



Collaborative on Health and the Environment - Washington



Biweekly Bulletin June 3, 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

Children's Environmental Health Working Group Schedule

The CHE-WA Children's Environmental Health Working Group is taking a hiatus from our monthly meetings during July, August and September. We will meet on June 11th and will begin monthly meetings again on October 8, 2009. This will allow group members to focus on the Northwest Children's Environmental Health Forum on October 1st and 2nd, at the Tukwila Community Center. Hope to see you there!

New members

CHE-Washington welcomes these new members:

- Roger Briggs, MPH, CIH, Richland
- Deb Brown, PhD, Spokane
- Teresa Cooper, RN, MPH, Olympia
- Shamsah Ebrahim, PhD, Bellevue

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

Looking back to go forward

Lessons Learned is a new CHE-WA 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](#).

Bhopal - 25 years later

by Steven G. Gilbert, PhD, DABT



The Bhopal Disaster occurred 25 years ago in Bhopal, India when a Union Carbide (now owned by Dow Chemical) pesticide plant released a highly toxic gas that killed 8,000-10,000 in the first three days. It is estimated that 25,000 ultimately died and another 500,000 people were exposed. The 25 Years Of Spirit And Survival: Bhopal Survivors' US Tour, April 14 - June 1, 2009, just concluded with a visit to Seattle. This was a tragic and preventable accident that brought a focus to the plight of poor people living near a major industrial complex. It is also a classic lesson of environmental justice. Learn more: [The Bhopal Medical Appeal](#) or [International Campaign for Justice in Bhopal](#).

Upcoming Events

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

1) Film - Black Mold Exposure

in various cities around the US in April, May and June 2009
at select theaters

Sponsor: Looking Glass Entertainment Company

"Black Mold Exposure" explores the bizarre illnesses associated with exposure to toxic mold and the film participants' difficult task of regaining their health and lives in an atmosphere of political and social intolerance and disbelief.

Price: varies

[Visit the website](#)

Contact: contact@blackmoldexposuremovie.com

2) 2009 Northwest Chemicals Policy Symposium

Thursday June 4, 2009

8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Seattle, Washington

at the Hyatt Hotel at Olive 8

Sponsor: Snohomish County, Conference on Canadian Stewardship

In this highly interactive workshop, participants will share activities and successes, barriers encountered, and emerging strategies to improve chemicals policy nationally. The session will bring together diverse stakeholders working toward a green materials economy where manufacturing, use, and end-of-life management of consumer products have no adverse effects on our health our environment. Representatives from academia, local and state government, health and environmental organizations, business, and advocacy organizations are all invited to attend. The session will emphasize generating ideas and joint strategies for advancing policy change in our communities, states, and the nation.

Price: \$50

[Visit the website](#)

Contact: Marni Solheim, 509-329-3564 or MSOL461@ECY.WA.GOV

3) CHE Science Café Call

Thursday, June 4, 2009

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

Sponsor: Collaborative on Health and the Environment

Join CHE as we host our first Science Café call featuring Steve Gilbert, PhD, with the Institute of Neurotoxicology and Neurological Disorders. Dr. Gilbert will discuss Toxipedia (<http://www.toxipedia.org>), a tool he created that uses a modified wiki approach. Now with a contract from the National Library of Medicine and funding from King County and the Washington Department of Ecology, he will be able to further develop the site and lessen the information gap between those with knowledge on environmental public health and those that need the information to lead healthier lives.

Price: free

[Visit the website](#)

4) Environmental Health Seminar

Thursday June 4, 2009

12:30 - 1:20 p.m.

Seattle, Washington

at the University of Washington Department of Environmental and Occupational Health Sciences, Room T-435

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

Edward M. Postlethwait, PhD, professor and chair of the Department of Environmental Health Sciences, School of Public Health, University of Alabama at Birmingham will present "Early Life Exposures to Environmental Oxidants: Rethinking Paradigms about Adaptation and Long Term Consequences."

Price: free

[Visit the website](#)

Contact: Sarah Fischer, fischs@u.washington.edu

5) Nanotechnology Health & Safety Forum

Monday and Tuesday, June 8 - 9, 2009

Seattle, Washington

at the Edgewater Hotel, 2411 Alaskan Way # 67

Sponsor: Battelle, the University of Washington, the University of Oregon, and Oregon State University

The forum will focus on occupational and environmental health and safety standards of nanotechnology. The forum will be divided into four units: Framing the Unknown; nanoEHS Perspective; Insurance, Nanotechnology, and Risk; and Nanotechnology: The Next 10 Years.

