



Collaborative on Health and the Environment - Washington



Biweekly Bulletin February 9, 2011

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-Washington Highlights

CHE-WA Children's Environmental Health Working Group Meeting, February 10th
9:30 - 11:30 a.m.
Seattle, Washington
in Room 105, 130 Nickerson Street

The agenda includes participants sharing information on work they are doing related to children's environmental health, plus a talk by Geoffrey Crofoot, president of the Washington State Environmental Health Association, talking about WSEHA and its work. For more information, please contact Gail Gensler: 206-263-3082 or gail.gensler@kingcounty.gov

February Meeting Presentation Online

The presentation from Sian Wu's February 1st presentation about Resource Media's work to increase the profile of key environmental health campaigns is now available on the CHE website: [Healthy Communications](#).

New members

CHE-Washington welcomes these new members:

- Teresa McCormick, Lakewood
- Jon Sharpe, MEd, Seattle
- Denice Taylor, Shoreline

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>

Lessons Learned

Two Edges of the Same Sword - Chemical Weapons to Pesticides

"...Determined for the sake of all mankind, to exclude completely the possibility of the use of chemical weapons, through the implementation of the provisions of this Convention." - Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), 1993.

The chemical revolution of the past century was driven in part by humans' ongoing wars with each other and relentless drive to invent new ways to kill other people. The modern era of chemical weaponry began in the first world war, and advances in synthetic chemistry led to the development of increasingly potent compounds such as nerve agents and VX. Chemical weaponry stockpiling was an integral part of the arms race throughout the Cold War; they were used during that time by Egypt, Iraq and Iran. The Chemical Weapons Convention of 1993 outlaws the production, stockpiling and use of

chemical weapons for all signatories. The CWC is an extension of the 1925 Geneva Protocol that aimed to outlaw the production, stockpiling and use of chemical weapons, ignored in WWII and the Cold War.

The use of chemical compounds (as well as biological materials) dates back to biblical times. Greek historian Thucydides recorded use of arsenic smoke by the Spartans against the Athenian city of Delium during the Peloponnesian War in 425. Similar smoke was used during the Sung Dynasty by the Imperial forces in China. The use of poisons fell out of favor in the 18th and 19th century.

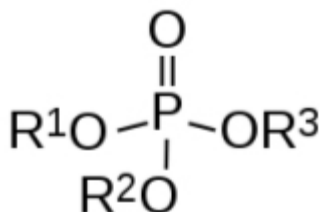


Chlorine dispersion WW1

At the beginning of World War I, the use of chemical weapons was still very much taboo, but this changed as trench warfare dragged on. The Germans employed the first successful use of chemical weapons on April 22, 1915, at Ypres Salient in Belgium: chlorine released from cylinders was carried by the wind toward enemy positions, killing an estimated 5,000 soldiers. This use spawned a technological competition between the Allies and Germans revolving around offensive and defensive (protective masks and antidotes) possibilities of chemicals.



The beginning of modern chemical warfare unequivocally begins in the German search for new pesticides in the 1920s and 1930s and the ongoing chemical revolution. With the loss of territory after World War I and Germany's desire to lessen its reliance on food importation, the German leadership emphasized the need for new insecticides to increase food production. Chemist Gerhard Schrader was tasked with finding new non-flammable, non-harmful insecticides to eliminate the threat from the boll weevil. Schrader synthesized a series of "organophosphates" which included Tabun and later the extremely lethal Sarin which became part of the military arsenal. And thus the race was on to develop and stockpile highly lethal chemical weapons that we are now spending a small fortune to destroy.



Organophosphate
formula

Pesticides and chemical weapons share a common root of development and common mechanism of action, two sides of the same sword. From bitter experience we have learned that it is prudent to ban the use of chemical weapons and similarly ban the use of the most hazardous pesticides. We now struggle to adequately regulate the pesticides we need while ensuring that workers and children develop in an environment in which they can reach and maintain their full potential.

Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) at Toxipedia -

<http://toxipedia.org/x/5hE>

Overview of Chemical Weapons at Toxipedia - <http://toxipedia.org/x/0ww>

Looking back to go forward

Lessons Learned is a bulletin feature focusing on an historical event that provides an important lesson for ensuring a more sustainable and healthy environment. Please feel free to send suggestions to [Steve Gilbert](#).

Past Lessons Learned - Looking back to go forward: <http://toxipedia.org/x/06Jb>

by Steven G. Gilbert, PhD, DABT

Announcements

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

[Call for abstracts: International Symposium on Health Benefits of Foods: From Emerging Science to Innovative Products.](#)

The overall objective of this event is to review and debate recent advances in substantiation of health benefits of foods, covering establishment but also the communication of innovative nutrition science. The submission deadline is Tuesday, March 1, 2011.

[Call for abstracts: Growing Old in a Changing Climate.](#)

Population aging and global warming are two of the biggest challenges facing humanity this century. How will these complex phenomena impact each other, and how will aging populations adapt to climate change? This conference will explore this May 25 - 26, 2011, in British Columbia. Submissions are due February 15, 2011.

[EPA to hold five listening sessions on updating the Clean Air Act's pollution standards for power plants, refineries.](#)

Five sessions between February 4th and March 4th in Washington, DC, Atlanta and Chicago seek input to design common-sense, cost-effective greenhouse gas standards for the largest polluters. Each session has a different target audience and will be webcast and recorded for later viewing. EPA will accept comments for 60 days after the proposed rule is published in the Federal Register.

[EPA solicits public input on using vapor intrusion threats as criteria for Superfund sites.](#)

Vapor intrusion describes the migration of volatile chemicals from contaminated groundwater or soil into the atmosphere, and is a particular concern if vapors enter an overlying building.

[New database: Health Effects Spreadsheet and Summary.](#)

TEDX maintains a publicly available database of the potential health effects of chemicals used during natural gas operations.

[Call for proposals: Fiscal Year 2011 Pollution Prevention Grant Program.](#)

EPA Regions will award P2 grants and/or cooperative agreements to support state and tribal technical assistance programs that address the reduction or elimination of pollution by businesses across all environmental media: air, water and land. Proposals are due March 28th.

[Call for proposals: Healthy Homes and Lead Poisoning Prevention Program.](#)

The purpose of the HHLPPP is to reduce or eliminate housing-related health hazards and to promote housing that is healthy, safe, affordable, and accessible. Letters of intent are due February 28th.

[Call for proposals: Health Impact Assessment to Foster Healthy Community Design.](#)

The purpose of the program is to increase the capacity of state, tribal and local government to include health considerations in community development, transportation, housing, and land use planning decisions, and to expand the scope of health impacts considered when making decisions that impact community design. Letters of intent are due February 25, 2011.

[Call for proposals: Developing High-throughput Assays for Predictive Modeling of Reproductive and Developmental Toxicity.](#)

EPA is seeking applications for research in development of high-throughput assays for use in analyzing chemicals or mixtures of chemicals to explain how exposure can be

causally related to adverse, apical outcomes related to development and reproduction.

[Request for proposals: Environmental Justice Small Grants Program.](#)

The EPA is now accepting grant applications through March 31, 2011, for \$1.2 million in funding to support projects designed to research, educate, empower and enable communities to understand and address local environmental and public health issues. The closing date is March 31st.

Job opening: Washington, DC.

The National Research Center for Women & Families, and our Cancer Prevention and Treatment Fund, has an opening for a senior fellow with a graduate degree in epidemiology/public health, medicine, psychology, or a related field. The position is a 20 hours/week position for 4-6 months with modest stipend and excellent benefits. Please send a resume and cover letter to info@center4research.org.

