



Bulletin of the Canadian Network for Human Health and the Environment

Number 12

August 2009

Welcome to the twelfth Bulletin of the Canadian Network for Human Health and the Environment!

Visit us at: www.cnhhe-rcshe.ca

If you have new information that would be useful to others on any aspect of human health and the environment, please forward it to us for inclusion in the next Bulletin:

barb.mackinnon@nb.lung.ca. The deadline for the next Bulletin is **September 11, 2009**.

CONFERENCES

Canadian Standards Association to Host Forum

The Canadian Standards Association, a not-for-profit membership-based association, is presenting a forum in downtown Toronto, Canada on September 21-22, 2009 for organizations who are interested in learning about the new trends in standards, legislation, policies, regulation and emissions reporting of Greenhouse Gases in Canada and the U.S. For the full brochure, please visit: https://learningcentre.csa.ca/lc_site/be.asp?gid=50016245&tid=50041499.

Professional Training Workshop for Physicians and Licensed Health Professionals

Friday, September 25th, 2009 8:30am – 4:30pm

Prince Arthur Waterfront Hotel and Suites, 17 N. Cumberland St., Thunder Bay, ON P7A 4K8

The Canadian Institute of Child Health (CICH), in collaboration with the Ontario College of Family Physicians (OCFP) and the Ontario Ministry of the Environment (OME) cordially invite you to attend a one-day children's health and the environment education and training workshop for physicians and health professionals. The content for this workshop is based on children's environmental health training modules developed by the World Health Organization (WHO). This program meets the accreditation criteria of The College of Family Physicians of Canada and has been accredited by the Ontario Chapter for up to 5.5 Mainpro-M1 credits. To view the flyer, please visit: <http://www.cnhhe-rcshe.ca/html/events.html>.

GENERAL

Notices with respect to Batch 4 of the CMP Challenge were published in the *Canada Gazette* Part I, Vol. 143 No. 31 on Saturday, August 1, 2009. The public has until September 30, 2009 to submit written comments on the risk management approach documents to the Minister of the Environment and to the Minister of Health. For three of the 18 substances in Batch 4, the conclusion of the final screening assessments is that the substances meet one or more of the criteria in section 64 of the *Canadian Environmental Protection Act, 1999* (CEPA 1999), and the Government is proposing to add these substances to Schedule 1 of the Act. The final screening assessment reports for these substances and the risk management approach documents for the

three substances that are proposed harmful to health and/or the environment are available on the Chemical Substances Web site at: <http://www.chemicalsubstanceschimiques.gc.ca/en/>. You may obtain paper copies of any of the screening assessment reports or risk management approach documents by contacting Andrea Marchylo at 613-952-9376 or by email at Andrea_Marchylo@hc-sc.gc.ca.

CMP Draft Tracking Tool Offered

This spreadsheet is designed to track the risk assessment management decisions pertaining to Challenge substances of the CMP, and the government's justifications for these; NGOs are welcome to add and utilize it according to their purposes. To view the spreadsheet, please visit: <http://www.cen-rce.org/CMP/indexcmp.html>.

Videos and Presentations from CEC's Council Session and Climate Policy Workshop Now Online

Video recordings of all public sessions as well as speaker presentations from the Commission for Environmental Cooperation's (CEC) annual Council session and related meetings are now available on the CEC's website. Downloadable videos and presentations from the meetings held in Denver, Colorado, from 22-24 June can be found at: <http://www.cec.org/council>.

America's Children and the Environment Website

The America's Children and the Environment website has recently been updated with the most current data available for measures of contaminants, body burdens and illnesses important for children's environmental health. To learn more, please visit: <http://www.epa.gov/envirohealth/children/index.htm>.

CDC Announces New Website for Health Tracking

The National Environmental Public Health Tracking Network is a system of integrated health, exposure, and hazard information and data from a variety of national, state, and city sources. On the Tracking Network, you can explore information and view maps, tables, and charts about health and environment across the country. To view the tool, please visit: <http://ephtracking.cdc.gov/showHome.action>.

