



## VERMONT PUBLIC INTEREST RESEARCH GROUP

1972

- **VPIRG is Born!**
- **Downhill in Warren** VPIRG's first report assessed the impact of ski area development on members of the community and received national attention in **Time Magazine**
- **VT Consumers Health Conference is Held:** VPIRG sponsors the event.

1973

- **Bottle Deposit Law** withstands lobbying pressure in Montpelier and is implemented with VPIRG's support
- **Nothing to Smile About** VPIRG reports on children's dental health in Vermont and proposes plan

1974

- **Tooth Fairy Program** enacted, ensuring proper dental care for all Vermont children
- **Prescription Drugs:** VPIRG issues second statewide Prescription Drug Survey
- **Hearing Aids for the Elderly:** VPIRG publishes and distributes a Hearing Aid Buying Guide to the Elderly

1975

- **Up in Smoke:** "The Myth of Clean Air in Vermont" Report released
- **Roll Call Report:** VPIRG's first annual report on legislators' voting records
- **Nuclear Plant Construction Law** Vermont passes the nation's first law requiring legislative approval for nuclear plant construction
- **Consumer Fraud in Action** VPIRG critiques the operation of the state's Consumer Fraud Division

1976

- **Frogs in the Faucet** VPIRG report outlines the problems of public drinking water supplies in the state
- **Road Waste on the Roadway** VPIRG reports on hazards of trucking nuclear waste across Southern Vermont
- **X-Rated:** VPIRG reports on the consumer hazards of over-use of X-rays

1977

- **Williston Anti-Sprawl Coalition:** VPIRG works allies with to stop the Pyramid Mall development in Williston
- **Nuclear Waste Disposal Law** Requires legislative approval prior to the disposal of nuclear waste in Vermont



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1978

- **Generic Drug Law** passed, which requires pharmacists to substitute low cost generic drug equivalents
- **Dioxin White Paper** pushes Pesticide Advisory Council to eliminate use of some herbicides with dioxin by-products
- **Utility Advertising Law** requires shareholders, not ratepayers, to pay for utilities' lobbying and political advertising

1979

- **The Final Shutdown** White paper on decommissioning of Vermont Yankee argues for state planning to deal with the costs of plant decommissioning
- **Certificate of Need:** Passage of the VPIRG-supported health cost containment bill ensures scrutiny of need and cost effectiveness for proposed health care facility expansions

1980

- **Uranium Mining Ban** requires legislative approval before uranium mining can take place in Vermont
- **Endangered Species Bill** Strengthens Vermont's endangered species law and qualifies the state for federal funds for endangered species protection

1981

- **Guide to Hazards in the Workplace** reports on toxic exposures on the job
- **VT Clean Air Coalition:** VPIRG forms group with state allies to push for passage of strong federal clean air legislation

1982

- **More Road Waste on the Roadway** exposes secret plan to ship nuclear waste through Vermont, which leads to nuclear waste transport restrictions in Vermont
- **Conservation Loan Program** establishes new law allowing VHFA to set up low-interest loan program for moderate-income homeowners for energy conservation retrofits

1983

- **Radioactive Waste Transport:** Bans 14 Vermont communities restrict the transport of nuclear waste through their towns following VPIRG's discovery of secret nuclear shipments
- **Regulation of Herbicide Spraying** Vermont issues improved notification requirements for spraying utility rights-of-way

1984

- **New Car Lemon Law** VPIRG initiative protects new car buyers from having to absorb the costs of defective new automobiles
- **No Rate Hike** Continental Telephone withdraws rate hike

1985

- **Mini-Superfund Law:** Taxes industry generating toxic materials to clean waste and help handle toxics emergencies
- **Community Right-To-Know Law:** Citizens and local officials can get information about toxics used in their communities
- **Defeat of High Level Radioactive Waste Dump** VPIRG leads the charge and defeats federal DOE plans to site a national nuclear waste dump in Vermont

1986

- **Non-Pesticide Alternatives for Rights-of-Way** Public Service Board allows residents to prevent utilities from spraying pesticides under powerlines near their homes
- **Expanded Tooth Fairy Program:** More Vermonters covered under this innovative program
- **Vermont Lifeline Rates Law:** Expands assistance to maintain phone services for low-income & elderly Vermonters

1987

- **Vicon Electric Rate Hike Defeated** VPIRG successfully challenges attempt to pass through exorbitant rates from Rutland's Vicon incinerator and saves CVPS customers \$46 million
- **Comprehensive Solid Waste & Recycling Law** emphasizes waste reduction and recycling throughout the state

1988

- **Bottle Bill Law Expands to Liquor** Increasing recycling to include wine coolers, liquor bottles and juice bottles
- **Energy Efficiency and Least-Cost Planning:** VPIRG initiative leads to Public Service Board investigation of energy saving programs

