

## New Chair and Four New Members Join INFORM's Board

This summer, we welcomed four new members to INFORM's Board of Directors, while Dennis Krumholz, a four-year veteran, took over as chair. Mr. Krumholz replaces Stephen B. Land, who served ably on the board for nine years, the last two as chair, presiding over a process of strategic planning that positioned INFORM for future growth.

### Dennis J. Krumholz

Dennis Krumholz is chair of the environmental practice group at Riker, Danzig, Sherer, Hyland & Perretti, a law firm in New Jersey. His interest in environmental issues grew out of his tenure as deputy attorney general in New Jersey during the 1970s, representing the state's Department of Environmental Protection. "During that period," he recalls, "landfills were closing in New Jersey and other states, and hazardous waste was an increasing concern throughout the country. I found tackling this important issue so compelling that I decided to stay with the practice of environmental law."



Mr. Krumholz' two-pronged goal as chair of INFORM's board is ensuring our financial and institutional stability and increasing the impact of our work. "INFORM has an excellent series of messages to communicate, and I want to see us attain a higher profile — both

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## INFORM to Oversee Major New Waste Prevention Program in New York City

In June, New York City's last remaining landfill, at Fresh Kills on Staten Island, shut its gates forever. Ever since the facility's closure was first announced, the city's answer to the question of what to do with 11,000 tons of waste generated each day by residents and institutions was mainly to export it. That answer has brought sky-rocketing waste management costs, growing concerns about public health and the environment, and increasing strains on the city's budget. But now INFORM has a rare opportunity to make a direct contribution to helping the city reduce its waste load and improve its fiscal and environmental well-being.

INFORM has been chosen (along with the Council on the Environment of New York City) to launch the city's new Waste Prevention Community Coordinators Program, a unique initiative that gives grassroots organizations responsibility for implementing waste prevention and recycling projects tailored to specific neighborhoods. The three-year, \$6.3 billion program is the brainchild of INFORM and the New York City Waste Prevention Coalition, which worked closely with the City Council to gain support for this initiative during 1999 and 2000. "The program will use intensive education and outreach programs in selected neighborhoods to show how citizens and local businesses can save New York precious dollars through waste prevention and increased recycling," says INFORM senior research associate Alicia Culver. "We hope it eventually serves as a model for cities nationwide."

### The True Costs of Waste

The city's adoption of the community coordinators program was driven primarily by the large increase in disposal costs predicted on the heels of the Fresh Kills closure. As plans advanced to ship city trash to landfills and incinerators in other states, INFORM and the coalition demonstrated, in briefings and testimony before the City Council, that the Dept. of Sanitation's (DOS's) disposal budget was likely to more than double, to \$300 million, when closure was nearly complete in fiscal 2001. "The city can't control the cost per ton of exporting its waste," says Culver, "but with good waste prevention initiatives in place, it *can* control the amount it exports."

Concern about New York's worsening asthma epidemic further increased City Council receptiveness to making waste prevention (and increased recycling) a significant part of the city's waste management plan. Exporting all residential and institutional trash will mean more waste transfer stations and more traffic from polluting garbage trucks. With growing evidence of a link between asthma and children's exposure to diesel exhaust, opposition to the export plan has been fierce — especially in low-income communities, where the majority of existing and proposed waste management facilities are located and asthma rates are high. In this environment, city officials were willing to look at the real ways in which waste prevention could save tax dollars and improve air quality.

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# Letter from the President

## Making Energy a Path to Peace



As Americans seek to respond to and recover from the attacks of September 11, the first order of business is to heal our wounds and work with other nations to bring an end to terrorism. But it is also imperative that we begin the search for long-term solutions that can ensure a peaceful and secure future for our country. This will require a shift in US policies abroad to alleviate some of the conditions the terrorists have used to fuel hostility toward the United States. We must and can address these sources of discontent.

One way is to reduce this country's reliance on oil, more and more of which we import from the Middle East. This reliance has led to our deeply resented military presence and our support for oppressive regimes in the region. The solution, to significantly reduce our dependence on foreign oil, is well within our technological and commercial grasp.