Upcoming Events

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

1) CHE-WA Children's Environmental Health Working Group Meeting

Thursday February 10, 2011
9:30 - 11:30 a.m.
Seattle, Washington
in Room 105, 130 Nickerson Street

Sponsor: CHE-WA Children's Environmental Health Working Group

The agenda includes participants sharing information on work they are doing related to children's environmental health, plus a talk by Geoffrey Crofoot, president of the Washington State Environmental Health Association, talking about WSEHA and its work.

Price: free

[Visit the website](#)

Contact: Gail Gensler, 206-263-3082 or gail.gensler@kingcounty.gov

2) Report from the Cancun Climate Change Talks: NGOs Promote Health and Partner for Future Action

Thursday February 10, 2011
10:00 a.m. Pacific / 1:00 p.m. Eastern time

Sponsor: Collaborative on Health and the Environment

Despite scant and discouraging media coverage of the United Nation's Climate Change talks in Cancun last December, a number of NGOs and health and medical groups can attest that COP16 was in fact good for human health. Movement towards greater inclusion of health in global climate change decisions at the meetings in Cancun was in large part catalyzed by energetic new projects and partnerships among NGOs based in Europe, Africa and the US, and the increasing evidence of both the health impacts from climate change and the increasingly quantified health benefits of ambitious climate action. CHE is pleased to host three active leaders in that process - Dr. Pendo Maro (Health and Environment Alliance/Health Care Without Harm, Europe), Dr. Lynn Wilson (SeaTrust Institute) and Pastor Peters Omoragbon (Nurses Across the Borders) - in this teleconference call to share how the momentum from Copenhagen to Cancun is being carried forward into 2011 towards collaborative activities promoting health in the run up to COP17 in Durban, South Africa, and beyond. In particular, the speakers will focus on ways CHE partners and anyone concerned with these issues can become involved in projects that support putting health at the heart of climate negotiations and decisions.

Price: free

[Visit the website](#)

Contact: CHE, info@healthandenvironment.org

3) What You Need to Know to Make the Most of the New School Nutrition and Wellness Improvements

Thursday February 10, 2011

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

Sponsor: Food Research and Action Center

In this webinar, speakers will focus on the improvements the new law makes to the school nutrition environment including the additional six cents, USDA's proposed new school meals nutrition standards, stronger competitive foods rules and wellness policies, nutrition environment report cards and farm to school resources. Speakers from USDA's Food and Nutrition Service, Action for Healthy Kids, and FRAC will provide details on the key new provisions, next steps and implementation plans. There will be time for questions.

Price: free

[Visit the website](#)

Contact: FRAC, 202 986-2200

4) Autism NOW Webinar

Thursday February 10, 2011

2:00 p.m. Eastern time

Sponsor: Autism NOW, a national initiative of The Arc

The speaker will be Joyce Martin, the environmental health policy director for AAIDD. In that capacity, she interacts with Congress, federal agencies, state and local environmental and health departments, industry, nonprofit organizations and the public to change US chemical policy to protect the health of all and particularly of those with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Price: free

[Visit the website](#)

Contact: Jennifer Sladen, jsladen@autismnow.org

5) 3rd Annual Northwest Environmental Health Conference

Friday February 11, 2011

Portland, Oregon

Sponsor: Oregon Environmental Council

The tracks for the 2011 Northwest Environmental Health Conference are 1) Emerging Science & Research: Presentations that address new and innovative research on environmental factors affecting human health; 2) Direct Practice & Real World Applications: Presentations that describe programs that engage, directly affect, and/or are led by members within a community or procedures and protocols that nurses, doctors, and other health care professionals are taking to integrate issues of health, environment and safety into facilities and practices and 3) Policy & Future Directions: Presentations that address federal, state, county, local or organizational policies and initiatives about environmental health issues and concerns. Continuing education credits are available.

Price: \$60 for professionals, \$75 for professionals with continuing education credits, or \$30 for students

[Visit the website](#)

Contact: nwehc@oeconline.org

6) Human Health Issues at Hanford Nuclear Reservation

Thursday February 17, 2011

12:30 - 1:20 p.m.

