dozens of different standards, the federal government is trying to pre-empt some state regulations. (It has constitutional power to regulate anything in interstate commerce.) Washington state, for instance, places no limits on the liability of companies responsible for oil spills, but proposed federal legislation would cap liability. And last month President George Bush proposed allowing feder-



Clean driving: Texas mandates natural-gas vehicles

al regulations to override stricter state controls on pesticides in some cases. Business is all for that: it's a lot easier to meet one national standard than 50 different specifications. Argues Jeffrey Nedelman of the Grocery Manufacturers of America, "We're unaware of any medical reason why people in one state need food manufactured differently than people elsewhere in the country." Since federal laws tend to be weaker than states', environmental groups and state officials are livid about pre-emption. "Unless and until the federal government gets its act together, what justification can there be to take away the power of the people of California to protect themselves?" fumes attorney Al Meyerhoff of the Natural Resources Defense Council.

Ideally, states' environmental leadership would inspire not pre-emption but imitation. The states' experience shows that manufacturers (despite their dire warnings) can meet stricter car standards, for instance: Detroit has no trouble supplying California with clean cars, and buyers don't balk at the extra \$200 or so they cost. Congress may finally have noticed. Last month a subcommittee voted unanimously to make the California car rules apply to all 50 states; the bill is now before

the full committee. Similarly, the states' experience with acid-rain controls undermines arguments that such measures would push electricity rates sky-high: the sulfur dioxide controls in Minnesota, achieved by switching from high-sulfur Illinois coal to low-sulfur Western coal, haven't raised utility bills at all. Acid-rain legislation will probably be ready for Bush's signature next year.

Reluctant pioneers: If the new environmental federalism is so successful, why bother with Congress? For one thing, some citizens get left behind. In the South, legislatures are loath to be pioneers. Few Southerners regard the environment as a hot-button issue; rather, "there seems to be a feeling that environmental legislation gets in the way of economic development, where we have lagged behind the rest of the country," says Chuck McGrady of the Sierra Club's Georgia chapter. Another problem is that no state will be free of pollutants until every one cleans up its act. Minnesota now gets more than 90 percent of its acid-rain emissions from other states. Finally, some states' "environmental" laws can be shaped more by local expediency than concern for nature. Nebraska this year passed a law requiring that all diapers sold in the state be biodegradable by 1993. It turns out that biodegradable diapers are made with corn starch—from Nebraska's namesake grain. That's why even proponents of states' rights wish Washington would enlist in the pollution wars. "States have to take the lead if anything is to be done," says Tom Hayden, "but it's no substitute for federal policy."

Even if the environment receives more attention at the national level, states are not about to relinquish their newfound ecological consciousness. Instead, they are trying to organize and strengthen their efforts. Minnesota Gov. Rudy Perpich is pushing for the creation of an Environmental Compact of the States, which would serve as a vehicle in which state officials could build a consensus on key environmental problems and coordinate ways to address them. So far, six states have signed on. With or without the help of Congress and the White House, America may yet clean up its act.

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