Since 1975, our country has begun to use petroleum much more efficiently and incorporate renewable technologies in the residential, commercial, and utility

sectors, where oil consumption has dropped 22 percent. But we have yet to address the soaring rates of petroleum use in our transportation sector, where consumption has risen in the same period by 45 percent.

Fortunately, every American can contribute to the solution – putting us on the path to more efficient use of petroleum in the transportation sector and, ultimately, an end to our addiction to oil. Every American can help advance the shift away from oil by:

- Urging the Bush Administration to provide increased funding for projects that promote the most rapid development of hydrogen fuel cell vehicles.
- Urging Congress to pass legislation providing strong economic incentives for the purchase and use of alternative-fuel and high-efficiency vehicles.
- Encouraging local governments to switch their fleets – of transit buses, school buses, garbage trucks, and taxis – to alternative fuels.
- Buying their own alternative fuel vehicles: natural gas vehicles for those living in areas with access to natural gas refueling and gasoline-powered hybrid electric vehicles elsewhere.

US leadership in this arena can mean significant progress toward a global vision of sustainable hydrogen-fuel transportation that will be essential to ensuring a safer future for us all.

### A SALUTE TO SANITATION AND THE CLEAN GARBAGE TRUCKS OF THE FUTURE

More than 136,000 garbage trucks lumber through our nation's towns and cities, collecting over 200 million tons of municipal waste and recyclables each year. Logging an annual average of 25,000 miles, these huge trucks provide an invaluable public service. Nowhere has this service been more vital, and supplied more steadily, than in the past weeks in Manhattan, where city Sanitation Dept. officials have supported security, fire, rescue, and medical officials in helping our city recover from the attacks on the World Trade Center and restoring peace, safety, and order.

Soon, according to a forthcoming report from INFORM, the thousands of garbage trucks that bring us clean streets nationwide will also help to ensure cleaner air in the cities they serve. Up until now, the price of their service has been heavy pollution from the burning of diesel fuel. But tomorrow they could burn cleaner fuels. In the past year of research, INFORM has found that compressed natural gas and other domestically available alternative fuels are a viable commercial option. Our new report, to be published this winter, documents clean-fuel demonstration programs for garbage haulers that have been undertaken in the US and abroad.

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a member of Earth Share

## New Chair and Board Members (continued from page 1)

in and beyond the environmental community — so we can influence more of the decisions made by leaders in the public and private sectors.”

Mr. Krumholz holds a BA in Urban Studies from Oberlin College and a JD from Boston College Law School. He has been named one of the best environmental lawyers in America by Woodward/White, Inc., a professional research company.

### Ronald M. Ollie

As vice president and head of the sustainability practice at Malcolm Pirnie, a White Plains, NY, firm that provides environmental engineering, science, and consulting services, Ronald Ollie has worked on environmental issues since 1993. In the mid-'80s, he lived by the ocean in Pacifica, CA, where, he says, “people at the grocery would talk about keeping the area pristine in the face of development. Environmental issues naturally became part of my consciousness.”



“In different ways,” Mr. Ollie says, “INFORM and Malcolm Pirnie are both seeking to protect the environment, so we have a great deal to learn and share with each other. INFORM is a great organization, and I’m looking forward to increasing our visibility and resources.”

Ronald Ollie is involved with numerous city and regional development groups, serving on the NYC Task Force on Minority Business Development Programs and on the board of the Regional Alliance of New York and New Jersey. He holds degrees in mechanical engineering and business management from the University of Missouri at Rolla and the University of Pittsburgh Graduate School of Business Administration.

### Soheil Galal

Soheil Galal is a principal with the management consulting firm Booz Allen & Hamilton, with a focus on the technology and communications sectors.



Before settling in New York, he lived in South and Southeast Asia, the Middle East, Western Europe, and Scandinavia. “I’m originally from Cairo, one of the most polluted cities,” he says. “When I later lived in Bangkok and Delhi, I noticed the same kind of problems, so the urban environment became a personal and professional issue for me.” As a board member, Mr. Galal hopes to use his extensive business systems and technology experience to help INFORM realize fully its ability to have “change-of-behavior impacts” on corporations.

