



Collaborative on Health and the Environment - Washington



Biweekly Bulletin December 2, 2009

This bulletin lists upcoming events plus recent announcements, news and journal articles, calls for proposals and other items related to learning environmental contributors to human health in Washington State and the Pacific Northwest. They are archived and searchable on our website: <http://washington.chenw.org/bulletins.html>

CHE-WA Highlights

December Event: Author and Scientist Presented

At our December 1st event at Antioch University, Doug Abrams, author of *Eye of the Whale*, and Sheela Sathyanarayana, MD, MPH, researcher and assistant professor at the University of Washington and Seattle Children's Hospital, presented a dynamic conversation on endocrine-disrupting chemicals from both artistic and scientific perspectives. Doug read from his book, and Sheela talked about the latest research on phthalates and BPA. For those who tried to call in to the event to hear the conversation, we apologize that technical problems meant you were dropped from the portion of the call. Look for more information in the next bulletin.

New members

CHE-Washington welcomes these new members:

- Richard Adusa-Poku, MSc, Everett, Massachusetts
- Eric Apeageyi, MSc, Waltham, Massachusetts
- Betsy Johnson, Tacoma
- Tolu Osoba, Redmond

For a searchable database of organizations with which CHE-WA members are affiliated, please visit the CHE-WA website: <http://washington.chenw.org/members.html>

Announcements

A daily news feed with articles and announcements is available on CHE's website: <http://www.healthandenvironment.org/news/announce>.

[EPA issues rule to reduce water pollution from construction sites.](#)

The final rule requires construction site owners and operators that disturb one or more acres to use best management practices to ensure that soil disturbed during construction activity does not pollute nearby water bodies.

[New interactive tools show continuing SO2 reductions at coal-fired power plants.](#)

Using interactive charts and Google Earth satellite maps, the public can now observe recent changes in SO2 emissions and other indicators at individual coal-fired power plants in the Acid Rain Program.

[Research Data Project.](#)

Birth Defect Research for Children is starting a new initiative to connect scientists studying birth defects with cases of specific birth defects in the National Birth Defect Registry.

Upcoming Events

Online Calendar. These and more upcoming events are listed in a searchable calendar: <http://www.chenw.org/cgi-bin/searchevents.cgi>.

1) To Ban or Not to Ban: A Review of Atrazine from Both Sides of the Atlantic

Tuesday December 8, 2009

10:00 a.m. Pacific / 1:00 p.m. Eastern time

Sponsor: Collaborative on Health and the Environment

If the same science is available on both sides of the Atlantic, why would Europe choose to ban the use of atrazine while the US has not? Join CHE as we explore this question and other pesticides issues with speakers from both Europe and the US. We will discuss the findings of the Agricultural Health Study recently conducted by NIH and the EPA, look closer at the scientific literature addressing atrazine and the implications for human health and conclude with a conversation with colleagues from the Health and Environment Alliance (HEAL) in Europe about pesticides, including their choice to ban atrazine.

Price: free

[Visit the website](#)

Contact: info@healthandenvironment.org

2) Climate Change: Mastering the Public Health Role

Tuesday December 8, 2009

1:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m. Eastern time

Sponsor: American Public Health Association

Public health professionals have the opportunity to participate in a new webinar series covering climate change. Topics will include the basic science of climate change, impacts to human health, the role of public health in climate change action plans, vulnerable populations, communication challenges, case studies, and more. Presenters for this topic will be Jonathan Patz, MD, MPH, and Patrick Kinney, ScD, MS. Participants must register to participate in this webinar.

Price: free

[Visit the website](#)

3) Introduction to Managing Environmental Data with Microsoft Access 2007

Wednesday and Thursday, December 9 - 10, 2009

8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Kirkland, Washington

at Yarrow Bay Office Park - One North Building, 10604 NE 38th Place, Suite 118

Sponsor: Northwest Environmental Training Center

This course is part of a series and is immediately followed by the Managing Environmental Data With Microsoft Access 2007, Applying the Tools workshop, December 11, 2009. Participants may register for either course individually or both courses. A discount applies when registering for both courses. After completing this course, participants will be able to 1) understand concepts of database structure and design, 2) create relationships between tables, 3) import and export datasheets, 4) perform simple queries on multiple tables, 5) construct and customize forms for retrieving data and 6) build macros for automating tasks.

Price: \$495 or \$395 for Native American Tribes; nonprofits; government agencies; students; and NAEP, NEBC, NWAEP members; an early-bird discount of \$20 is available until November 6, 2009.