Price: \$145, students \$75

[Visit the website](#)

6) Ecological Intelligence: A Conversation with Daniel Goleman

Friday June 12, 2009

1:00 p.m. Pacific / 4:00 p.m. Eastern time

Sponsor: Collaborative on Health and the Environment

This special conversation with Daniel Goleman, psychologist and bestselling author, will discuss issues he raises in his most recent book, *Ecological Intelligence: How Knowing the Hidden Impacts of What We Buy Can Change Everything*. The book is described as drawing on "cutting-edge research to reveal why 'green is a mirage,' illuminates inconsistencies in our response to the ecological crisis, and introduces new technologies that reveal with 'radical transparency' the eco-impact of products we buy, with the potential to drive consumers to make smarter decisions and companies to reform their business practices." Goleman's description of what it means to be ecologically intelligent underscores why CHE is committed to articulating a working framework for ecological health in which the multiple factors that influence our health and well-being are addressed systemically. Michael Lerner, PhD, president of Commonweal and vice-chair of CHE, will facilitate the conversation with Goleman and offer plenty of time for Q&A with CHE partners.

Price: free

[Visit the website](#)

Announcements & Articles

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

[**Scientists convene to discuss new method to study how toxic chemicals impact human health.**](#)

More than 200 scientists, regulators, and policy makers from around the world

convened recently at EPA's first ToxCast Data Analysis Summit to discuss results of the first phase of ToxCast. ToxCast is an innovative approach for profiling how chemicals in our environment impact important biological pathways that are critical for the function of the body's systems such as the heart, lungs, brain or reproductive organs. US Environmental Protection Agency.

[New online forum promotes transparency and openness in government.](#)

The eRulemaking Program has launched Regulations.gov Exchange. Regulations.gov is the one-stop, online source for citizens to search, view and comment on regulations issued by the U.S. government. US Environmental Protection Agency.

[Well water should be tested annually to reduce health risks to children.](#)

Private well water should be tested yearly, and in some cases more often, according to new guidance offered by the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP). National Institute of Environmental Health Science.

[EPA strengthens safety measures for soil fumigant pesticides.](#)

The Environmental Protection Agency is strengthening safety measures for soil fumigant pesticides. The safety measures will reduce fumigant exposures to bystanders -- people who live, work, attend school, or spend time near agricultural fields that are fumigated -- and increase overall safety of fumigant use by requiring greater planning and compliance. US Environmental Protection Agency.

[Asthma Awareness Month focuses on afflictions of 20 million Americans.](#)

In response to the growing asthma problem, EPA created a national, multifaceted asthma education and outreach program to share information about environmental factors -- indoors and outdoors -- that trigger asthma. US Environmental Protection Agency.

[President Obama announces national fuel efficiency policy.](#)

President Obama today -- for the first time in history -- set in motion a new national policy aimed at both increasing fuel economy and reducing greenhouse gas pollution for all new cars and trucks sold in the United States. US Environmental Protection Agency.

[Summertime and the grillin' is easy -- but do it safely.](#)

Tuesday, June 02, 2009

Steaks made on the grill, sending a smoky aroma into the air, could be culinary cancer causers. A look at how serious the dangers are and how to minimize them. Wall Street Journal.

[More stain repelling chemicals found in Inuit's traditional food than in store foods.](#)

Tuesday, June 02, 2009

Traditional and locally harvested foods contribute more persistent, stain-repelling compounds to the native Inuit diet than packaged food that is imported and sold at the local stores, report researchers who analyzed and compared exposures from the two food sources. Environmental Health News.

[Lead remains a threat to all ages.](#)

Tuesday, June 02, 2009

There have also been a number of studies of lead toxicity in elderly people. But until now, none have evaluated links between lead and mortality in people over age 65 in the general population. Environmental Science & Technology.

[See a related article about lead exposure and liability: [Landlord facing EPA lead fines](#)]

[Agricultural pesticide use and pancreatic cancer risk in the Agricultural Health Study Cohort.](#)

Monday, June 01, 2009

Findings suggest that herbicides, particularly pendimethalin and EPTC, may be associated with pancreatic cancer. International Journal of Cancer.

[Adolescent and adult soy food intake and breast cancer risk: results from the](#)

[Shanghai Women's Health Study.](#)

Monday, June 01, 2009

This large, population-based, prospective cohort study provides strong evidence of a protective effect of soy food intake against premenopausal breast cancer. American Journal of Clinical Nutrition.

[Obama's EPA administrator renews pledge for 'environmental justice.'](#)

Monday, June 01, 2009

Lisa P. Jackson, chosen by President Barack Obama to head the EPA, told attendees at a conference on environmental justice that minorities and low-income people are the victims of pollution by U.S. companies and businesses. Cybercast News Service.

