

WRITING TO YOUR CONGRESSPERSON

What's the Best Method?

- **Email**
In today's technologically savvy world, sending an email may be a better choice than writing a letter. **But be sure to personalize your email** – pre-written bulk emails are common now, so the more personal you can be, the more likely you are to bring the issue to the congressperson's attention and receive a response. Follow up your email with a call to your legislator's office if you haven't received a response.
- **Old-Fashioned Mail**
A physical letter is also a good choice because it shows the most effort on your part, and therefore a high level of concern. Stacks of letters to a legislator highlight the importance of a single issue to their constituency.

How Do I Write It?

General outline for writing a letter to your congressperson: 1) Mention some key findings in linking certain chemicals to asthma and reproductive harm. 2) Explain what we're asking for: full disclosure of ingredients on the product label, and removal of chemicals from household cleaners until they can be proven safe. 3) Write about why this issue matters to you.

- **Write on a personal level**
You are writing this letter because health, safety, and the environment matters to you, so try to make that apparent. You can explain why you decided to host a Green Cleaning Party, or tell a story about how toxins have affected you, your friends, or your family. It's okay to use an informal tone in your letter if it helps you to get your point across. If you're using one of our sample letters, feel free to add some of your own words or change it to fit your experience.
- **Be brief**
Legislators and their staffers receive a lot of letters, so try to stick to one page!
- **Ask them to take action regarding toxic chemicals in your cleaning products**
If there is a specific bill in progress, mention it and ask your congressperson to support it. If not, suggest that they introduce legislation to regulate chemicals in household products.
- **Ask for a response**
This ensures that legislators are paying attention to your voice. Include your name and address in the letter, because envelopes are often thrown away. If you haven't received a response, call your Congressperson's office to follow up.
- **Include printed materials on toxic chemicals**
Including recent and relevant news clippings from newspapers or magazines demonstrates that the issue is important to the public. Keep a watch for relevant news articles – check the “news” section on the WVE website for links to recent articles.

Where Do I Send It?

- Look up your Representative's contact information at www.house.gov
- Look up your Senator's contact information at www.senate.gov
- Call your local elections office for your congressperson's contact information