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## Adk Council issues annual park report

The Adirondack Council has issued its 2009 “State of the Park” report, the 24th annual edition of the organization’s review of actions by local, state and federal government officials that in the Council’s view helped or hurt the ecological health and scenic beauty of the Adirondack Park.

The illustrated, 18-page magazine-style report is available free by calling 1-877-873-2240 or can be viewed online at [www.adirondackcouncil.org](http://www.adirondackcouncil.org).

Receiving praise in this year’s publication are the Adirondack Park Agency, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation and individual local government leaders.

### GOOD AND BAD

The Legislature received its highest marks in years for what it accomplished when both houses worked together. Taken individually, however, the Senate’s rating dropped, while the Assembly maintained a favorable rating.

“Governor [David] Paterson received praise for his recent proposal to curb carbon dioxide emissions,” said Adirondack Council Executive Director Brian L. Houseal. “He also won praise for making solid appointments to the Adirondack Park Agency and U.S. Senate and for signing the new Bigger Better Bottle Bill.”

### CRITICISM TOO

But there was criticism as well.

“The Adirondack Council’s criticism of the governor stemmed from his proposal to cap the state’s property tax payments in communities that host Adirondack Forest Preserve,” Houseal said. “In addition, he participated in large raids on the state’s Environmental Protection Fund and advanced a plan that would have removed the EPF’s most stable funding source, replacing it with an untried revenue source.

“He also offered to provide extra carbon dioxide allowances to companies that complained about the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative, and we were troubled by his announcement that he would review state environmental regulations and throw out the unpopular ones.”

### LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

Local governments earned an 8 to 3 rating, garnering more praise than criticism from the Adirondack Council for the 11th consecutive year.

“Several Adirondack local governments can boast of extraordinary achievements this year, doing things that we wish the State Legislature would do park-wide or statewide,” Houseal said.

For example, “The Hamilton County Town of Inlet this year passed a local law requiring the inspection of existing septic systems when residential and commercial properties change hands. Malfunctioning septic systems can cause water pollution, including bacterial outbreaks, excess nutrients that provoke rapid weed growth and pharmaceutical contamination,” he said.

“In addition, the Essex County towns of Elizabethtown, Moriah, Jay and Wilmington decided they would not wait for state government to regulate outdoor wood boilers and took matters into their own hands by limiting or banning the devices town-wide,” Houseal said.

“Outdoor furnaces are extremely inefficient and will accept almost any kind of fuel,” he continued. “Their low chimneys and smoky, sooty emissions can impair local air quality very rapidly. When a neighbor starts burning trash in it, the emissions are worse than living downwind of a municipal waste incinerator.”

The Adirondack Council is a not-for-profit, non-partisan environmental research, education and advocacy organization. It is funded solely through private donations and does not accept government grants or taxpayer-funded contributions.