Janine Hamner
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April 19, 2006

Mr. Bob Fletcher
Division chief
California Air Resources Board-
Stationary Source Division
1001 I Street
P.O. Box 2815
Sacramento, CA 95812

Dear Mr. Fletcher,

I am writing to express my great concern over the Air Resources Board (ARB) staff's proposed amendments to the Airborne Toxic Control Measure (ATCM) for perchloroethylene in dry cleaning. There is ample scientific data showing that perchloroethylene ("perc") is very harmful to human health, and dry cleaners using this chemical pose an unacceptable health risk to their employees, their customers and our neighborhoods. The control measure that the ARB has proposed is not enough to protect Californians from this toxic chemical.

I urge you to replace the current proposal with an expeditious phase-out of perc in dry cleaning.

Perchloroethylene is known to the state of California to cause cancer. Also, the non-cancer health effects include headaches, dizziness, nausea, vomiting, fainting, fluid buildup in the lungs, and damage to the central nervous system, kidneys, liver and reproductive system.

ARB estimates that about 3 million pounds of perc are released into California's air each year by the dry cleaning industry alone. Based on EPA data, perc is one of the top 10 most toxic air contaminants in California.

I am in favor of alternatives to the use of the toxic chemical perc, such as wet cleaning. Professional wet cleaning uses only water and non-toxic biodegradable detergents that are environmentally friendly, less costly and may even save energy. Wet cleaning is effective in washing delicate garments but does not melt buttons or ornamentation on garments.

Furthermore, AB 998, legislation that took effect in January 2003, directed ARB to apply a fee on the perc used in dry cleaning, use some of the funds collected to establish a demonstration program of non-toxic, non-smog forming alternatives, and use the additional funds for grants to cleaners which are making the transition to these safer alternatives.

Unfortunately, more than two years after this law took effect, ARB has not made sufficient progress to implement the program. Coupled with the weak Dry Cleaning ATCM, this raises serious questions about ARB's commitment to pollution prevention and to the protection of public health from toxic chemicals.

To protect workers, customers and the environment, please phase out perc in dry cleaning.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Janine Hamner