Citizens for a Better Environment Encyclopedia Article

Citizens for a Better Environment

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Citizens for a Better Environment

Citizens for a Better Environment (CBE) is an organization that works to reduce exposure to toxic substances in land, water, and air. Founded in 1971, CBE has 30,000 members and operates with a $1.8 million budget. The organization also maintains regional offices in Minnesota and in Wisconsin.

CBE staff and members focus on research, public information, and advocacy to reduce toxic substances. They also meet with policy-makers on state, regional, and national levels. A staff of scientists, researchers, and policy analysts evaluate specific problems brought to the attention of CBE, testify at legislative and regulatory agency hearings, and file lawsuits in state and federal courts. The organization also conducts public education programs, and provides technical assistance to local residents and organizations that attempt to halt toxic chemical exposures.

The Chicago office won a Supreme Court decision against the construction of an incinerator in a low-income neighborhood in the Chicago area and is researching the issues on volume-based **garbage** for suburban Chicago areas. In Minnesota, the staff has developed a "Good Neighbor" program of agreements between community groups, environmental activists, businesses, and industries along the Mississippi River to reduce **pollution** of the river. In Wisconsin, **transportation** issues under study include selling ride-sharing credits to meet **Clean Air Act** standards. Selling and buying of credits between and among individuals, businesses, and polluting industries has become a lucrative way for polluters to continue their practices. CBE is attempting to close the legislative loopholes that allows this practice to continue.

The Chicago office maintains a library of books, reports, and articles on environmental pollution issues. Publications include CBE's *Environmental Review*, a quarterly journal on the public health effects of pollution; it includes updates of CBE activities and research projects.

Resources

Organizations

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