



Collaborative on Health and the Environment - Washington



Biweekly Bulletin September 23, 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

Northwest Children's Environmental Health Forum

CHE-WA's Children's Environmental Health Working Group is hosting a Northwest Children's Environmental Health Forum October 1-2, 2009, at the Tukwila Community Center. Confirmed speakers include many regional experts and these national leaders:



- Ted Schettler, MD, MPH, Science & Environmental Health Network
- Bruce Lanphear, MD, MPH, Simon Frazier University
- Michael Skinner, PhD, Washington State University
- Shanna Swan, PhD, University of Rochester

Visit the [forum web page](#) for the agenda, to register and for more information.

Lessons Learned

Silent Spring - Rachel Carson

by Steven G. Gilbert, PhD, DABT

"We are rightly appalled by the genetic effects of radiation; how then, can we be indifferent to the same effect in chemicals we disseminate widely in our environment?"

- Rachel Carson, author, *Silent Spring* (1962)

"The 'control of nature' is a phrase conceived in arrogance, born of the Neanderthal age of biology and the convenience of man."

- Rachel Carson, *Silent Spring* (1962)



Rachel Louise Carson (May 27, 1907 - April 14, 1964), born on a family farm outside Pittsburgh, was a marine biologist whose book, *Silent Spring*, is credited with having launched the global environmental movement. *Silent Spring*, published September 22, 1962, had an immense effect in the United States, where it spurred a re-evaluation of the national pesticide policy. Carson's work directly led to the banning of DDT and the first modern environmental movement. She was posthumously awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom on June 9, 1980.

More on Rachel Carson - <http://toxipedia.org/x/JAU>

Looking back to go forward

Lessons Learned is a 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](#).

Announcements

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

[EPA joins global call-to-action on radon cancer dangers.](#)

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is joining the World Health Organization's first global call-to-action on cancer risk from radon in homes.

[Safer chemicals campaign platform.](#)

The Safer Chemicals, Healthy Families campaign has published a platform for Reform of the Toxic Substances Control Act. The group invites organizations to sign the platform and join the campaign.

[H1N1 flu poster available for printing and posting.](#)

The World Health Organization has created a poster that may be hung up in businesses and shared with friends and relatives.

[Report: School Indoor Air Quality: State Policy Strategies for Maintaining Healthy Learning Environments.](#)

This report discusses how state policy can ensure that all K-12 schools address basic IAQ issues as part of their ongoing operations and maintenance activities.

[Report: Opportunities to Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions through Materials and Land Management Practices.](#)

There is much potential to reduce the nation's greenhouse gases through recycling, waste reduction, smart growth, and by reusing formerly contaminated sites including brownfields. US Environmental Protection Agency.

[Safe Cosmetics video.](#)

Lead in lipstick, carcinogens in baby shampoo -- you've heard the rumors, now get the real story behind what's in your cosmetics and what you can do about it. The Campaign for Safe Cosmetics.

[EPA launches fall tour to help Americans fight climate change and save money.](#)

This year's "Change the World, Start with Energy Star" fall campaign includes a national, multicity, multimedia tour of the Energy Star Exhibit House, which showcases energy-efficient products and practices. US Environmental Protection Agency.

[EPA seeks comment on greener site cleanups.](#)

The US Environmental Protection Agency is seeking public comment on a new strategy that would make cleanups at hazardous waste sites greener. The Superfund Green Remediation Strategy is an initial effort to outline key actions and related activities that can be undertaken to promote green remediation and to reduce energy use.

[Call for proposals: Greater Research Opportunities undergraduate fellowships.](#)

Fellowships for bachelor-level students in environmental fields of study will provide support for recipients' junior and senior years of undergraduate study and for an internship at an EPA facility during the summer between their junior and senior years. Applications must be received by December 10, 2009. US Environmental Protection Agency

[Job opening: Raleigh, North Carolina.](#)

The World Health Organization (WHO) has a fixed-term, two-year appointment available for a medical officer. A minimum of 10 years postgraduate experience in national and international human environmental health research and/or training is required, with at least five years experience in establishing multidisciplinary, multilateral international programs on research and/or training desirable. The deadline for applications is October 2, 2009.