Soheil Galal holds a BA in computer science from Hunter College, City University of New York (where he graduated first in a class of 2000 students), an MS in industrial engineering from Columbia’s Graduate School of Engineering, and an MBA from Columbia Business School.

### Debbie Breckenridge

A vice president for business analysis at Reuters America, Debbie Breckenridge has over 20 years of experience in management consulting and information technology project management.



Her interest in environmental issues goes back to junior high school, when she first read Rachel Carson’s *Silent Spring*. “It’s never occurred to me that we have unlimited resources,” she says, “and it continues to amaze me that other people live as if we do.”

Ms. Breckenridge became a volunteer for INFORM in the mid-90s, and this year was asked to join the board. “INFORM does such high-quality analysis of the really tough environmental problems,” she says. “I think our partnerships with industry really increase the odds for making progress on those issues.” As a board member, she hopes to help INFORM reach out to a broader base of constituencies.

Debbie Breckenridge holds a BS in chemistry and a masters in electrical engineering from the University of Missouri.

### Strachan Donnelley

Strachan Donnelley is director of the Humans and Nature Program at the Hastings Center, a research institute in Garrison, NY, that focuses on ethical issues relating to health, medicine, and the environment. “My involvement with the Hastings Center and INFORM represents a valuable association between two organizations dedicated to understanding the long-term impact of rapid advances in technology on human communities and nature,” Mr. Donnelley says. “I look forward to contributing my experience in environmental philosophy and Hastings Center projects on biological and medical ethics to INFORM’s efforts.”



Strachan Donnelley received his BA from Yale University and his doctorate in philosophy from the New School University (formerly the New School for Social Research) in New York City. He serves on the boards of the University of Chicago, the National Humanities Center, Yale University’s Institute for Biospheric Studies, New School University, and the American Museum of Natural History’s Center for Biodiversity and Conservation. ❖

# New Waste Prevention Program in NYC

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## Projects Made to Order

In the coming months, INFORM will develop and disseminate RFPs (requests for proposals) for grants to be awarded annually to nonprofit groups throughout the five boroughs. Grant recipients will recruit and deploy a total of about 15 coordinators, who will implement the waste prevention or recycling project planned by each group for the local community. So taxpayers can benefit directly from the program, strategies will focus on reducing wastes and recycling materials that would otherwise be discarded by residents and institutions (rather than by businesses) and collected by the city for disposal.

“The coordinators program will work from the bottom up,” says Timothy Logan, acting coordinator of the New York City Waste Prevention Coalition. “It gives grassroots groups a great opportunity to carry out waste prevention initiatives especially designed for their population and housing stock.” For example, in neighborhoods dominated by high-rises, the coordinators might work with community boards, block associations, and building managers to increase participation in the city’s recycling program. Where single-family homes are the norm, they might promote backyard composting and “grasscycling” (the natural recycling of grass that occurs when clippings are left on the ground instead of being carted away — in a 30-week growing period, an acre of lawn can generate up to 6 tons of clippings).

In mixed-use (residential/commercial) areas, the coordinators may find ways to collaborate with local businesses on initiatives to help residents reduce the amount (and toxicity) of products they bring home and ultimately discard. They could work with businesses to take back items ranging from clothes hangers and packaging “peanuts” to computers, batteries, and cell phones for

reuse or recycling. Electronic products are a particularly troubling waste management challenge because they represent a huge and growing addition to landfills and have many toxic components.

## Program Support and Assessment

As manager of the community coordinators program, INFORM will serve as an ongoing source of guidance and information. Drawing on our own numerous waste prevention guides and fact sheets, as well as information provided by DOS and other sources, we will provide the coordinators with orientation materials and assistance in tailoring each group’s agenda to specific community needs. Each month, coordinators will receive training in key waste prevention and recycling strategies, such as composting and environmental purchasing, and skills such as volunteer recruitment, door-to-door outreach, and public speaking.