[Visit the website](#)

Contact: NETC, 206-762-1976 or info@nwetc.org

4) National Conversation on Public Health and Chemical Exposures Leadership Council Meeting

Friday December 11, 2009

9:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Washington, DC and virtual

at the Omni Shoreham Hotel, 2500 Calvert Street NW

Sponsor: US Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry

This meeting will be open to the public, on a first come, first served basis, limited by the space available. An opportunity for the public to listen to the meeting by phone may be provided. If you would like to receive additional information on attending the meeting or the potential opportunity to listen to the meeting by phone, please use the contact information below.

Price: free

[Visit the website](#)

Contact: nationalconversation@cdc.gov

5) Climate Change and Environmental/Reproductive Justice

Friday December 11, 2009

10:00 a.m. Pacific / 1:00 p.m. Eastern time

Sponsor: Women's Health and the Environment Initiative

Speakers include Ogonnaya and Anhthu from WeAct for Environmental Justice, Dana Paredes from Asian Communities for Reproductive Justice, and Rachel Morello-Frosch from UC Berkeley. There will be substantial time on this call for discussion.

Price: free

[Visit the website](#)

Contact: Jamie Silberberger, jamie@womenandenvironment.org

6) Break the Cycle of Environmental Health Disparities: A Model for Promoting Research and Advocacy among Students

Tuesday December 15, 2009

3:00 p.m. Eastern / noon Pacific time

Sponsor: National Association for the Dually Diagnosed

Children who grow up in circumstances of social and economic disadvantage are at greater risk for exposure to chemical, physical and psychological hazards in their environment. This presentation reports on the "Break the Cycle of Environmental Health Disparities" project, in which an interdisciplinary group of university students were recruited to develop awareness of environmental health disparities and to cultivate a focused interest and set of skills to enable them to become the leaders of the future who will bring positive change with them. Leslie Rubin, MD, will present. Handouts will be available three days prior to the teleconference for participants to access online.

Price: \$65 for NADD members, \$85 for nonmembers

[Visit the website](#)

7) Public Meetings on the State's Climate Change Impacts Response Strategy

Thursday December 30, 2009

5:30 - 7:30 p.m.

Wenatchee, Washington

Sponsor: Washington Department of Ecology in partnership with the Departments of Agriculture, Commerce, Fish and Wildlife, Natural Resources, and Transportation

In 2009, the Washington legislature passed Senate Bill 5560 directing these agencies "to develop an integrated climate change response strategy to better enable state and local agencies, public and private businesses, nongovernmental organizations, and individuals to prepare for, address, and adapt to the impacts of climate change." The strategy is due to the Legislature in December of 2011. The six state agencies tasked with developing the state climate change response strategy are requesting initial feedback from the public. These meetings will be used to provide an overview of the strategy framework, provide background on the need for such a strategy for Washington State, and most importantly to answer questions and gather feedback from the public on what issues the strategy should address.

Price: free

[Visit the website](#)

Contact: Spencer Reeder, 360-407-6229 or spencer.reeder@ecy.wa.gov

News and Journal Articles

[First BPA detection In U.S. infant cord blood](#)

Wednesday, December 2, 2009

The tests identified the plastics chemical in 9 of 10 cord blood samples from babies of African American, Asian and Hispanic descent. Environmental Working Group.

[See related articles: [Infuriated mom: Why can't I protect my body? Study pinpoints chemicals in moms-to-be](#) and [The toxins of life, discovered in a body burden test](#)]

[Many get extra radiation from needless CT scans.](#)

Tuesday, December 01, 2009

Every year, many patients undergo unnecessary computed tomography (CT) scans that are not indicated, exposing them to more radiation than is necessary, according to new research presented here at the annual meeting of the Radiological Society of North America. Reuters Health.

[See related articles: [With cancer screenings, 'more is not always better'; Cancer screening: What could it hurt? A lot, actually](#) and [Study questions safety of mammograms for young women at high risk of cancer](#)]

[Eating less meat helps the planet -- and your heart.](#)

Monday, November 30, 2009

Alan Dangour of the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine and colleagues explored the livestock industry's potential to help the UK halve its carbon emissions by 2030, relative to 1990 levels, and the knock-on effect on the nation's health. New Scientist.

[See other articles about food choices and health: [The flu fighters -- in your food](#), [How safe is your chicken dinner?](#), [Debate on raw milk's safety goes back decades](#) and [Soy crazy: The US consumes tons of soy -- and it's not all good](#)]

[Another reversal haunts a federal health agency.](#)

Monday, November 30, 2009

Some lawmakers are accusing the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry of cursory evaluations, getting the science wrong and ignoring independent studies. New York Times.