[Job opening: Milwaukee, Wisconsin.](#)

The Endometriosis Association is seeking an education program coordinator/associate director to manage and coordinate the Association's Education Program, including writing, copyediting, proofreading and producing/publishing literature, the website, and

the volunteers, staff, and vendors involved in this work.

[Job opening: Tumwater, Washington.](#)

There is currently one opening for a project Health Services Consultant 4 (HSC 4) within the Epidemiology, Health Statistics and Public Health Laboratories Division, Non-Infectious Conditions Epidemiology Unit. This position is in the Biomonitoring for Protection of Public Health in Washington State project. The deadline is September 29, 2009.

Upcoming Events

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

1) Preventing Injury and Chronic Disease through Smart Growth Policy

Thursday September 24, 2009

2:30 - 4:00 p.m. Eastern time

Sponsor: The Association of State and Territorial Health Officials, National Association of County and City Health Officials and State and Territorial Injury Prevention Directors Association

This webcast will be the first in a two-part series that will focus on the relationship between injury and chronic disease prevention, Smart Growth, and community design. During this webcast, participants will learn more about Smart Growth policies and the proactive steps that public health practitioners can take to influence transportation and land-use decisions. Participants will also learn additional strategies they can use to ensure that public health is a primary consideration in community design. Our featured speaker will be Mary Lee, a practicing attorney and expert on housing, land use and community economic development. Ms. Lee is the associate director for PolicyLink, a nonprofit national research and action institute advancing economic and social equity.

Price: unknown

[Visit the website](#)

Contact: 770-690-9000 or stipdainfo@stipda.org

2) The Vaccine Seminar

Saturday September 26, 2009 (other dates and locations are available through mid November)

8:00 a.m.

Bellevue, Washington

Sponsor: The Doctor Within

This 12-hour multimedia presentation covers topics including the history of vaccines, their ingredients, scientific proof of efficacy, exemption laws, new vaccines, the new flu vaccine controversy and more. A detailed course description is available on the website. Continuing education credits are available.

Price: \$169 advance or \$199 at door for the 12-hour continuing education accredited seminars, \$99 for the general public, spouse or student

[Visit the website](#)

Contact: 408-298-1800 doc@thedoctorwithin.com

3) Sustainable Ballard Festival

Saturday and Sunday, September 26 - 27, 2009

noon - 5:00 p.m.

Ballard, Washington

at Ballard Commons Park, corner of NW 56th & 22nd NW

Sponsor: KBCS FM, Chinook Book, Goodfunds Wealth Management and others listed on the [Sponsors page](#)

The Sustainable Ballard Festival is a community fair and the culmination of all of our hard work - a showcase for the activities and initiatives our neighbors have engaged in throughout the year. The 2009 Festival will feature live music, how-to workshops, fun & educational activities, local and sustainable businesses and much more. Learn about transportation options, local eating, clean energy, waste and water reduction, and much more through activities such as Undriver Licensing, Chef and Gardening Demos, Green Home and Urban Farm Zones, test driving e-cars, ebikes and scooters, creating new fashions from old clothing, and lots of kids activities. Please browse our festival pages for information on volunteering, sponsoring, and festival speakers and schedules as they develop.

Price: free

[Visit the website](#)

Contact: info@sustainableballard.org

4) CHE Cafe: A Conversation with Author Doug Abrams

Wednesday September 30, 2009

11:00 a.m. Pacific / 2:00 p.m. Eastern time

Sponsor: Collaborative on Health and the Environment

Join CHE Director Elise Miller for a conversation with Doug Abrams, author of the newly released novel *Eye of the Whale*. The novel weaves science throughout the story, addressing important issues of endocrine disruption and toxins. Abrams will talk about his writing process, how he included leading scientists, physicians and others in his research and why he chose to address the issues of endocrine disruption in his work.