European Sustainable Development Network Offers Newsletter

The ESDN Newsletter is circulated on a quarterly basis. It informs subscribers about new ESDN Quarterly Reports on a specific topic, news on SD strategies in Europe, developments within the ESDN and selected international events and upcoming ESDN activities. To register for the newsletter, please visit: <http://www.sd-network.eu/?k=resources&s=newsletter>.

HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT NEWS

Lack of Biodiversity May Make Us Sicker

Put all the living species together and you have an impressive array of mechanisms to fend off pathogens or contain them in particular ecosystems that have defenses built in. This arrangement, however, is now under serious threat: humans are changing the balance of ecosystems the world over and taking these defenses apart. These warped ecologies become ground zero for new and deadly infectious diseases, which emerge and spread at an ever-greater rate. To view the full article, please visit: <http://www.newsweek.com/id/202865>.

BPA Linked to Cell Damage in Post-Menopausal Women But Not Men, Younger Women

Women in menopause are more prone to the BPA-associated health effects of inflammation and oxidative stress than either men or women who are still menstruating, finds this study of Korean adults. This is the first time BPA has been linked to these conditions in people and suggests older women may be more susceptible to the chemical's estrogen-like manner that drives these particular types of cell damage. Oxidative stress can be involved with aging, cancer and other disease states. To view the full article, please visit:

<http://www.environmentalhealthnews.org/ehs/news/science/bpa-linked-to-cell-damage-in-post-menopausal-women-but-not-men-younger-women/>.

DDT Breakdown Chemical (DDE) Alters Thyroid Hormone Function in Pregnant Women

Researchers report that a woman's DDE exposure during early pregnancy is associated with altered thyroid hormone levels, a condition that could affect fetal brain development. Pregnant women with higher blood levels of a long-lived pesticide residue were more likely to have skewed thyroid hormone levels, finds a study conducted in Spain. To view the full article, please visit: <http://www.environmentalhealthnews.org/ehs/news/science/dde-in-early-pregnancy-affects-thyroid-hormones/>.

Polluted Air Impairs Neurons that Regulate Heart Rate in Mice

In mice, short-term exposure to fine particulate matter reduces responsiveness of specialized neurons that regulate cardiac rhythm. Scientists at the University of California Davis believe that this reduced activity may be responsible for the cardiovascular disease associated with air pollution. To view the full article, please visit:

<http://www.environmentalhealthnews.org/ehs/news/science/particulates-alter-neurons-that-regulate-mice-heart-rate/>.

Anxiety, Inattention, Poor Decisions Increase in Kids with Higher Lead Levels

Higher blood lead levels in children were associated with specific learning and behavior changes, including more anxiety and deficits in planning, abstract thinking and determining appropriate behavior, finds this large study from India. To view the full article, please visit:

<http://www.environmentalhealthnews.org/ehs/news/science/anxiety-inattention-poor-decisions-linked-to-lead-in-kids/>.

Clean Fuels Could Reduce Deaths from Ship Smokestacks by 40,000 Annually

Rising levels of smokestack emissions from oceangoing ships will cause an estimated 87,000 deaths worldwide each year by 2012 — almost one-third higher than previously believed, according to the second major study on that topic. The study says that government action to reduce sulfur emissions from shipping fuel (the source of air pollution linked to an increased risk of illness and death) could reduce that toll. For the full article, please visit:

<http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2009/07/090708094835.htm?tr=y&aid=5089425>.

U.S. EPA Administrator Jackson Takes New Steps to Improve Water Quality

The U.S. EPA has made available comprehensive reports and data on water enforcement in all 50 states. This is part of Administrator Lisa P. Jackson's larger effort to enhance transparency, promote the public's right to know about water quality and provide information on EPA's actions to protect water under the Clean Water Act. Facilities and Enforcement Activities related to the Clean Water Act. To view the report, please visit:

<http://www.epa.gov/compliance/data/results/performance/cwa/index.html>. EPA also launched

new Web-based tools to help the public search, assess, and analyze the data the agency used to help prepare those reports: <http://www.epa.gov/compliance/state/srf/index.html>.