Seattle, Washington

at the University of Washington Department of Environmental and Occupational Health Sciences, room D-209

Sponsor: University of Washington Department of Environmental and Occupational Health Sciences

As part of the weekly Environmental Health Seminar, the speaker will be John Price with Beth Rochette, PhD, Section Manager, State of Washington, Department of Ecology Nuclear Waste Program.

Price: free

[Visit the website](#)

Contact: 206-543-6991 or ehadmin@u.washington.edu

7) Environmental Negotiations for Scientists and Resource Managers

Wednesday through Friday, February 23 - 25, 2011

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

Portland, Oregon

at the North Ramada Airport

Sponsor: EOS Alliance

This workshop provides attendees with improved skills for effective participation in environmental negotiations. Environmental negotiations are often more complex due to their technical and regulatory intricacy, interest from many parties, and the emotional nature of parties involved. This workshop presents basic negotiation concepts, specific environmental applications, and principled (ethical) negotiation approaches for building trust and relationships.

Price: \$795 or \$695 for employees of Native American tribes, government agencies, and nonprofits; students; and NAEP members

[Visit the website](#)

Contact: Northwest Environmental Training Center, 425-270-3274

News and Journal Articles

[Exposure to pesticides in womb linked to learning disabilities.](#)

Tuesday, February 08, 2011

Babies exposed to high levels of pesticides while in the womb may suffer from learning problems, a new study suggests. USA Today.

[See another article about pesticides: [Children's pesticide safeguards advance](#)]

[New superbugs resist most powerful antibiotics.](#)

Monday, February 07, 2011

Life-threatening bacterial infections are likely to become dramatically more common over the next 10 years as antibiotics lose their remaining effectiveness against man's age-old enemy. Sydney Australian, Australia.

[See another article about bacteria and illness: [Why keeping little girls squeaky clean could make them sick](#)]

[Avoiding health pitfalls of home energy-efficiency retrofits.](#)

Monday, February 07, 2011

Housing consumes 40 percent of our nation's energy use, making it a prime target for energy-efficiency measures. But even experienced and well-intentioned contractors can

make mistakes in installation. This can result in health problems for occupants and installers alike. Environmental Health Perspectives.

Obesity epidemic risks heart disease "tsunami"

Friday, February 04, 2011

Being overweight or obese raises the risk of heart disease, diabetes, some cancers and arthritis. Hypertension, another key risk factor for heart disease, is the world's biggest killer. Reuters.

[See related articles about weight, exercise and health: [Moderate aerobic exercise in older adults shown to improve memory](#); ['Fat cancers' also hitting developing nations](#); [Study: Global obesity rates double since 1980](#); [Low dose organochlorine pesticides and polychlorinated biphenyls predict obesity, dyslipidemia, and insulin resistance among people free of diabetes](#) and [Bottle-fed babies at risk for early obesity](#)]

Natural gas: It's not easy being green.

Wednesday, February 02, 2011

With increased scrutiny from regulators, more communities' being directly exposed to natural gas exploration, and questions arising about the fuel's global climate benefits, a more variegated view of natural gas is emerging. New York Times.

Are plastics without estrogenic-active compounds possible?

Wednesday, February 02, 2011

According to research performed by George Bittner, PhD, and his colleagues at CertiChem and PlastiPure, almost all commercially-available plastic products, including those sold as BPA-free, leach chemicals that exhibit detectable estrogenic activity. Environmental Factor.

[See another article about BPA: [A better understanding of BPA metabolism, with Frederick vom Saal](#)]

UC Riverside: 'We are guinea pigs,' professor says.

Tuesday, February 01, 2011

In his new book, Carl Cranor details the toxic chemicals people are exposed to daily from plastics, fabrics, cosmetics and other products. He advocates testing that would ensure the chemicals are safe before they can be used in such items. Riverside Press-Enterprise, California.