To evaluate the program’s effectiveness, INFORM will use DOS collection reports to track changes in waste generation and recycling over time and compare the waste tonnage rates of neighborhoods participating in the coordinators program with those that are not. “By measuring waste reduction and the related cost savings resulting from initiatives in specific communities,” says Culver, “we will be able to give city leaders and the public a tangible idea of waste prevention’s value to New York’s economic and environmental future.”❖



section of INFORM’s Community Waste Prevention Toolkit at [www.informinc.org](http://www.informinc.org).

For more information on INFORM’s work on behalf of the Community Coordinators Program, see “Implementing a Waste Prevention Program in Your Community,” a

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# INFORMing Others

## Preventing Toxic Consumer Waste

### Clean Computer Collaboration

More than 20 million PCs became obsolete in the US in 1998, and fewer than 11 percent of them were recycled. The rest — almost 18 million computers — were landfilled, incinerated, or placed in storage. This waste is an especially serious environmental concern because of its toxicity: mercury, lead, and other heavy metals in components of the central processing unit; lead in the protective shield of monitors; polybrominated flame retardants in the plastics used to house equipment and cover wiring. All of these substances are persistent, bioaccumulative toxins (PBTs), a dangerous class of chemicals that linger in the environment and accumulate in living tissue, creating potential environmental and health risks when computers are manufactured, incinerated, landfilled, or melted down during recycling.

To address this growing waste stream, INFORM has joined the Silicon Valley Toxics Coalition and other groups in the national Electronics Take It Back! Campaign, which aims to make computer manufacturers physically and/or financially responsible for their obsolete electronic products. This strategy, known as extended producer responsibility (EPR), shifts the costs of collecting and recycling products and packaging from government to private industry. In so doing — and as INFORM has documented extensively over the years — it gives manufacturers an incentive to design less wasteful, less toxic, more economically recyclable products.

In an ongoing project, INFORM is helping government agencies, businesses, and universities in a dozen states to avoid buying PBT-containing products. Now we will work with these large-volume purchasers to identify electronic products with more environmentally benign components, such as lead-free solder. “In addition,” says Ted Smith, executive director of Silicon Valley Toxics, “INFORM's long-standing expertise in EPR will be of great value in helping these purchasers incorporate EPR provisions into their computer contracts, and helping the campaign develop specific language for EPR legislation.” INFORM will also support the campaign by providing cutting-edge research comparing voluntary corporate “take-back” initiatives in the US with requirements mandating high levels of computer take-back and recycling by manufacturers in Europe.

For more information on EPR and computer take-back, see “Return to Vendor: A Solution to Obsolete Computer Equipment,” and the computer fact sheet in INFORM's Community Waste Prevention Toolkit, at [www.informinc.org](http://www.informinc.org). For the Electronics Take It Back! Campaign, see [www.svtc.org/cleancec/index.html](http://www.svtc.org/cleancec/index.html).

### Battling Batteries by the Bay

A new resolution passed by the city of San Francisco is the first comprehensive policy addressing battery waste since the Rechargeable Battery Recycling Corp.(RBRC) set up its voluntary recycling initiative in 1994. The resolution, which urges city agencies to purchase and use rechargeable batteries whenever possible, and calls on manufacturers to take more responsibility for recycling them, drew fierce criticism from the RBRC and industry trade associations when first proposed this spring. To keep it alive, the city's Board of Supervisors called on INFORM to provide feedback on the draft policy and analyze the battery manufacturers' claims. Thanks in part to our technical support, the city passed the resolution in July.

Americans throw out about 179,000 tons of batteries a year, of which about 14,000 tons are rechargeables. Rechargeable batteries are considered environmentally preferable to disposable, single-use batteries because they reduce the total number of batteries manufactured and entering the waste stream. But because these batteries contain a high concentration of heavy metals, disposing of them in landfills and incinerators can disperse significant amounts of toxic substances into the air and water. For this reason, they should be recycled, according to the US Environmental Protection Agency.