[See a related article: [Bill aims to keep emission-reduction efforts local](#)]

[Groups ask EPA to ban lead tire weights.](#)

Monday, June 01, 2009

While the federal government has banned lead in paint, gasoline, plumbing, and other products, the EPA has ignored an estimated 3.5 million pounds of lead weights that drop off tire rims and onto U.S. roads every year, according to a petition to ban their use. San Francisco Chronicle, California.

[The landscape of antibiotic resistance.](#)

Monday, June 01, 2009

The problem of antibiotic resistance is severe enough that many experts believe the value of existing antibiotic therapies over the next 100 years is now uncertain.

Environmental Health Perspectives.

[Agent Orange experts to testify before US Congress.](#)

Sunday, May 31, 2009

The US government said on Friday it would double funding for environmental health and remediation in Vietnam with an additional US\$3 million. Thanhnie News, Vietnam.

[Dangers of two-stroke engines.](#)

Sunday, May 31, 2009

Two-stroke engines commonly used for gardening and boats can cause serious health problems including cancer, from emissions of benzene and other hazardous chemicals, a Griffith University environmental scientist warned. Brisbane Times, Australia.

[New warning on hormone replacement.](#)

Sunday, May 31, 2009

Hormone therapy taken by women to counter the effects of menopause can increase the risk of dying from lung cancer. Researchers said the new data should serve as a caution to women who continue to take hormones not to smoke. New York Times.

[Where's the beef? Ghent goes vegetarian.](#)

Saturday, May 30, 2009

The Flemish city of Ghent has designated every Thursday as "Veggie-dag" calling for meat-free meals to be served in schools and public buildings, and encouraging vegetarianism among citizens by promoting vegetarian eateries and offering advice on how to follow a herbivorous diet. Time Magazine.

[See another article about diet and environment: [Can America's urban food deserts bloom?](#)]

[E-waste handling remains primitive.](#)

Saturday, May 30, 2009

Cellphones, computers, hand-held devices, TVs and VCRs all become poisonous garbage -- leaching lead, mercury, arsenic, cadmium, beryllium and brominated fire retardants either into our air or into landfills, depending on the method of disposal. Canwest News Service, Canada.

[Rail industry petitions to stop moving toxins.](#)

Friday, May 29, 2009

Railroad companies are pressing federal regulators to cut back on trains carrying

hazardous materials through urban areas, saying they fear a catastrophic release of toxic chemicals in a large city. Environmental News Network.

[Climate change hitting poor in U.S. hardest.](#)

Friday, May 29, 2009

Climate change is disproportionately affecting the poor and minorities in the United States -- a "climate gap" that will grow in coming decades unless policymakers intervene, according to a University of California study. Daily Climate.

[See a related article: [Can poor people be protected by global warming laws?](#)]

[Exposure to combustion by-products linked to male infertility.](#)

Friday, May 29, 2009

A new study adds to the growing literature suggesting that chemical exposure may affect male fertility. Environmental Health News.

[Cigarette butts: Tiny trash that piles up.](#)

Friday, May 29, 2009

Cigarette butts comprise one-quarter of the items tossed onto U.S. streets. Smokers see butts as a more natural kind of trash. But they are not biodegradable: they have plastic filters that will be swept out to sea -- hence releasing toxic chemicals including nicotine, benzene and cadmium. New York Times.

[Deadly mercury in fish is a global health hazard.](#)

Friday, May 29, 2009

Your mother often told you fish is brain food. Now experts are telling you that the very same source of the food that helps to boost your brain function could be a source of brain-toxic heavy metals, such as mercury. Johannesburg Business Day, South Africa.

[Pesticides lurk everywhere.](#)

Friday, May 29, 2009

According to Washington, D.C.'s National Coalition on the Misuse of Pesticides, triclosan -- aka 2,4,4'-trichloro-2'-hydroxydiphenyl ether -- is associated with skin irritation, allergy sensitivity, bacterial and antibiotic resistance, and the destruction of aquatic ecosystems. In addition to certain brands of socks, it's also found in everything from makeup to children's toys. Georgia Straight, Canada.

[New data suggest PBDE byproducts are ubiquitous in U.S. waters.](#)

Thursday, May 28, 2009

Research shows for the first time that compounds produced when PBDE flame retardants are exposed to wastewater treatment can generate dioxins. Environmental Science & Technology.

[A simple smooch or a toxic smack?](#)

Thursday, May 28, 2009

The debate seems to resurface every few years. Do some lipsticks contain lead? If so, is the amount so negligible that consumers have nothing to be concerned about? Or will all those years of applying lipstick add up to a worrisome accumulation of a dangerous substance? New York Times.

