

Earth Day 2000 lists companies harming environment

Patrick Minford
Oregon Daily Emerald

You might call it a top ten list with a social conscience.

An environmental group unveiled its annual list of the year's ten worst "greenwashers" — companies that make earth-friendly claims in order to market and sell products that pollute.

The list, produced by Earth Day 2000, was released by OSPIRG.

"From cleaners to paper plates, people have been fooled by environmental product claims by companies," said OSPIRG's Uni-

versity organizer, Matt Rabin. "Companies are claiming their products are helping the environment when they actually don't."

The list, which was timed to coincide with April Fools' Day, is part of a nationwide effort to return Earth Day to its roots, Rabin said. Corporations have taken advantage of the environmental movement while continuing their environmentally damaging practices, he said.

"The public wants green responsibility, not green rhetoric," Rabin said.

Windex window cleaner topped the list because it comes in a difficult-to-recycle plastic container.

General Motors Corp. made the list for its campaign to plant a tree on behalf of Geo Metro buyers, one of the company's most fuel efficient cars. It would take 734 trees to make up for the emissions of just one of the cars in a 10-year lifetime, said Chris Kantrowitz, a student senator who helped OSPIRG present the list.

Also on the list were Amoco Foam Products, which manufac-

tures a line of foam plates and cups, and the Nuclear Energy Institute, which ran advertisements touting the industry's protection of the environment.

Earth Day 2000, a coalition formed in 1991 to create more sustainable patterns of living, annually selects the year's worst greenwashers. PIRGs held news conferences across the nation to publicize the list.

The Federal Trade Commission took action against several of the greenwashers, requiring changes in product packaging and advertising claims.

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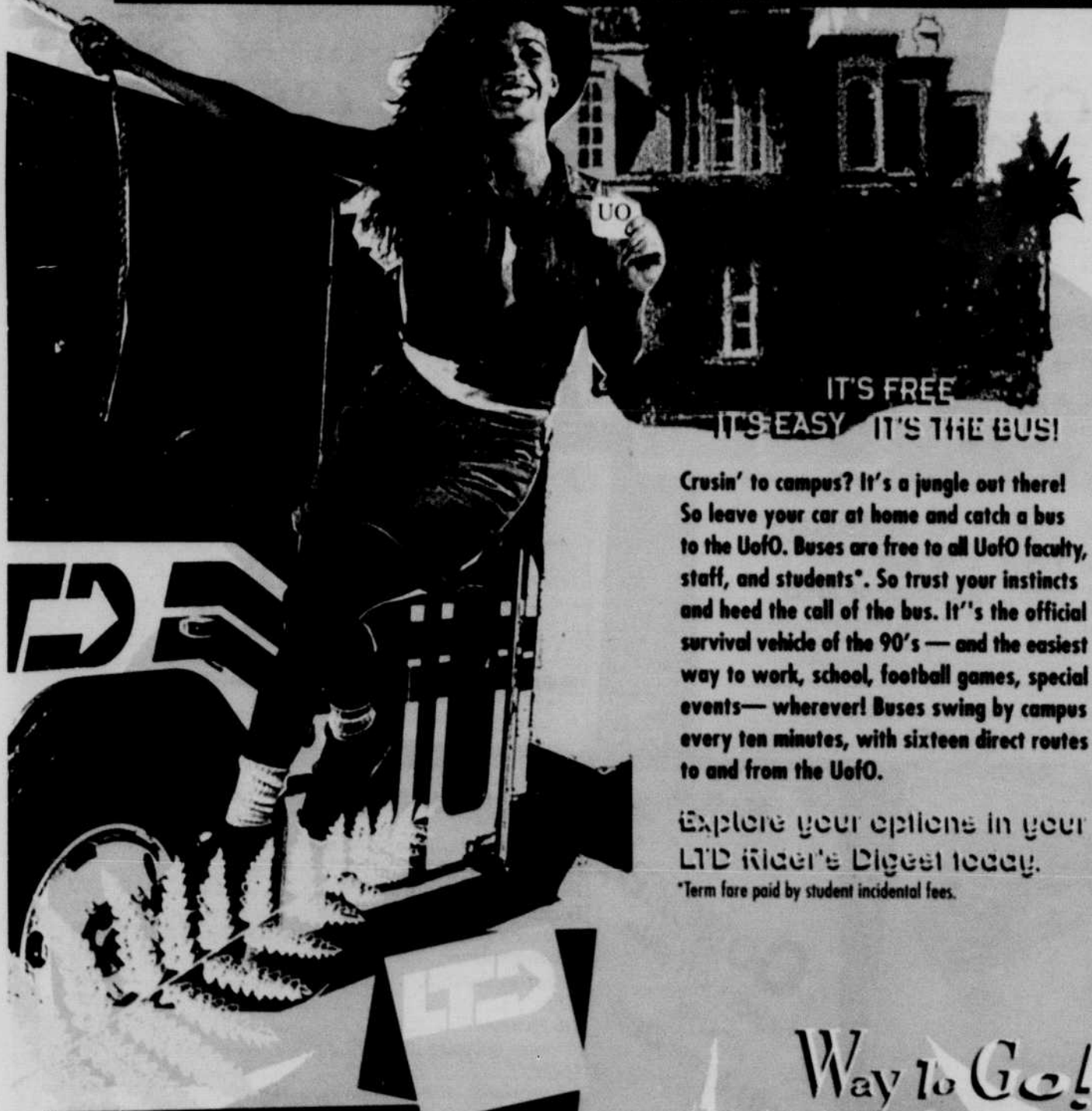
Earth Day 2000's Greenwash Awards, the year's top ten companies that misled consumers with false claims of environmentally safe products.

- SC Johnson & Sons, Inc.—Windex Cleaner
- Creative Aerosol Corporation—"Funny Color Foam" children's bath foam
- Amoco Foam Product Company—Polystyrene plates, cups, etc.
- LePage's Inc.—"Biodegradable" transparent tape
- General Motors—Geo tree planting program
- Whirlpool Corporation—Two refrigerator models
- CP Industries—Sno-N-Ice melter
- America's Favorite Chicken Company—Fast food packaging
- The Nuclear Energy Institute
- Chevron—"People Do" campaign

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