



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Malcolm Smith

## Senator Malcolm A. Smith Announces New Legislation Banning The Use Of PERC In New York State

MALCOLM A. SMITH June 2, 2007

NEW YORK. - New York State Senate Democratic Leader Malcolm A. Smith today announced legislation prohibiting the use of chlorinated solvents or products containing any chlorinated solvents. The legislation, introduced on Friday in the State Senate, will amend New York State Environmental Conservation Law, phasing out the use of the dangerous chemical in the State by January 1, 2012."

Known as PERC, tetrachloroethene, is a synthetic organic chemical commonly used by dry cleaning, and auto body businesses

"PERC has caused major concerns in my own district and I believe it is appropriate to ban the use of this chemical from the entire state and replace it with healthier and environmentally friendly products," said Senator Smith, who was joined by DEC Commissioner Pete Grannis during the announcement.

If it becomes law, Senator Smith's legislative proposal will mandate the New York State Departments of Health and Environmental Conservation to work closely with producers and users of chlorinated solvents and to establish a program to facilitate the transition from these dangerous chemicals to healthier and environmentally friendly products.

PERC is known to be harmful to humans and animals. It has the potential to affect the nervous system, kidney, liver, and possibly the reproductive system. Its impact on the environment has direct effects on human and animal health.

"Knowing that we have alternatives, why should we wait for a health crisis to take the appropriate measures on this issue, the time to move on this is now," continued the Senator.

Three weeks ago, the New York City Department of Environmental Protection detected an alarming quantity of PERC in the water supply of Cambria Heights, Hollis and St. Albans. As reported by the agency, at some points the levels of contamination reached 13 parts per billion, more than double the amount that triggers an alert from the City's Department of Health.

Senator Craig M. Johnson, the Ranking Member of the Senate Environmental Conservation Committee, said: "Phasing out the use chlorinated solvents is a priority in our fight for clean air and a clean water supply system. While we help our businesses to make the transition to healthier products and educate our residents about the risks involved in using products containing this harmful chemical, we need to pass legislation ensuring that New York will be PERC free by 2012."

State Senator Shirley Huntley said: "This is a matter of common sense. We have safer alternatives to PERC and the government has the responsibility to facilitate a reasonable transition to get rid of this chemical, for the sake of the health of our community. We should stand with Senator Smith in making this a priority."

According to the federal Environmental Protection Agency, people who drink water containing PERC over many years can develop liver problems and may have an increased

risk of cancer. At least as of 2003, according to the New York City Department of Environmental Protection, PERC has been present in our water periodically.

"While we promote and protect small business and businesses in general, we must make sure that the health of all New Yorkers is not put at risk by routinely using products containing PERC.

New York has already prohibited the use of PERC products in newly installed residential laundry facilities, but our citizens are constantly exposed to PERC related chemicals in the air, and water, due to the use of this product by cleaners, auto-body repair shops and other businesses. Let's build a bridge to a healthy New York by getting PERC out of our air and water supply.

"The Federal Government and other states have taken measures to closely monitor the use of PERC and related products but now we should take the leadership in getting rid of this health threat in its entirety," said Senator Smith

Smith made the announcement in front of his district office.

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