Nonetheless, battery makers (represented by the National Electrical Manufacturers Association) maintained that the detrimental environmental effects associated with collecting and transporting batteries are greater than the benefits to be gained from recycling them. “INFORM pointed out that this claim applied only to single-use batteries, and was irrelevant to a resolution aimed at promoting recycling of rechargeables, which are much more toxic,” says David Assmann, deputy director of San Francisco's Dept. of the Environment.

At a hearing on the proposed resolution, INFORM reported that the RBRC had achieved disappointing recycling rates of under 15 percent in San Francisco and nationally, in part because city agencies and other public facilities have to pay the RBRC to transport and recycle any batteries they collect. The new resolution urges manufacturers to spend more money on public education, work with the city to develop a more effective municipal collection program, and do a better job at reporting its results to local government officials. To facilitate recycling, it also calls for batteries to be more easily removable from products and for more batteries to be labeled as to their recyclability and chemical content.

For more information on battery procurement and recycling, including a copy of the resolution, see the battery fact sheet in INFORM's Community Waste Prevention Toolkit at [www.informinc.org](http://www.informinc.org).

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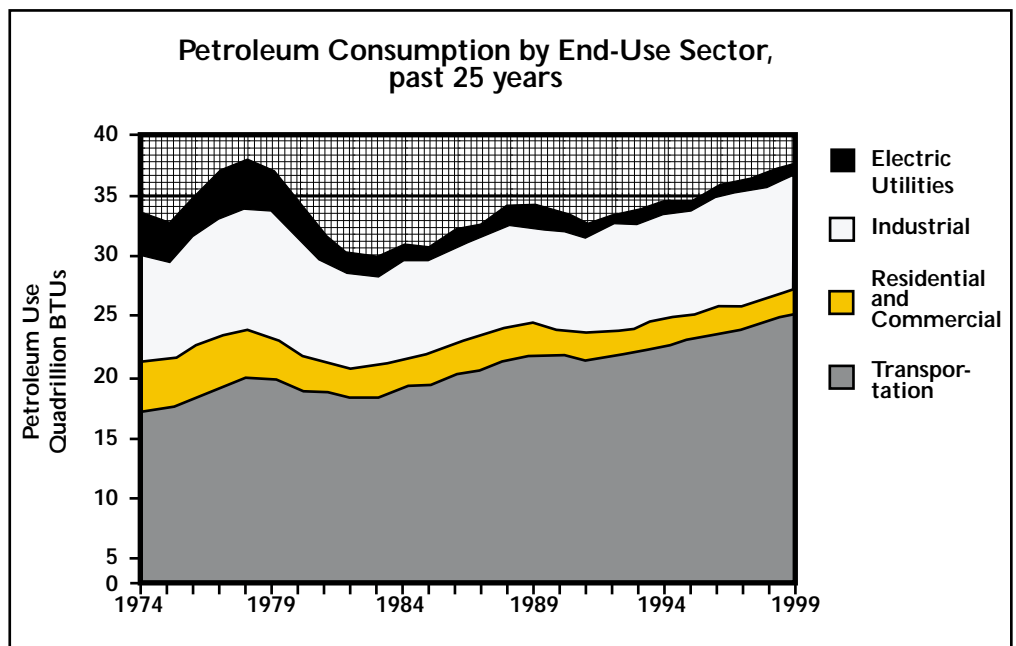
Cleaner Computers

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## INFORMation: Transportation's Appetite for Oil

Over the past 25 years, total petroleum consumption has increased 13 percent, driven by a 45 percent increase in transportation and despite a 22 percent decrease in all other sectors. Transportation accounts for 28 percent of our total national energy consumption, and cars and trucks alone consume more oil than the US produces domestically. In addition to leaving the US increasingly vulnerable to price shifts and disruptions in supply, our reliance on foreign oil comes with a hefty price tag — in 1995, the US exported about \$49 million to oil-producing countries.



Source: *Transportation Energy Data Book*, October 2000.