Price: free

[Visit the website](#)

Contact: info@healthandenvironment.org

5) Community Indicators Consortium 2009 International Conference

Thursday and Friday, October 1 - 2, 2009

Bellevue, Washington

at the Meydenbauer Center

Sponsor: Community Indicators Consortium

The theme is "Community Indicators as Tools for Social Change," and the conference itself is organized into four focus areas and six topic areas. The focus areas are aspects of successful indicator initiatives that are important whenever indicators are used. The topic areas are specific areas of public planning and policy in which indicators are useful.

Price: see the website

[Visit the website](#)

Contact: Community Indicators Consortium, 860-808-7487 or ED@communityindicators.net

6) Fundamental Contaminant Chemistry

Monday October 19, 2009

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

Seattle, Washington

at Northwest Environmental Training Center, 650 South Orcas Street, Suite 220

Sponsor: Northwest Environmental Training Center

This course provides participants with an overview of key chemistry concepts associated with environmental contamination and provides a foundation for understanding contaminant transport and fate. This material is intended for environmental professionals who are not chemists, but who require a fundamental understanding of chemistry principles for their work. This course is recommended for all environmental professionals working with contaminated soil and water with minimal formal training in the subject. It is also recommended for project managers seeking a review of the subject. This course is part of a series and is immediately followed by the Contaminant Chemistry and Transport in Soil and Groundwater Workshop and then the Monitored Natural Attenuation course. Attendees may register for courses individually.

Price: \$250, or \$195 reduced tuition available for Native American tribes; government employees; nonprofits; students; and NAEP, NEBC, NWAEP members

[Visit the website](#)

Contact: Northwest Environmental Training Center, 206-762-1979 or info@nwetc.org

7) Climate Change and You: Putting a Face on Global Warming

Monday October 19 - Wednesday October 28, 2009

Sponsor: EcoRes Forum

The purpose of the EcoRes Forum E-Conference Series is to provide an easily accessible platform for moderated discussions among global stakeholders about the socio-cultural aspects of climate change. The forum includes several tracks, including one on health and nutrition.

Price: free

[Visit the website](#)

Contact: see the [contact web page](#)

8) The Multi-Ethnic Study of Atherosclerosis and Air Pollution (MESA Air): Mid-Course Update

Thursday October 22, 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

Joel Kaufman, MD, MPH, will speak.

Price: free

[Visit the website](#)

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

News and Journal Articles

[Aluminum hydroxide injections lead to motor deficits and motor neuron degeneration.](#)

Tuesday, September 22, 2009

A second series of experiments was conducted on mice injected with six doses of aluminum hydroxide. Behavioural analyses in these mice revealed significant impairments in a number of motor functions as well as diminished spatial memory capacity. *Journal of Inorganic Biochemistry*.

[See a related article: [Benefit and doubt in vaccine additive](#)]

[The case for bans on smoking.](#)

Tuesday, September 22, 2009

The growing numbers of bans on smoking in restaurants, bars and workplaces, intended to protect nonsmokers against second-hand-tobacco smoke, are turning into potent weapons in the battle to prevent heart attacks. Wall Street Journal.

[See related articles: [Second-hand smoking results in liver disease, study finds](#) and [Secondhand smoke risks underestimated, survey finds](#)]

[National Autistic Society comes off the fence: MMR isn't linked to autism.](#)

Tuesday, September 22, 2009

A leading British organization supporting people with autism and their families has until now remained agnostic about links between the MMR vaccine and autism. No longer. It has issued a new statement asserting that MMR is not associated with the condition. London Times, United Kingdom.