[See other articles about chemical exposures and regulation: [Legislation proposed for federal regulation of perchlorate, chromium 6](#); [EPA to develop regulation for perchlorate and toxic chemicals in drinking water](#) and [EPA plan to limit rocket chemical fuels debate](#)]

10 American cities with the worst drinking water.

Tuesday, February 01, 2011

Unknown to most Americans, a surprising number of U.S. cities have drinking water with unhealthy levels of chemicals and contaminants. Daily Finance.

[See other articles about water quality: [New report ties coal ash to hexavalent chromium](#); [Dems report that oil, gas drillers pumped diesel into the ground](#) and [Drilling industry says diesel use was legal](#); [Water-treatment method can create pollution problem](#)]

EPA proposes to retain national air quality standards for carbon monoxide.

Monday, January 31, 2011

After a careful review of the best available science, the US Environmental Protection Agency is proposing to keep the current national air quality standards for carbon monoxide, while taking steps to gather additional data through more focused monitoring.

[See other articles about air quality: [New legislation to restrict efforts to reduce air pollutants harms public health, increases health care costs](#); [Environmental report urges tougher power plant emission rules](#); [Oregon's Aprovecho Research Center builds stoves to help the environment, health and humanity](#) and [Living with 100 yards of petrol stations 'damages your health', study claims](#)]

New electricity meters stir fears.

Monday, January 31, 2011

Pacific Gas and Electric's campaign to introduce wireless smart meters in Northern California is facing fierce opposition from an eclectic mix of Tea Party conservatives and left-leaning individualists who say the meters threaten their liberties and their health. New York Times.

[See another article about wireless technologies: [International scientists recommend global governments adopt new exposure guidelines for electromagnetic radiation -- pointing to biological hazards and risks to the genetic code from unchecked proliferation of wireless technologies](#) and another article about radiation: [Risk of cancer increases with exposure to low-dose radiation from cardiac imaging, study finds](#)]

Chromosomes, upbringing or both?

Sunday, January 30, 2011

A seminar on factors that influence the brain, from heredity and environment to creativity, parenting and medications held recently at Jerusalem's Shaare Zedek Medical Center featured a lively debate on whether certain neurological diseases result from Nurture (environment) or Nature (genes). Jerusalem Post, Israel.

In China, the true cost of Britain's clean, green wind power experiment: Pollution on a disastrous scale

Sunday, January 30, 2011

Pollution on a disastrous scale. On the outskirts of one of China's most polluted cities, an old farmer stares despairingly out across an immense lake of bubbling toxic waste covered in black dust, dumped by rare earth processing plants. He remembers it as fields of wheat and corn. London Daily Mail, United Kingdom.

CDC executive recruited to study health effects of climate change.

Sunday, January 30, 2011

Michael McGeehin, former director of environmental hazards and health effects at the CDC, will now work at RTI on public health issues, such as how people are affected by flooding, drought, higher readings of ground-level ozone and food and water-borne diseases. Medcity News.

Antioxidants fall from grace.

Thursday, January 27, 2011

Antioxidants in supplement form may not do any good. In fact, they may actually be causing harm. Newsweek.

[See other articles about nutrients: [Eating poorly can make you blue: trans-fats increase risk of depression, while olive oil helps avoid risk](#); [Discovery of a biochemical basis for broccoli's cancer-fighting ability](#); [Vitamin D deficiency alters lung growth and decreases lung function](#); [Deficiency of dietary omega-3 may explain depressive behaviors](#); [Avoid excess of folic acid, researchers say](#); [Early cow's milk consumption may cut breast-cancer risk](#); [Vegans' elevated heart risk requires omega-3s and B12, study suggests](#); [Children are at risk of getting rickets, says doctor](#); [Poor diets may lower children's IQ and Sun exposure, vitamin D may lower risk of multiple sclerosis](#)]

Childhood leukemia, brain cancer on the rise.

