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## Issue Paper

Registered Nurses are educated in disease and illness prevention that includes awareness of the factors in our environment that affect the health of the residents of Wisconsin. RNs are employed in many settings and are uniquely suited to identify, communicate and work with others in addressing those environmental hazards that can have an impact on vulnerable populations, at-risk workers and communities.

WNA remains interested in environmental health strategies that support:

1. A safe and healthy work environment for nurses and others.
2. A nursing workplace that uses evidence-based environmentally friendly and safe materials, products, technology, and policies that impact nursing practice.
3. RNs as participants in assessing the quality of the environment in which they practice and live.
4. Disclosure to RNs, other health care workers, patients and communities about exposure to potentially harmful products, chemicals, pollutants, and hazards in a relevant and timely manner.

WNA is interested in the following specific environmental health hazards in which national and state policy are needed to address:

1. Phosphorus runoff from fertilizer causes algae to grow in our water, robbing the water of oxygen, thus impacting the quality of our precious water resource.  
Solution: **Ban fertilizers containing phosphorus.**
2. Mercury is a neurotoxin that impacts the brain and nervous system, kidneys and liver.  
Solution: **Reduce the amount of mercury in products.**
3. Climate change is the result of the build-up of greenhouse gases that act to hold in the sun's radiation and warm the earth's atmosphere. Greenhouse gases include carbon dioxide, methane, and nitrous oxide, among others. Some of these occur naturally, but additional human contributions to greenhouse gas emissions (mostly through the burning of fossil fuels) have caused the warming of the planet to be accelerated, resulting in global climate change and global warming.  
Solution: **Reduce burning of fossil fuels and reduce use of chlorofluorocarbons and other products and practices that produce global warming.**