Health Characteristics of Adults Aged 55 Years and Over

The National Center for Health Statistics recently released a report, "Health characteristics of adults aged 55 years and over: United States, 2004-2007." This report is based on data from the 2004 through 2007 Sample Adult component of the annual National Health Interview Survey. The report concluded that prevalence rates for fair or poor health status increased with advancing age; and that poor adults with Medicaid coverage were the most disadvantaged in terms of health status. The report also found that health disparities exist across subgroups of older adults and vary by age. To view report, please visit:

<http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nhsr/nhsr016.pdf>.

Infectious Disease in a Warming World: How Weather Influenced West Nile Virus in the United States

Weather effects on West Nile virus (WNV) mosquito populations in the United States have been widely reported, but few studies assess their overall impact on transmission to humans. Jonathan Soverow and colleagues investigated meteorological conditions associated with reported human WNV cases in the United States. They found that increasing weekly maximum temperature and weekly cumulative temperature were similarly and significantly associated with a 35-83% higher incidence of reported WNV infection over the next month. They concluded that "warmer temperatures, elevated humidity, and heavy precipitation increased the rate of human WNV infection in the United States independent of season and each others' effects." For more information, please visit: <http://www.ehponline.org/members/2009/0800487/0800487.pdf>.

UN Report Pinpoints Cancer Risk from Radon in Homes

New studies have found direct evidence of a lung cancer risk from the presence of colourless, odourless radon gas in many homes, a United Nations committee said in a report released on Tuesday. Officials on the U.N. Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation (UNSCEAR) said the finding provided the first quantifiable evidence of the risk in homes from radon, long seen as a potential health risk. For the full article, please visit:

<http://www.reuters.com/article/healthNews/idUSTRE56K3LX20090721>.

Do Contaminants Play a Role in Diabetes? Evidence is Growing

A Great Lakes study linking a pesticide in fish to diabetes adds to the growing chorus of studies suggesting that environmental contaminants may play a role in the widespread disease. "The science has been growing very, very rapidly, and to my mind, it's one of the most exciting developments in the study of diabetes," said David O. Carpenter, director of the Institute for Health and the Environment at the University of Albany. To view the full article, please visit:

<http://www.environmentalhealthnews.org/ehs/news/diabetes-and-environmental-contaminants>.

Minireview: The Case for Obesogens

Recent research in a number of laboratories suggests the existence of chemicals that alter regulation of energy balance to favor weight gain and obesity. These obesogens derail the homeostatic mechanisms important for weight control, such that exposed individuals are predisposed to weight gain, despite normal diet and exercise. To view the full review, please visit: http://www.cnhhe-rcshe.ca/pdf/grun_molendo-minireview.pdf.

Ozone, Nitrogen Change The Way Rising Carbon Dioxide Affects Earth's Water

Through a recent modeling experiment, a team of NASA-funded researchers concluded that models of climate change may be underestimating how much water is likely to run off the land and back into the sea as atmospheric chemistry changes. Runoff may be as much as 17 percent higher in forests of the eastern United States when models account for changes in soil nitrogen levels and atmospheric ozone exposure. To view the full article, please visit:

<http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2009/07/090709120657.htm>.

CFC Replacements Intensify Climate Concerns

Scientists say the chemicals that helped solve the last global environmental crisis - the hole in the ozone layer - are making the current one worse. The chemicals, called hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), were introduced widely in the 1990s to replace ozone-depleting gases used in air conditioners, refrigerators and insulating foam. They worked: The earth's protective shield seems to be recovering. But researchers say what's good for ozone is bad for climate change. In the atmosphere, these replacement chemicals act like "super" greenhouse gases, with a heat-trapping power that can be 4,470 times that of carbon dioxide. To view the full article, please visit:

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/07/19/AR2009071901817.html>.

Tribal Indoor Air Quality (IAQ) Website Launched

This brand new resource is designed to bring together the community of tribal IAQ professionals to share, network and learn in order to take action to promote healthy indoor environments in tribal communities. For more information, please visit: <http://www.epa.gov/iaqtribal>.

Endocrine Society Calls for Precautionary Action

The Endocrine Society, a highly respected international medical society of over 14,000 members in 100 countries, issued a seminal new report stating that exposures to endocrine disrupting chemicals are a growing threat to human health and well-being. The report explicitly states that "the precautionary principle is critical to enhancing health." For more information on the report, please visit: <http://www.endo-society.org/journals/scientificstatements/index.cfm>.

