ENVIRONMENT WASHINGTON'S FRIGHTENING FACTS ABOUT PUGET SOUND

1. An estimated 581,432 pounds of toxic waste has been dumped into Washington waterways as of 2010. 38,926 lbs of these toxic waste were found to be cancer-causing chemicals, 7,603 lbs of them were found to be developmental toxins, and 5,636 lbs of them were found to be reproductive toxins.

2. Current estimates show that Puget Sound receives more than 1 million pounds of toxic chemicals from surface runoff, groundwater seepage, and municipal and wastewater outfall pipes. These contaminants range from oil, grease, and PCB's to metals like copper, lead, and zinc.

3. The endangered Orca whales in Puget Sound are considered to be the most PCB-contaminated mammals on earth.

4. Puget Sound harbor seals are seven times more contaminated by toxic chemicals than Canada's Strait of Georgia harbor seals, which anchor the sound.

5. In 2008, there were 549 streams and rivers that carry poor water quality from stormwater and toxins that were tributaries to Puget Sound.

6. Puget Sound's consistent exposure to toxins and pollutants poses an economic threat on the Sound's $147 million annual commercial and recreational fishing industry. It can also threaten the $9.6 billion dollar tourism industry built around the Sound.

7. Washington State is the nation's leading commercial producer of oysters, clams and mussels and brings in over $100 million in sales annually. Since 1999, over 30 percent of Puget's Sound's shellfish-growing area has been closed due to polluted water that led to contaminated shellfish.

8. On an average day, an estimated 140,000 lbs of toxic chemicals ranging from petroleum to polychlorinated biphenyls PCB enter Puget Sound.

9. Research shows that 30% of chinook salmon spend the entire marine part of their life in Puget Sound, rather than swimming out to sea, due to the sound's increased levels of pollution. Their diets now have elevated levels of toxic chemicals.

10. Phthalates are substances added to plastics that now have growing health concerns. Every year, a total of 9,392 pounds of the phthalate diethyl is permitted to be discharged from sewage treatment plants in the Puget Sound region.