[See related articles: [Flu vaccine rekindles debate over connection to autism](#) and [Vaccine skepticism is in the air](#)]

[GAO audit: Schools slow to get alerts about tainted food.](#)

Tuesday, September 22, 2009

Federal agencies that supply food for 31 million schoolchildren fail to ensure that tainted products are pulled quickly from cafeterias, a federal audit obtained by USA TODAY finds. USA Today.

[On the children's menu: dangerous levels of salt.](#)

Monday, September 21, 2009

Children's menu items at popular restaurant chains across Canada contain dangerously high amounts of sodium -- in many cases, enough to raise a child's risk of developing high blood pressure, cardiovascular disease and other serious health problems. Toronto Globe and Mail, Ontario.

[Study puts pesticide's safety in spotlight once again.](#)

Monday, September 21, 2009

Overseas research has discredited the safety assessment data used by the national pesticides authority to justify using one of the world's most toxic crop sprays, endosulfan. Sydney Morning Herald, Australia.

[Hormone therapy nearly doubles risk of death from lung cancer, study says.](#)

Sunday, September 20, 2009

Hormone replacement therapy, already linked to increased risk of breast cancer, heart disease and stroke, nearly doubles a woman's risk of dying from lung cancer, researchers reported, a finding that may be the final blow for a therapy already rapidly declining in use. Los Angeles Times, California.

[Cancer deaths higher for some DOE workers.](#)

Sunday, September 20, 2009

Construction workers at Department of Energy nuclear sites, including Oak Ridge, had a significantly increased rate of cancer deaths, according to a study published recently in the American Journal of Industrial Medicine. Knoxville News Sentinel, Tennessee.

[St. Jude Hospital study links Parkinson's, bird flu.](#)

Sunday, September 20, 2009

In a study offering tantalizing clues into the origins of a devastating and mysterious ailment, researchers concluded that people who survive a strain of bird flu have a significantly greater risk of developing Parkinson's disease. Nashua Telegraph, New Hampshire.

[Waste incineration health risks low, panelists claim.](#)

Friday, September 18, 2009

A European Union toxicology expert says a modern garbage incinerator should pose no significant health hazard to nearby residents, particularly when stacked against more plentiful but mundane sources of toxins. BC Local News, British Columbia.

[Acrylamide: Why French fries shouldn't be overheated.](#)

Friday, September 18, 2009

America's most popular vegetables -- golden brown French fries and crispy potato chips - - aren't just loaded with fat and sodium. Starchy fried foods also can contain a chemical called acrylamide that is quietly raising concern as a potential human carcinogen. Chicago Tribune, Illinois.

[Health ills abound as farm runoff fouls wells.](#)

Friday, September 18, 2009

Runoff from all but the largest farms is essentially unregulated by many of the federal laws intended to prevent pollution and protect drinking water sources. New York Times.

[Detox! The movement to reform chemicals policy.](#)

Thursday, September 17, 2009

We live, eat, and breathe in a complex brew of industrial chemicals, some eighty thousand of them. And all but a handful have never been tested to find out if they're safe. A World of Possibilities.

[Individual characteristics associated with PBDE levels in US human milk samples.](#)

Thursday, September 17, 2009

PBDEs were detected in nearly all human milk samples, varying by maternal weight and age, and over the course of breastfeeding. Environmental Health Perspectives.

[Should we be worried about trace carcinogens in shampoos if the government says they're not toxic?](#)

Thursday, September 17, 2009

You won't spot it on ingredient lists, but the Organic Consumers Association found 1,4-dioxane in 46 per cent of "natural" and "organic" branded shampoos, body washes and hand soaps tested. Now Toronto, Ontario.

[U.S. reconsiders Bush-era smog pollution standards.](#)

Thursday, September 17, 2009

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency said on Wednesday it would reconsider Bush-era standards for smog pollution that have been slammed by environmentalists for not being aggressive enough. Reuters.