Thursday, January 27, 2011

Childhood leukemia and brain cancer are on the rise, and exposure to chemicals in our environment such as chlorinated solvents and the head lice treatment lindane may be partially to blame, according to experts speaking at a conference call sponsored by Safer Chemicals, Healthy Families. WebMD.

[See other articles about cancer: [Starting HRT early raises breast cancer risk: study](#); [FDA advises women with breast implants](#); [Every smoke brings cancer closer: campaign](#); [Specific jobs tied to excessive lung cancer deaths in U.S. women](#) and [Breast cancer risk is rising, study shows](#)]

New report: Dirty Energy's Assault on Our Health: Mercury.

Wednesday, January 26, 2011

Dirty Energy's Assault on our Health is a series of reports examining the numerous

threats that power plants pose to our environment and our health. Each segment in the series focuses on a different pollutant emitted by power plants.

[See related articles: [Environmental report urges tougher power plant emission rules](#) and [Report on environment critical of power plants](#)]

Mercury in Bay Area fish a legacy of California mining.

Wednesday, January 26, 2011

Mercury mining and gold recovery in the mid-1800s to late 1900s, combined with present day oil refineries, chemical manufacturing plants and wastewater treatment plants have contributed enough mercury to threaten wildlife and prompt a fish consumption advisory in the Bay Area. ScienceDaily.

[See other articles about food contamination: [Pregnant women warned of clay risk; FDA ramps up scrutiny on a new area: Cheese](#) and [Newly identified chemicals leach into food packages, pose regulatory challenge](#)]

Simultaneous exposure of non-diabetics to high levels of dioxins and mercury increases their risk of insulin resistance.

Wednesday, January 26, 2011

We hypothesize that simultaneous exposure to dioxins and mercury heightens the risk of insulin resistance more than does individual exposure. Journal of Hazardous Materials.

Oregonians buy fewer cigarettes, die less from tobacco-related cancers, according to state report.

Wednesday, January 26, 2011

While Oregonians buy fewer cigarettes and die less from tobacco-related cancers, the number of people smoking had a slight uptick in 2009 - though public health officials can't yet say is a trend. Portland Oregonian, Oregon.

[See other articles about smoking and tobacco: [Trying to quit smoking? It will take you FIVE years and seven attempts](#) and [Does the smoke ever really clear? Thirdhand smoke exposure raises new concerns](#)]

Noise from road traffic 'increases stroke risk.'

Wednesday, January 26, 2011

Authors of a Danish study, published today in the European Heart Journal, said their research shows that for every 10 decibel increase in noise, the risk of stroke among adults over the age of 65 increased by more than a quarter (27 per cent). London Daily Telegraph, United Kingdom.

Safety first as bottles banned.

Wednesday, January 26, 2011

Health fears over a component [BPA] used in the manufacture of babies' bottles has prompted the authorities to act. Dublin Irish Times, Ireland.

[See other articles about concerns over consumer products: [Artists worry about toxic art supplies](#); [Chinese dry wall did not kill 11 people](#); [Mothballs can kill children, experts warn](#); [Keratin hair treatments get raves from customers but raise health concerns](#) and [The toxic truth about nail salons](#)]

Smoking, obesity trim life expectancy.

Wednesday, January 26, 2011 Smoking, a declining habit, and obesity, a burgeoning problem, have cut three to four years off the increasing life expectancy of Americans, an international longevity comparison concludes. USA Today.

How to buy lead-safe, reusable shopping bags?

Wednesday, January 26, 2011

The Center for Environmental Health, which supports limits on disposable shopping bags, has found that about 10% of the reusable bags it has tested so far contain at least minute levels of lead. USA TODAY.

[See another article about lead hazards: [Exposure to lead found to be extremely dangerous for children, pregnant women](#)]

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

[Join Our Mailing List!](#)