[Toxic.](#)

Wednesday, May 27, 2009

What is making American children sick? Cancer rates are climbing. Cases of autism, attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder, and asthma are through the roof. Is the answer all around us - in the food our kids eat, the air they breathe, and the clothes they wear? WCVB Boston.

[Autism: It's the environment, not just doctors diagnosing more disease.](#)

Wednesday, May 27, 2009

California's sevenfold increase in autism cannot be explained by changes in doctors' diagnoses and most likely is due to environmental exposures, University of California scientists reported Thursday. Seattle Post-Intelligencer, Washington.

[See an opposing view: [Autism: study finds 12-fold rise in cases](#)]

[Meat intake not linked to breast cancer.](#)

Wednesday, May 27, 2009

A large study has found no link between eating meat -- total meat, red meat, processed meat, or meat cooked at high temperatures -- and the risk of breast cancer in older women. Reuters.

[EPA announces dioxin review, plans for Dow cleanup.](#)

Wednesday, May 27, 2009

The federal government will speed up a long-delayed assessment of how chemicals called dioxins affect human health, Environmental Protection Agency head Lisa Jackson said Tuesday. Associated Press.

[Strapped states cut smoking-prevention funds.](#)

Wednesday, May 27, 2009

Cash-strapped state governments are slashing funding for tobacco prevention and cessation programs in a move anti-tobacco groups say could backfire, costing taxpayers later for treatment of tobacco-related illnesses among people who might've quit. Associated Press.

[Could you be gargling your way to cancer?](#)

Tuesday, May 26, 2009

According to a report published in the Dental Journal of Australia, there was 'sufficient evidence' linking breath-freshening products containing alcohol with a higher risk of cancer. London Daily Mail, England.

[Using less pesticide may kill more cockroaches.](#)

Tuesday, May 26, 2009

An innovative cockroach control strategy that keeps pesticide use to a minimum is much more effective than the standard approach -- regular, massive sprays of powerful bug-killers -- for wiping out the pests, a new study conducted in schools shows. Reuters Health.

[Impulsive behavior in preteens linked to mom's smoking when pregnant.](#)

Tuesday, May 26, 2009

New research indicates that smoking during pregnancy can lead to impulsive behavior in children. Environmental Health News.

[Vaccine study links refusal to disease risk.](#)

Tuesday, May 26, 2009

Children whose parents refuse to have them immunized against it are 23 times more likely to get whooping cough, according to a new study that is perhaps the most definitive yet linking vaccine refusal to disease. Denver Post, Colorado.

[Consumer group pushes J&J on chemicals in shampoo.](#)

Tuesday, May 26, 2009

A coalition of health, environmental and consumer groups is demanding that health products giant Johnson & Johnson remove tiny amounts of two chemicals suspected of causing cancer from its Johnson's Baby Shampoo and other products. Miami Herald, Florida.

[Discover Magazine ignores much of vaccine-autism story.](#)

Tuesday, May 26, 2009

The following letter was sent to the editors at Discover Magazine last week regarding a recent article on vaccines and autism. The magazine claimed that the debate is over, but ignored the fact that federal and private support of research into a possible association continues. Huffington Post.

[The Discover article was referenced in this publication on May 7th.]

[Fire underscores threats and benefits of refineries.](#)

Monday, May 25, 2009

The explosion and fire at Sunoco's Marcus Hook oil refinery was a reminder of the potential for major accidents at such facilities. But day in and day out, refineries have a

significant impact, ranking among the region's top air polluters. They emit a brew of contaminants. Philadelphia Inquirer, Pennsylvania.

[Asphalt turns green!](#)

Sunday, May 24, 2009

Conventional cold mixes use petroleum-based softeners like diesel and kerosene, which allow the material to be spread at ambient temperatures. Those additives, however, give off harmful emissions known as volatile organic compounds, which destroy the ozone layer, contribute to global warming and cause cancer, experts say. New York Daily News, New York.

[Earth Talk: Scientists cite global-warming dangers.](#)

Saturday, May 23, 2009

Some of the ways global warming negatively affects human health -- especially in developing nations -- include speeding the spread of infectious diseases such as malaria and dengue fever; creating conditions that lead to potentially fatal malnutrition and diarrhea; and increasing the frequency and severity of heat waves, floods and other weather-related disasters. Baxter Bulletin, Arkansas.

[Conn. lawmakers vote to ban BPA in food containers.](#)

Saturday, May 23, 2009

Connecticut on Friday joined a growing number of state and local governments banning the sale of plastic baby bottles, food containers and cups containing Bisphenol-A. Associated Press.