Co-Operative Gives £53,000 to Canadian Cree for Tar Sands Lawsuit

People in the UK are being urged to support a legal fight by a Canadian Cree community against "tar sands" – a form of fossil fuel which campaigners warn could help push the world into a climate disaster. The Co-operative Financial Services is backing the Beaver Lake Cree Nation, who are fighting the extraction of tar sands from their ancestral lands in the boreal forest of Alberta because of the damage it is doing to their environment. To view the full article, please visit: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/2009/jul/20/canada-cree-tar-sands>.

Red Meat and Poultry: Two Major Sources of PBDE Exposure

People who eat meat and poultry have significantly higher levels of common flame retardants compared to vegetarians. The findings indicate that food may be a more important source of the contaminants, known as PBDEs, than previously thought. To view the full article, please visit:

<http://www.environmentalhealthnews.org/ehs/newscience/red-meat-and-poultry-sources-of-pbde/>.

UNICEF Reports: Climate Change and Child Health

A. Climate Change and Children: A Human Security Challenge (Policy Review Paper)

The study reviews the implications of climate change for children and future generations, drawing on relevant experiences in different sectors and countries of promoting child rights and well-being. It traces in considerable detail the pathways through which shifts in temperature and precipitation patterns create serious additional barriers to the achievement of the child survival, development and protection goals embraced by the international community. The role of children as vital participants and agents of change emerges as a key theme. To view the full report, please visit: http://www.unicef-irc.org/publications/pdf/climate_change.pdf.

B. Global Climate Change and Child Health: A Review of Pathways, Impacts and Measures to Improve the Evidence Base

This paper reviews the published evidence of pathways and impacts of global climate change on child health. The review was occasioned by the recognition that most of the work to date on climate change and health lacks clear focus on the children's dimension, while the climate change and children literature tends to be brief or imprecise on the complex health aspects. To view the full report, please visit: http://www.unicef-irc.org/publications/pdf/idp_2009_03.pdf.

Green Groups' Face Off Against Mr. Clean Delayed

On July 23rd, a New York State Supreme Court judge rejected legal briefs filed by household cleaning giants Procter & Gamble, Colgate-Palmolive, Church and Dwight and Reckitt-Benckiser in a right-to-know case filed by environmental and public health advocates. Oral arguments in the case were scheduled to begin last week. But the judge said industry lawyers violated court procedure by filing a motion-to-dismiss brief that exceeded the maximum page limit. So the judge tossed the brief and rescheduled oral arguments for October 15. To view the full article, please visit: <http://www.commondreams.org/newswire/2009/07/23-10>.

Forest Fire Prevention Efforts Will Lessen Carbon Sequestration

Widely sought efforts to reduce fuels that increase catastrophic fire in Pacific Northwest forests will be counterproductive to another important societal goal of sequestering carbon to help offset global warming, forestry researchers at Oregon State University conclude in a new report. For the full article, please visit: <http://environmentalresearchweb.org/cws/article/yournews/39879>.

Consumer Products Could be Major C8 (PFOA) Source, Study Says

Everyday consumer products such as stain repellents and paper coatings may be a "significant source" of the toxic chemical C8, according to a new U.S. Environmental Protection Agency study. Chemicals used in these consumer products could degrade, releasing C8 and related toxic substances, much faster than previously projected by DuPont Co. scientists, according to the new EPA study. To view the full article, please visit: <http://wvgazette.com/News/200907232187>.

Stumbling Blocks on the Path to Global Climate Deals

In a paper published in Environmental Research Letters, researchers outline the major "tripping points" likely to be encountered in trying to reach a global agreement. To view the full article, please visit: <http://environmentalresearchweb.org/cws/article/futures/40026>.

Future of Western Water Supply Threatened by Climate Change

As the West warms, a drier Colorado River system could see as much as a one-in-two chance of fully depleting all of its reservoir storage by mid-century assuming current management practices

continue on course, according to a new University of Colorado at Boulder study. To view the full article, please visit: <http://environmentalresearchweb.org/cws/article/yournews/40002>.