[See another article about US federal agency functioning: [White House tells Markey it won't interfere with independent EPA testing](#)]

[Review: H2Oil.](#)

Saturday, November 28, 2009

A searing indictment of the Alberta oilsands project, that massive industrial enterprise that Prime Minister Stephen Harper has compared to the building of the pyramids and the Great Wall of China. Neither of those, however, has been linked to arsenic in the

drinking water and mercury in fish. Canwest News Service.

Feds links Chinese drywall to corrosion.

Tuesday, November 24, 2009

Federal agencies investigating contaminated Chinese drywall have finally tied the tainted wallboard to corrosion of metals in affected homes, and went further Monday than ever before in potentially associating the material with the health problems residents have been complaining about -- some for a year or longer.

[See a related article: [Chemical lobby group attacks CPSC Chinese drywall study](#)]

Smoking ban 'did not lead to rise in home exposure.'

Tuesday, November 24, 2009

The smoking ban in the UK did not lead to children being exposed to more smoking at home, a study has concluded. One of the main criticisms of the ban in public places was that it could prompt people to swap pubs for drinking at home where they could smoke. BBC.

[See related articles: [Secondhand smoke worst for toddlers, obese kids](#); [Moms-to-be smoke less after workplace smoking ban](#); [Inhaling human pathogens with cigarette smoke](#); [UGA tests outside smoking risks](#) and [Smokers take their last legal puffs in Va. restaurants](#)]

Dirt can be good for children, say scientists.

Tuesday, November 24, 2009

Children should be allowed to get dirty, according to scientists who have found being too clean can impair the skin's ability to heal. BBC.

Study links asthma, pollutant exposure.

Tuesday, November 24, 2009

Indoor [endotoxin] and outdoor [traffic exhaust] pollutants work together to cause more damage to young lungs than either pollutant could achieve on its own, according to new research from the University of Cincinnati. Cincinnati Enquirer, Ohio.

[See related articles about asthma: [H1N1, asthma can be a dire combination in children](#) and about air pollution: [PCBs: When green paint isn't 'green'](#), [Residents advised to get their home tested for radon](#), [Petrol inhalation causes road-rage rats](#) and [Ohio school district sues over air pollution](#)]

Toxic playgrounds.

Tuesday, November 24, 2009

No kid should ever play in arsenic. Especially at school. Yet many probably do, according to findings of a study presented today. Science News.

[See a related journal article about arsenic exposures through food: [Probabilistic modeling of dietary arsenic exposure and dose and evaluation with 2003-2004 NHANES data](#)]

Cellphones affect the brain.

Monday, November 23, 2009

Cellphones and other cordless telephones have a biological effect on the brain, according to research from Sweden's Örebro University. It's still too early to say if any health risks are involved, but those cautious Swedes are recommending that people, especially children, should use headsets. Tech Generation Daily.

[See related articles: [Is electro smog causing your headache?](#) and [Stay a safe distance away from screw-in fluorescent bulbs!](#)]

Clorox to stop using chlorine.

Sunday, November 22, 2009

Citing a desire to improve security, Clorox says it will stop making its namesake bleach out of chlorine and sodium hydroxide. Instead, the big household-products company will purchase high-strength bleach of up to 15% concentration and dilute it to household strength of 6%.

Harvard says kidney stones, malaria are climate risks.

Sunday, November 22, 2009

Kidney stones, malaria, Lyme disease, depression and respiratory illness all may increase with global warming, researchers at Harvard Medical School said. Bloomberg.com.

[See a related article: [Curbs to ship pollution would stoke global warming, study says](#)]

[Phthalates exposure and attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder in school-age children.](#)

Saturday, November 21, 2009

The present study showed a strong positive association between phthalate metabolites in urine and symptoms of ADHD among school-age children. Biological Psychiatry.

[See related articles: [Study links ADHD to smoking, lead](#) and [Plastics chemical phthalate may shorten pregnancy](#)]

[Funeral workers risk cancer from formaldehyde.](#)

Saturday, November 21, 2009

Morticians who use formaldehyde to embalm bodies have a higher risk of leukemia, researchers reported on Friday. Reuters.

[Health issues in middle age can lead to dementia.](#)

Friday, November 20, 2009

People who smoke or who have high blood pressure or diabetes in middle age are more likely to develop dementia, a new study has found. ABC News.

