

Key Environmental Regulatory, Legislative Compliance & Enforcement Developments: Practical Impacts for New England Business

The New England Council: Environmental Issues Conference

The New England Council's Environmental Committee, chaired by Hale and Dorr Senior Partner Paul Wallach, sponsored a conference in July 1999 that examined a wide range of environmental legislative and regulatory developments. The session was attended by over one hundred of the region's leading manufacturing, technology and services companies.

Designed to provide a comprehensive and practical look at the impact of environmental regulations and developments of concern to the region's businesses, the sessions covered key air, water and hazardous waste issues at both the state and federal levels. Mr. Wallach reviewed current federal and state enforcement initiatives.

Hale and Dorr Senior Partner Ken Meade provided a status report of the ozone transport regulations, which were made final in September of 1998. The proposal, which aims to reduce the transport of pollution over state boundaries in a 22-state area throughout the northeast, midwest and south, is currently being challenged. A requirement that states submit State

Implementation Plans by September of this year has been delayed until further notice due to a recent decision in an unrelated court case. Pending Nox SIP Call litigation - where Hale and Dorr represents the Council as an Intervenor - is still on schedule and moving forward with oral argument scheduled for Fall 1999.

The Environmental Conference also included a discussion of corporate compliance programs and a six-state roundtable session examining trends in state environmental initiatives. This session was particularly useful given that often in New England an issue begins in one state and emerges in a neighboring state soon after. The audience received a regional scope of issues, as well as insights and lessons learned from other states.

A common theme among corporate environmental officers was the need to fully incorporate environmental compliance into business practices for all functional areas. Dennis Welch, Vice President, Northeast Utilities, identified a strong commitment and leadership by top management as a key component to full integration and results.

The day's activities concluded with a luncheon presentation by Jerome Facher of Hale and Dorr. Mr. Facher was the attorney in the "Civil Action" lawsuit that defended W.R. Grace Company. In a very straightforward, interesting and informative fashion, Mr. Facher described his experience and the final outcome of the nine-year case.

Hale and Dorr and The New England Council's Environmental Committee are actively engaged on these important environmental issues. For more information about the topics discussed, or for information on becoming a member of the Committee, please contact Paul Wallach.

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