

# Tory plans to better environment

I would like to take this opportunity to update you on some of our environmental plans.

As I have previously written, last October we introduced our Clean Air Act in the House of Commons. This legislation is still in front of the House. We are currently working with the New Democrats to see if we can agree to amendments that will strengthen our environmental plan so as to secure their support for this important piece of legislation and ensure its passage in the House of Commons.

However, the Clean Air Act is only one part of our overall environmental plan.

Last fall we also introduced our Chemicals Management Plan. This is a tough new \$300-million plan to curb the use of toxic chemicals in Canada. Our government will prohibit chemicals known to be particularly toxic, while other chemicals will be tightly controlled.

The plan, which will be implemented over four years, focuses on chemicals that are harmful to human health and the environment. For example, substances found in stain repellents and flame retardants will be affected by the new plan, as could the chemicals found in ordinary products like plastic bottles or the coating on kitchen utensils. While the chemicals in many products we use daily don't pose an immediate threat, some could be harmful if allowed to accumulate in the body over a long period.

Rick Smith, who heads the Canadian advocacy group Environmental Defence, applauded our government's plans and said, "It's a great step to bring us up to the level of the kind of programs we're already seeing around the world."

**Michael Chong**



While banning toxic chemicals will be expensive, it is vital to the health of Canadians. Our plan is the first of its kind, going beyond initiatives in Europe and the United States. We have shown leadership on this file by categorizing 23,000 "legacy" chemicals, which were introduced to Canada in the 1980s, before the government started doing strict risk assessments of new chemicals in 1994.

Under this new plan, our government will regulate some of the legacy chemicals we have categorized. Our plan will also re-evaluate the safety of 200 older types of pesticides to ensure they meet standards. As well, our government will also strengthen the list of contaminants under the Food and Drug Act, and we will also make disclosure of ingredients mandatory on cosmetic labels.

These are initiatives that will have a real impact on our environment and our health.

For more information on our government's Chemicals Management Plan, please go to <http://www.chemicalsubstanceschimiques.gc.ca>

As always, I can be reached at [chongm@parl.gc.ca](mailto:chongm@parl.gc.ca) or at 866-878 5556.

—Michael Chong is the MP for Wellington-Halton Hills

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