[See a related article: [Obesity in adolescence may increase girls' MS risk](#)]

[Persistent organic pollutant exposure leads to insulin resistance syndrome.](#)

Friday, November 20, 2009

Our findings, for the first time, provide evidence that exposure to POPs commonly present in food chains leads to insulin resistance and associated metabolic disorders. Environmental Health Perspectives.

[See related articles: [PCBs hike blood pressure](#) and [Walleye in Lake Huron's Saginaw Bay carry less PCB contamination than a decade ago](#)]

[NIEHS Director: "We kind of jump from the proverbial fry pan into the fire" when replacing chemicals.](#)

Friday, November 20, 2009

As head of the federal institute examining environmental health, Linda Birnbaum and her staff are taking on many controversial topics, including Bisphenol A and new flame retardants. She is concerned about what role chemicals play in cancer and other diseases. Environmental Health News.

[See a related article: [Effects of flame retardants on children's development unclear](#)]

[On the scent of danger.](#)

Thursday, November 19, 2009

Scientists at GE's Global Research Center in Niskayuna are developing sensors smaller than a penny that could be worn by their users to warn of chemical hazards in the air. Albany Times Union, New York.

[Silica nanoparticles flow in \(and out of\) waste.](#)

Thursday, November 19, 2009

New research highlights some of the issues swirling around nanomaterials in wastewater, but no answers are forthcoming. Environmental Science & Technology.

[Report details 'coal's assault on human health.'](#)

Thursday, November 19, 2009

Coal pollution is assaulting human health through impacts on workers, residents near mining operations and power plants, and the environment in coalfield communities, according to a new report by a group of physicians. Charleston Gazette, West Virginia.

[Infectious burden and risk of stroke.](#)

Wednesday, November 18, 2009

A quantitative weighted index of infectious burden was associated with risk of first stroke in this cohort. Archives of Neurology.

[Putting madness in its place: Can the environment explain schizophrenia's hereditary patterns?](#)

Wednesday, November 18, 2009

Researchers believe the potential for schizophrenia starts to emerge during early brain development, beginning in the womb. Scientific American.

[Pesticides & birth defects may be linked.](#)

Wednesday, November 18, 2009

One out of every 33 babies in the U.S. are born with a birth defect, one of the leading causes of infant death in this country. Now, researchers say during certain times of the year, birth defects spike. Scripps Howard News Service.

[See related articles: [Bug spray 'can raise birth defect risk'](#), [Pesticide levels in blood associated with prostate cancer](#), [DDT benefits outweigh risks, says Ntebela](#) and [Professional pesticide use ups risk of nasal woes](#)]

[Health group finds high lead levels in toys.](#)

Wednesday, November 18, 2009

Children's toys carrying the Barbie and Disney logos have turned up with high levels of lead in them, according to a California-based advocacy group -- a finding that may give consumers pause as they shop for the holiday season. Associated Press.

[See related articles: [Lead, dangerous chemicals found in toys despite law; Toy recall undermines company's 'green' image](#); [US lauds China for boosting toy safety standards; Stores must remove lead-laced toys, says Attorney General Brown](#) and [State issues alert on seven children's products](#)]

[Supplements tied to cancer.](#)

Wednesday, November 18, 2009

Heart patients in Norway were more likely to die from cancer if they took folic acid and vitamin B12 supplements compared with those who did not take them, Norwegian researchers said on Tuesday. Reuters.

[See a related article: [Excess folate worsens B12 deficiency effects: study](#)]

Many of the news articles above come from [Environmental Health News](#).

The Collaborative on Health and the Environment offers this information as a service but does not endorse any of the events, articles or announcements.

Companion bulletins are available for different audiences:

- For those interested in general children's environmental health: http://www.healthandenvironment.org/working_groups/childrens_health/bulletins
- For those interested in environmental health and learning and developmental disabilities: <http://www.iceh.org/LDDIbulletins.html>

While there is overlap with this bulletin, there are some events and announcements unique to those bulletins.

If you would like to join the Collaborative on Health and the Environment (CHE) and the Washington State Regional Group, please complete the application on the CHE website: <http://www.healthandenvironment.org/application> Joining CHE means receiving up to four email messages a month from the CHE National listserv. CHE costs nothing to join and the benefit is shared information and opportunities for further engagement, if you choose. Be sure to mark that you want to join the Washington State regional group at the bottom of the application.

Nancy Snow
Collaborative on Health and the Environment

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