



February 27, 2014

To The Editor:

David Abel's 2/23/2014 article, "State is easing rules for some pollutants," ignores an essential fact about MassDEP's regulatory revisions and leaves the misimpression that the State is relaxing its protection of public health and the environment.

The fact is that MassDEP is improving public health protection by decreasing the acceptable levels of lead in the top three feet of soil, where it is most likely to come into human contact, and increasing the levels of lead and arsenic that can be left at depths below 15 feet where there is not generally an exposure risk.

When the Commonwealth's cleanup program was created 20 years ago, environmental and social justice organizations sat down with business groups, regulators, and environmental consultants and hammered out landmark legislation that led to the cleanup and reuse of tens of thousands of contaminated brownfield sites across the state. The cleanup standards were, and still are, based on science.

There are still thousands of contaminated sites needing remediation before being used for private and public purposes. We still need science to guide the regulations, not rhetoric.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Matthew E. Hackman'.

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