[See an article about the BPA industry response: [BPA industry seeks to polish image](#)]

[Rice milk arsenic contamination prompts food watchdog warning for children to stop drinking it.](#)

Saturday, May 23, 2009

Toddlers and young children should not be given rice milk because it exposes them to arsenic, parents have been told. London Daily Mail, England.

[Breathe easy.](#)

Saturday, May 23, 2009

One of the prices humanity seems to pay for getting richer is the rise of asthma. But exact causes of this life-threatening lung disease are unknown. A group of researchers believe that asthma is not caused directly by environmental factors -- but is the result of a distress signal produced by another life hazard: eczema. Economist.

[Senate panel backs FDA oversight of cigarettes.](#)

Friday, May 22, 2009

A U.S. Senate panel on Wednesday backed legislation that would give the Food and Drug Administration power to control the advertising and manufacturing of cigarettes and other tobacco products. Reuters Health.

[Cognition, attention altered in youngsters who live with gas appliances.](#)

Friday, May 22, 2009

Preschoolers who lived in homes using gas appliances scored lower on cognitive tests and had a higher likelihood of exhibiting inattention behaviors than those in homes without gas appliances, finds a recent study. Environmental Health News.

[Dioxin exposure in the womb, extra weight add up to health problems.](#)

Thursday, May 21, 2009

New animal research suggests that overweight children may be at unique risk of adverse health problems due to exposure to dioxin before they are born. Environmental Health News.

[Tobacco smoke exposed kids risk early emphysema.](#)

Thursday, May 21, 2009

Children who are regularly exposed to tobacco smoke appear to be at increased risk of developing early emphysema later in life, according to new research. Reuters Health.

Kidney stones seen on the increase in kids.

Thursday, May 21, 2009

Kidney stones -- a painful condition usually thought to plague people in middle age -- are on the rise in children, due in part to a poor diet, physical inactivity, and rising rates of childhood obesity. Reuters Health.

[See a similar article about a rise in disease related to lifestyle: [Child diabetes cases 'to double'](#)]

'Miracle' autism drug called junk science.

Thursday, May 21, 2009

Desperate to help their autistic children, hundreds of parents nationwide are turning to an unproven and potentially damaging treatment: multiple high doses of a powerful castration drug. The therapy is based on a theory, unsupported by mainstream medicine, that autism is caused by a harmful link between mercury and testosterone. Chicago Tribune, Illinois.

Elderly need more 'sun vitamin.'

Wednesday, May 20, 2009

Spending more time in the sun could help older people cut their risk of heart disease and diabetes say experts. Sun exposure helps the skin make vitamin D - a vitamin older people are generally deficient in due to their lifestyles and ageing processes. BBC.

Women smokers at greater risk.

Wednesday, May 20, 2009

Women may be more vulnerable to lung damage from smoking than men, according to new research. Even a few cigarettes a day is not safe. Toronto Star, Canada.

Dangers of food packaging and BPAs.

Wednesday, May 20, 2009

Food packages, including cans, many bottles and plastic or foil "pouches," all contain at least some plastic -- regardless of their appearance. And unfortunately, much of the plastic used these days contains the additive bisphenol A. Oakland Tribune, California.

[See a related article: [Drinking from plastic bottles 'increases exposure to gender-bending chemical'](#)]

Tree leaves reveal deadly pollution levels.

Wednesday, May 20, 2009

Silently lining the roads, trees seem passive garnish to a bustling human society. But they are also sentinels, their leaves taking careful measurements of the microscopic particles of pollution that humans generate, which stealthily claim hundreds of thousands of lives each year across the U.S. and Europe. Discovery Channel.

Toxic 'carbon tet' lingers in air near schools.

Wednesday, May 20, 2009

Despite efforts to eliminate carbon tetrachloride -- which eats up the Earth's ozone layer, is classified by the U.S. EPA as a probable human carcinogen, and is known to damage the liver, kidneys and brain -- it still shows up at elevated levels around the world, scientists say, including outside of many schools. USA Today.

[See a related article: [Banned toxic chemical lingers in Louisville air](#)]

Surrounded by plastic, NICU infants tested for risk.

Wednesday, May 20, 2009

Scientists say the nation's sickest newborns are exposed to unusually high levels of phthalates -- chemicals in plastics that can mimic hormones -- because they often spend days or weeks connected to feeding tubes, breathing tubes and intravenous lines made of plastic. All Things Considered, NPR.

Most of the news articles above come from Environmental Health News, <http://www.environmentalhealthnews.org/>.

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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