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**The New York 2007 “Dirty Dozen” Awards to Polluters  
and New York State Government Agencies**

Today the Albany-based Citizens’ Environmental Coalition unveiled the recipients of its fourth annual “Dirty Dozen” Awards\* to various polluters and state agencies in New York.

The “winners” were selected by a committee based on the severity of the threat they pose and the unwillingness of the polluters and government officials to adequately address the situation.

The Canton-based Fluoride Action Network Pesticides Project nominated one of the “winners”: the NY Department of Environmental Conservation’s Division of Natural Resources under the Pataki administration.

The FAN Pesticides Project nominated the Pataki-era Division of Natural Resources because they have withheld critical funding from the NY State Wildlife Pathology Unit for over three years. The Unit is headed by the state’s wildlife pathologist, Ward Stone. Stone’s unit was allotted \$250,000 by the state Legislature to perform general toxicology tests on suspicious wildlife deaths. However, this money has been diverted to other areas outside of the Wildlife Pathology Unit for over three years.

According to Ward Stone: “For 2006 we have over 600 cases where toxicology samples were taken but not tested, and several thousand backed up beyond that from 2005, 2004, and 2003.”

Without a “general” toxicology funding budget, Ward Stone has been unable to perform one of the primary jobs of a wildlife pathologist which is the testing of suspicious causes of wildlife deaths (fish, mammals, birds, amphibians, and reptiles). Without this information, the potential for contamination from industry’s toxic chemicals, pesticide users and manufacturers, and outbreaks of botulism and disease, as just some examples, go undetected with absolutely no chance of preventive measures put in place.

For the last three years, the impacts of polluters and pesticides on the death of wildlife have not been assessed.

While the FAN Pesticides Project works on fluoride and fluorinated pesticides, the issues involved with the Wildlife Pathology Unit stretch across the spectrum to all groups concerned with toxic and hazardous chemicals, as well as public health, in New York State.

According to Ellen Connett, Director of the FAN Pesticide Project: “The Spitzer administration is bringing unprecedented talent to the New York’s Department of Environmental Conservation. We can only hope that Ward Stone’s unit will be funded quickly and appropriately to allow it to get on with its important work.”

\* For a list of the “Winners” see <http://www.fluorideaction.org/pesticides/cec.dirty.dozen.2007.pdf>