[Cell phones: Precautions recommended.](#)

Thursday, September 17, 2009

Several government bodies around the world suggest that anyone who uses a cell phone would be well advised to keep a little distance between the phone and their body. And when people need to make a call, they should minimize radiation exposures by phoning only where reception is really good. Science News.

See related articles: [Cell-phone radiation risks: why the jury's still out](#), [Cell phones: Feds probing health impacts](#), [Study reveals how much cellphone radiation you're getting](#) and [An online tool to rate cellphone radiation](#) and watch US Senate hearings on cell-phone and health: [Senate Appropriations Subcommittee hearing on the health effects of cell phone use](#)]

[New web site offers toxic chemicals tally on numerous consumer products.](#)

Thursday, September 17, 2009

A new Web site that rates consumer products on their toxic chemical content launched Wednesday, providing information on goods ranging from automobiles and pet products to school supplies and women's accessories. Contra Costa Times, California.

[See a related article: [Study finds toxic chemicals in pet toys](#)]

[Effort to ban BPA in California fails.](#)

Thursday, September 17, 2009

In February, a bill was introduced to ban BPA from infant formula cans and baby bottles and cups. Last week that bill failed to pass in the Assembly. Why? San Francisco Chronicle, California.

[Chemical pollutants linked to fewer female births.](#)

Thursday, September 17, 2009

High exposure to PCBs and PBBs, now-banned industrial chemicals that persist in the environment, may lead to fewer female births, a new study suggests. What this means for the public at large is unknown. Reuters Health.

[Fight grows over labels on household cleaners.](#)

Thursday, September 17, 2009

Manufacturers of detergents, household cleansers and furniture polish are under pressure from consumers to come clean about the chemicals in their products. Some have been associated with asthma, birth defects and fertility problems in higher doses. New York Times.

[Low lead levels harming children.](#)

Thursday, September 17, 2009

Researchers say the toxic effects of lead on the central nervous system of young children are obvious even below the current so-called safe level of lead in the blood. They are recommending the threshold should be halved. BBC.

[See related articles: [Lead in bone associated with increased risk of death from cardiovascular disease in men](#), [Children 'exposed to dangerous levels of lead from soil'](#) and [Ashland U. chemist keeps kids unleaded](#)]

[Environmental group reveals toxic chemicals in consumer products.](#)

Thursday, September 17, 2009

Some tennis balls for dogs, chew toys for cats and women's plastic handbags were among the common household items found to contain lead and other toxic chemicals in recent tests, a nonprofit environmental group reported on Wednesday. New York Times.

[EPA turns the lights on mountaintop removal.](#)

Wednesday, September 16, 2009

In a highly anticipated announcement, the EPA declared that all seventy-nine pending mountaintop removal mining permits in four states would "likely cause water quality impacts" and sent them on for additional review under the Clean Water Act. The Nation.

[Doctors warn on climate failure.](#)

Wednesday, September 16, 2009

Failure to agree on a new UN climate deal in December will bring a "global health catastrophe", say 18 of the world's professional medical organisations. BBC.

[Pocket-size pollution sensors promise big improvement in monitoring personal environment.](#)

Wednesday, September 16, 2009

Is black carbon soot emitted by school buses raising childhood asthma rates? Technology to track what children are exposed to -- and when, where and for how long -- can now fit in the palm of your hand. Scientific American.

[See related articles: [The effect of ambient air pollution on sperm quality](#), [Association of heart rate variability in taxi drivers with marked changes of particulate air pollution in Beijing in 2008](#) and [Texas air rules violate federal law, EPA says](#)]

[Many plastic shoes toxic -- study.](#)

Tuesday, September 15, 2009

In its study titled "Chemicals Up Close", the Swedish Society for Nature Conservation found "disturbing concentrations" of phthalates in a variety of plastic-based flip-flops, sandals, clogs, and other shoes. Quezon City ABS-CBN News, Philippines.