1989

- **Ozone Protection Law** bans major uses of ozone-depleting CFCs in auto air conditioners and other uses
- **Vermont Yankee Economic Study:** Finds that early shutdown of Vermont Yankee could save ratepayers up to \$1 billion
- **Toxics Release Report** Inventories release of 4 million pounds of toxics per year in Vermont, suggests programs to reduce toxic use



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1990

- **Global Warming Strategies for Vermont** Report details how Vermont should respond to global warming
- **Ban on Unregulated Disposal of Nuclear Waste** Protects Vermont from new federal rules to exempt some radioactive wastes from regulation and allow disposal in municipal landfills

1991

- **Toxics Use Reduction** Innovative VPIRG initiative creates program for industry to reduce toxic hazards in Vermont
- **Paint & Battery Laws** require manufacturers to be responsible for the removal of these hazardous products from the waste stream

1992

- **Energy Efficiency Law** sets efficiency standards for light bulbs and state buildings
- **Fair Credit Reporting Law** requires credit reporting agencies in Vermont to provide consumers with one free copy of their credit report per year and protects consumer privacy by requiring consumer permission prior to the release of a personal credit history

1993

- **Clean Air:** VPIRG initiatives to reduce air pollution and to monitor the levels of toxic air pollution are established
- **Vicon Incinerator Shut Down** in Rutland, a major VPIRG victory
- **Lead Poisoning Prevention Law** Calls for screening and testing for Vermont children under age six and establishes lead abatement training programs

1994

- **Powering Vermont** VPIRG's campaign for clean energy airs a half-hour film on Public Access TV, addressing clean energy concerns
- **Incinerator Block** The state places a 5-year moratorium on the construction & licensing of trash incinerators.
- **EPA Grant – VPIRG Cleanup Oversight:** VPIRG studies the health and environmental effects of the Browning-Ferris Superfund site in Rockingham

1995

- **RBGH Labeling Law Defended & Implemented** Requires all dairy products produced using synthetic bovine growth hormone to carry consumer labels
- **VPIRG Warns of Mercury Pollution** As a result of publicity generated in part by VPIRG, L.A. Gear agreed to a voluntary recall of sneakers containing a mercury switch to activate flashing lights



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1996

- **VPIRG Poll:** Movement for Electoral Reform Supported. VPIRG commissions a poll conducted by the University of Vermont Center for Rural Studies and finds strong support for reform
- **Utility Restructuring** VPIRG intervenes in one of the biggest cases ever to protect Vermont's residential ratepayers and the environment

1997

- **Campaign Finance Reform Law:** VPIRG instigates legislation which limits campaign spending, reduces the size of campaign contributions, limits out-of-state money and holds candidates accountable for independent expenditures spent on their behalf
- **Aerial Spraying of Herbicides Banned** for forestry purposes, VPIRG supported bill signed into law.

1998

- **Mercury Labeling and Recycling Law** VPIRG-supported Law requires municipalities to provide for recycling mercury-containing products, bans disposal in landfills
- **Medical Waste Disposal:** VPIRG shuts down an unsafe medical waste disposal facility
- **Frog Survey** VPIRG members find deformed frogs in 30 of the 60 Vermont towns surveyed

1999

- **Energy Efficiency Utility Law:** Nation's first utility created to reduce power consumption
- **Factory Farm Coalition** VPIRG leads coalition to promote family farming by regulating factory farms
- **Spreading of Toxic Sludge in Vermont** Report shows polluting practices & suggests solutions
- **No rBGH:** VPIRG instigates campaign to get rBGH-induced milk out of schools

2000

- **Healthy Schools Bill** VPIRG initiative to reduce and eliminate toxic exposures of children in school environments is passed
- **First Annual Pesticide-Free Lawn Campaign** In support of healthy lawn care for healthy communities, VPIRG distributes lawn signs announcing "You can touch my grass! No toxic chemicals used to maintain this lawn"

2001

- **Let the Swimmer Beware:** Report shows on inadequate beach water testing
- **Public Eye:** VPIRG hosts videotaped coverage of State House events on website
- **Wilderness Preservation** Summer Canvass collects 9,000 signatures to support Wilderness in the Green Mountain National Forest

2002

- **Tobacco Tax** Raised to restore cuts to state health care budget & discourage teenage smoking
- **Hidden Hazards** VPIRG report exposes toxins in polymer clays & children's exposure levels released nationally
- **Campaign Finance Reform Law:** US Court of Appeals upholds major provisions of landmark 1997 Vermont law

2003

- **VPIRG Activists Set Record:** For most emails sent to the Public Service Board supporting increase in Efficiency Vermont funding.
- **Mercury Crisis in Vermont Fish** VPIRG report states that mercury contamination is at record levels at majority of fishing spots in Vermont
- **Clean Energy for Vermont** Report published, showing that by 2025, VT could provide most of its energy needs with renewables & increased efficiency

2004

- **Prescription Importation Bill Signed** Vermont joins a group of several states whose citizens can purchase prescription drugs from Canada.
- **Vermont Senate Passes Clean Power Act:** It works to increase clean local power generation while decreasing overall VT energy usage.

