

New E-Series at the Emerson Center begins in November

with educational programs of social justice

The new E-series begins on Tuesday evening, Nov. 30, at 7:00 PM with a film and speakers about worker's rights and unions particularly in the meat packing industry. The first film "Union Time: Fighting for Workers' Rights" is about the workers at the Smithfield Foods pork processing plant in Tar Heel, North Carolina.

Future topics include voting rights, vaccination rights, early childhood education, education about Black history and racism, and topics of environmental concern including sea level rise.

Be sure to attend these interesting programs!

Coal Plants and Federal Lease Policy

Eliminating the use of all fossil fuels is key to fighting the climate crisis, and that starts with coal — one of the worst sources of climate-heating pollution in the world. The Obama administration recognized this and implemented a moratorium on new federal coal leases, but the Trump administration undid the moratorium to protect polluter profits — prompting an Earthjustice lawsuit. Now, the Biden administration is taking another look at federal coal policies.

Here's why the federal government must stop leasing coal from our public lands:

- The relevant coal leases would account for 16.3% of the United States' annual emissions — approving them would be a climate disaster
- Leasing rates are significantly below market value, effectively subsidizing the coal industry
- Coal mining pollutes our water and air, and destroys habitat for wildlife on our public lands
- Industry has not complied with requirements to clean up and keep communities safe

We cannot accept any more delay in addressing the harm from leasing coal on our public lands. More than 200 coal leases are coming up for renewal in the next four years, and if the Biden administration doesn't act, they will be renewed under Trump's polluter-friendly rules.

[from Earthjustice Alerts, Aug.24, 2021]

What's Actually in the Infrastructure Bill?

The recent Senate-passed infrastructure proposal gives fossil fuel companies exactly what they're hoping for — nearly \$30 billion in more subsidies. Meanwhile, our water infrastructure is crumbling across the country. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) says we need to invest at least \$35 billion per year, yet this bill only provides \$10 billion annually — less than one third of the funding we need to ensure that everyone has access to clean, affordable water.

Thankfully, water privatization scams are absent from the most recent bipartisan infrastructure framework. This victory goes to show it is possible to influence our legislators and secure the future we all deserve when we make our voices heard.

Food and Water Watch organization asks us to contact our representative in Congress and ask them to improve the infrastructure bill by fully funding water systems and removing fossil fuel handouts.

Voice your concerns by going to

<http://click.messages.fwaction.org/?qs=230d3d758bd5574cc782f4b02d291121149869cfb844636913b2677d8794a099cfa531ef90a54038b44d5fba288e8b7263e9d3e6c1a31686>

International Peace Day is September 21

This day is devoted to strengthening the ideals of peace through observing 24 hours of non-violence and cease-fire. The United Nations **Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons** (which was developed in 2017 entered into force on January 22, 2021) has been signed so far by 86 countries, but not yet by the U.S. and Canada.

This treaty prohibits States Parties from developing, testing, producing, manufacturing, acquiring, possessing, or stockpiling nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. Signatories are barred from transferring or receiving nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices, control over such weapons, or any assistance with activities prohibited under the Treaty.

[from BullfrogFilms.com, Aug. 24, 2021, Wikipedia, and nti.org]

Fair Food Program of CIW Sets New, Enforceable Standards to Protect Farmworkers from Heat Stress

Rachel Licker, a senior climate scientist with the Union of Concerned Scientists (UCS) and an author of a [recent UCS study](#) on the threats posed to outdoor workers by the increasing number and intensity of dangerous heat waves, perhaps said it best in an [interview this month with NPR](#):

"The last seven years have been the hottest on record," said Rachel Licker. "Without additional protections, the risks to workers will only grow in the decades ahead as climate change worsens, leaving the roughly 32 million outdoor workers in our country to face a brutal choice: their health or their jobs."

Last week, following weeks of research, data collection, and discussion, the Fair Food Program stepped into the debate about the threat to farmworkers, and other outdoor workers, posed by steadily rising temperatures. It established important new heat safety standards for farmworkers under the FFP's protections.

In consultation with the Fair Food Standards Council (the third-party monitor that enforces the Fair Food Program Code of Conduct on Participating Farms), and with Participating Growers on the FFP's Working Group (a collaborative body at the heart of the FFP that provides essential feedback on emerging issues necessary to develop practical regulations designed to remedy those issues), the Coalition of Immokalee Workers set forth enforceable standards requiring mandatory breaks; comprehensive, trilingual training; and emergency response protocols, effective immediately, on all Fair Food Program farms.

[from [ciw-online.org](#), Aug. 20, 2021]

Glyphosate in Roundup is no Longer !



After relentless pressure from Food & Water Watch and our allies across the country, last week Bayer (one of the largest pharmaceutical companies in the world and owner of

Monsanto) announced it **would stop selling home-use products containing glyphosate in 2023**. This

includes the dangerous and deadly Roundup herbicide.

Bayer plans to replace glyphosate with a different active ingredient as a means of "managing litigation risk" — in other words, the tens of thousands of lawsuits brought by victims linking their cancer to Roundup use.



Food & Water Watch has been fighting to end the use of glyphosate for years. While it's an important win to see Bayer removing glyphosate products from lawn and garden centers, it's not a complete victory.

Non-farm application is just a small portion of total glyphosate usage. The toxic chemical will continue to be sprayed on cropland, where it poisons our soils, harms pollinators and their habitat, and pollutes our waterways. Food and Water Watch won't stop fighting until they have a complete national ban on glyphosate.

[from act@messages.fwwatch.org, Aug 5, 2020]



Public Citizen Urges Congress To Lower Pentagon Budget

Estimates predict that the removal of US troops from Afghanistan will save

between \$20 and \$50 billion in defense spending which should presumably be reflected by a reduction in the Pentagon's annual budget. In May Public Citizen collaborated with 30 other organizations to pen a letter to Congress urging reductions in the Pentagon budget.

"The coronavirus crisis is a wake-up call for the long over-due imperative of shifting spending away from the Pentagon and investing instead in human needs," said Public Citizen President Robert Weissman. Public Citizen and its allies point out that a 10% reduction in Pentagon spending would generate enough savings to produce 2 billion COVID-19 tests or provide medical care to over 7 million veterans.

[from an article by Sara Kate Baudhuin in *PUBLIC CITIZEN NEWS*, July/August 2021]

Information herein is gleaned from the Internet or magazines. This issue was compiled by Nancy Stiefel.

This issue and prior Social Justice News issues are also on the UUFVB website at uufvb.org/social-justice/social-justice-newsletter/.