



MASSACHUSETTS BREAST CANCER COALITION

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URGENT CALL TO ACTION FOR TOXIC-FREE DRINKING WATER

Seeking funding for Silent Spring Institute's water research on Cape Cod and Southeastern, MA

The House of Representatives 2013 budget was recently released, and Silent Spring Institute was *not* included. The Massachusetts Breast Cancer Coalition has requested \$375,000 in state funding for sister organization, Silent Spring Institute, to expand their research on drinking water on Cape Cod and in Southeastern Massachusetts. Representative Sarah Peake will be filing an amendment for the inclusion of this \$375,000.

Cheryl Osimo, Founder of Silent Spring Institute and Executive Director of the Massachusetts Breast Cancer Coalition, says, "Now is a critical time to direct our advocacy efforts to support our sister organization, Silent Spring Institute. This funding is crucial to the expansion of water research to investigate contaminants of emerging concern that have been linked to breast cancer and other diseases."

Silent Spring Institute was founded by the Massachusetts Breast Cancer Coalition in 1994 to study extraordinarily high breast cancer incidence rates on Cape Cod and is the only organization dedicated to research about breast cancer prevention. Their research has been cited in federal reports by the Presidents Cancer Panel, Institute of Medicine and Federal Interagency Breast Cancer and Environment Research Coordinating Committee.

Currently, there is a lack of information about the levels of contaminants released into groundwater from conventional and alternative wastewater treatment systems. Endocrine disrupting chemicals (EDCs) are generating increased concern because they interfere with the activity of natural hormones. Previous work by Silent Spring Institute shows that EDCs, pharmaceuticals, industrial pollutants, and consumer product chemicals are present in drinking water, groundwater, and ponds on Cape Cod. Of particular concern are potential links between EDCs and biological effects such as breast cancer and other hormonally influenced disorders. Now is a critical time to address wastewater contamination, since the wastewater management



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decisions that are currently being considered on Cape Cod may have implications for drinking water quality for years to come.

If the budget amendment is passed, Silent Spring Institute will be able to:

1. Evaluate inputs of wastewater contaminants -- including pharmaceuticals, consumer product chemicals, and hormones -- into the Cape Cod aquifer under current conditions and proposed changes to wastewater infrastructure.
2. Test for endocrine disruption in fish from ponds on Cape Cod and Southeastern Massachusetts in order to evaluate the presence of EDCs from septic systems and other wastewater sources. Previous studies conducted in North America have shown that environmentally relevant levels of hormones in natural waters have severely impaired fish reproduction.

“If we want to protect the public health from carcinogens and endocrine disrupting chemicals, there must be room in the budget for Silent Spring Institute,” Cheryl says. “It’s the only research organization whose mission it is to investigate the link between the environment and women’s health and the only one studying these chemicals on Cape Cod and Southeastern Massachusetts.”

On behalf of their sister organization, the Massachusetts Breast Cancer Coalition strongly urges Massachusetts citizens to contact their State Representatives and ask them to sign on to Representative Peake’s amendment for Silent Spring Institute to expand their research on drinking water throughout Massachusetts. Go to www.malegislature.gov/People/Search to find your legislators contact information.

For more information about the Massachusetts Breast Cancer Coalition and Silent Spring Institute, please visit www.mbcc.org and www.silentspring.org. All questions or further information can be directed to Cheryl Osimo at 508-246-3047 or cosimo@mbcc.org.