2005

- **Smoke-Free Workplaces** Extended the ban on smoking to include bars and private clubs.
- **Campaign Finance Loophole Closed:** Previous regulations allowed certain independent expenditures to go unregulated. New regulations state that anyone that raises \$500+ to influence the outcome of an election must file a report with the Secretary of State.

2006

- **International Paper Begins Burning Scrap Tires.** VPIRG succeeds in shutting it down in five days.
- **Nukes Need State Approval:** VT becomes the only state to require a nuclear power plant to seek approval from state legislators before extending its operating agreement
- **The "Deliberative Process Privilege"** for executive officials in Vermont is removed, ensuring further transparency in state government

2007

- **Scoring Catamount Health:** "Examining Vermont's Progress Toward an Equitable Health System" released, First in a series of scorecards to evaluate the effectiveness of the Catamount Health Program.
- **VPIRG Hosts Event on Phthalates,** inspiring legislation to address the threat.

2008

- **Affordable Mammogram Access:** Vermont passes a bill to ensure that no resident will have to pay more than \$25 out of pocket for a screening mammogram
- **VPIRG Appointed to Represent the Public Interest** on the Vermont (Electric) System Planning Committee, and was named as a member of Efficiency Vermont's Advisory Board.

2009

- **VPIRG Releases a Report on BPA:** It draws attention to the common chemical linked to reproductive and developmental disorders.
- **Nuke Vote Blocked!** Vermont legislature is blocked from voting on a twenty year extension of Vermont Yankee's operating license
- **Waterways Protections Increased** Legislation passed supporting stricter control over junk yards in Vermont

2010

- **Retire VY As Planned!** Vermont State Senate votes to retire Vermont Yankee when its license expires in 2012
- **VPIRG Energy is launched.** It will go on to become SunCommon, bringing affordable solar power to Vermont's residents.
- **Obama administration Follows Vermont's Lead** Announces new standards for automobile fuel economy and global warming emissions.

2011

- **VPIRG in the State House:** Staff invited to speak at 5 separate bill signing events – the most in VPIRG history
- **Energy Nuclear Tries for a "Do-Over" Vote** in the legislature regarding Vermont Yankee. It is blocked.
- **Clean Energy Bill Passed** eliminates subsidies for heating oil. Lets Vermonters sell their generated clean energy back to the utilities for a fair price. Removes upfront costs to home energy improvements.

2012

- **Don't Frack Vermont:** Vermont becomes the first state in the country to ban fracking.
- **VPIRG Launches its Fellows Program:** Recent college graduates gain opportunities to hone their skills and develop leadership experience.
- **Vermont Yankee Does Not Close.** A Judge rules that the legislature did not have the authority to vote for the plants closure. Decision moves to the Public Service Board.

2013

- **VT Senate Guts Bad Legislation.** Legislation aimed at blocking renewable energy development in the state is gutted.
- **GMO Labelling** Vermont House of Representatives passes historic legislation to protect your right to know if your food contains genetically modified organisms



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2014

- **Vermont Yankee is Closed!**  
The nuclear power plant, brought online the same year as VPIRG's birth, is finally shut down
- **Energy Independent Vermont is Launched:** VPIRG begins its work to put a price on carbon pollution

2015

- **Vermont Wins Round 1 of its GMO-labeling lawsuit:** A judge rejects the food companies' plea to stop Vermont's labeling law from moving forward.
- **Same-Day Voter Registration Passed:** State passes legislation allowing its residents to register to vote on Election Day.  
**Microbeads Banned** from beauty products in the state
- **Climate Change is Real.** Vermont formally recognizes climate change as a threat.

2016

- **Protecting our Pollinators:** Vermont passes legislation to protect pollinators by giving the state the authority to take action against treated article pesticides such as coated seeds.  
**Automatic Voter Registration:** Vermonters are automatically registered as voters when they renew their license, unless they specifically decline to do so.

2017

- **VPIRG Launches Vermont Fights Back:** Following the Election of President Donald Trump, VPIRG launches a campaign against the multi-pronged attack on the public interest coming from D.C.
- **Best. Canvass. Ever.** VPIRG holds its most successful canvass to date, visiting every Vermont town, hiring 127 young people, and knocking on over 110,000 doors.

**We couldn't accomplish all of this without your support.  
Thank you for standing with VPIRG.  
Here's to 45 more years, and then some!**