[Washington compiling top 50 chemicals toxic to kids.](#)

Tuesday, September 15, 2009

In 2008, Washington became the first state in the nation to pass a law requiring manufacturers to report whether certain products contain chemicals toxic to children. Associated Press.

[Is swimming pool chlorine fueling the allergy epidemic?](#)

Tuesday, September 15, 2009

Swimming in a chlorinated pool may boost the odds that a child susceptible to asthma and allergies will develop these problems, a study released today indicates. Reuters.

[Mapping the epigenome.](#)

Monday, September 14, 2009

Growing recognition of the importance of epigenetic processes in human development and disease has fueled an insatiable thirst for new technologies to detect epigenetic modifications on a genomewide, or "epigenomic," scale. Chemical & Engineering News.

[Advocates tout pesticide ban.](#)

Sunday, September 13, 2009

Calgary is lagging behind other major Canadian cities in protecting residents from the cancer-causing toxic, cosmetic pesticides, say advocates. Calgary Sun, Alberta.

[See related articles: [Work use of pesticides linked with Parkinson's](#) and [Coumaphos exposure and incident cancer among male participants in the Agricultural Health Study \(AHS\)](#)]

[Clean water laws are neglected, at a cost to health.](#)

Sunday, September 13, 2009

In the past five years, companies and workplaces have violated pollution laws more than 500,000 times. But the vast majority of polluters have escaped punishment. New York Times.

[Falling age of puberty in girls presents health risk.](#)

Saturday, September 12, 2009

The shift towards early puberty in girls is a public-health problem. Early puberty opens the window of exposure to estrogen in girls and increases the risk of breast cancer, which strikes one in eight U.S. women. Burlington Free Press, Vermont.

[Born to be big.](#)

Saturday, September 12, 2009

Evidence has been steadily accumulating that certain hormone-mimicking pollutants, ubiquitous in the food chain, act on genes in the fetus and newborn to make more fat cells, which stay with you for life. And they may alter metabolic rate, so that the body hoards calories rather than burning them. Newsweek.

[Nearly any lifetime smoking ups breast cancer risk.](#)

Friday, September 11, 2009

Women taking the next puff of a cigarette might consider this: smoking 100 or more cigarettes may substantially increase their odds of developing breast cancer, researchers report. Reuters Health.

[See a related article: [Multiple factors impact adolescent smoking risk](#)]

[Hispanics face high cancer risk from breathing household chemical.](#)

Friday, September 11, 2009

Hispanics have a cancer risk from air pollutants as much as five times the rate of others living in the same cities. But it isn't outdoor air posing the greatest danger; it is something much closer to home: Toilet deodorizers and moth repellents in their bathrooms and closets. Researchers call for a ban on the carcinogenic chemical used in the consumer products. Environmental Health News.

At long last, environmental supplement to GDP takes shape.

Thursday, September 10, 2009

Yesterday, the European Union announced plans to launch an indicator this year to measure environmental stress. The index will reflect the pollution and environmental harm within the bloc's member states. Greenwire.

Traffic noise hurts.

Wednesday, September 09, 2009

The rumbling of cars, trucks and trains isn't just annoying; it can raise your blood pressure. Los Angeles Times.

Supervise children's use of hand sanitizer, experts say.

Wednesday, September 09, 2009

As the popularity of alcohol-based hand sanitizer has risen, so has a debate about whether its germ-fighting ability outweighs potential risks that the alcohol-based cleansers may pose to youngsters if ingested. Houston Chronicle, Texas.

Toxicity testing gets a makeover.

Wednesday, September 09, 2009

The European Commission has revealed details of a major new research programme to develop a modern, high-throughput approach to repeat-dose toxicity testing. Nature.

Low dose makes the poison.

Wednesday, September 09, 2009

Modern toxicology doesn't typically test chemicals for what they do at low doses. But, sometimes, small amounts of substances can be harmful to human health, especially when it comes to the hormone-mimicking chemicals known as endocrine disruptors. Living On Earth.

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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