Toxins to be Removed from Former Arctic Military Site

Various toxic contaminants will be cleaned up from an abandoned American military site north of Clyde River, Nunavut, as part of a multi-year cleanup project by the Canadian government and local Inuit. The U.S. Coast Guard ran Cape Christian as a long-range navigational aide site from 1954 until 1974. Thirty-five years after Cape Christian closed, the Canadian government is spending \$5.1 million this year to start cleaning up debris and contaminants - including asbestos and polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) - from the site. To view the full article, please visit: <http://www.cbc.ca/canada/north/story/2009/07/23/cape-christian-cleanup.html>.

Study Examines Feedback Mechanism that May be Hastening Greenland Ice-Sheet Melt

The Greenland ice sheet and the surrounding Arctic sea ice have experienced record levels of melting in recent years. But are the two linked? When sea ice melts does it encourage the ice sheet to melt too? A new study suggests that the answer to this question may be yes. To view the full article, please visit: <http://environmentalresearchweb.org/cws/article/research/39917>.

Arctic CO2 Fueling Fierce Global Warming Cycle

A new European study finds that climate change is accelerating the release of carbon dioxide (CO₂) from sub-Arctic peatlands, stimulating a fierce cycle of global warming. Northern peatlands contain one-third of the Earth's soil-bound organic carbon, the equivalent of half the CO₂ in the entire atmosphere. An increase of just 1.8 degrees Fahrenheit (1.0 degree Celsius) over current average temperatures would more than double the amount of CO₂ released from the peatlands, the study found. To view the full article, please visit: http://www.redorbit.com/news/science/1728849/arctic_co2_fueling_fierce_global_warming_cycle/index.html.

New Insights into Health and Environmental Effects of Carbon Nanoparticles

A new study raises the possibility that flies and other insects that encounter nanomaterial “hot spots,” or spills, near manufacturing facilities in the future could pick up and transport nanoparticles on their bodies, transferring the particles to other flies or habitats in the environment. The study on carbon nanoparticles — barely 1/5,000th the width of a human hair - is scheduled for the Aug. 15 issue of ACS' *Environmental Science & Technology*, a semi-monthly journal. To view the full article, please visit: <http://pubs.acs.org/stoken/presspac/presspac/full/10.1021/es901079z?cookieSet=1>.

EPA Grants University \$1.4 Million to Study Impact of Roadways on Asthmatic Children

The Environmental Protection Agency is funding a \$1.4 million joint study with the University of Michigan on the effects of highway air pollution on asthmatic children living near roadways, the agency announced July 7. The two-year study, funded through EPA's Science to Achieve Results (STAR) program, will examine the effects of common highway air pollutants on 105 children with asthma in the Detroit area who live near various roadways. For more information on the study, please visit: <http://www.epa.gov/ncer/near-roadway>.

MEDIA RELEASES

ENE Releases Summary Analysis of ACES Act

The American Clean Energy and Security Act of 2009 ("ACES" or the "Act"), or H.R. 2454, was passed by the House of Representatives on June 26th. The Act sets forth an ambitious and comprehensive reform of U.S. climate and energy policy and charts the course to lower emissions and a sustainable clean technology future. The summary of the bill, including detailed section by section descriptions, can be found at: <http://www.env-ne.org/resources/open/p/id/885>.

Bulletin du Réseau canadien pour la santé humaine et l'environnement

Numéro 12

août 2009

Bienvenue a le douzième numéro du Bulletin du Réseau canadien pour la santé humaine et l'environnement!

Rendez-nous visite à : www.cnhhe-rcshe.ca.

Si vous avez de l'information nouvelle en matière de santé humaine et d'environnement susceptible d'intéresser d'autres lecteurs, veuillez la transmettre à : barb.mackinnon@nb.lung.ca. La date limite pour soumettre vos articles en vue du prochain numéro du Bulletin est le **11 septembre 2009**.

CONFÉRENCES

GÉNÉRALITÉS

Veillez noter que les avis concernant les substances du quatrième lot du Défi dans le cadre du PGPC ont été publiés dans la *Gazette du Canada*, Partie I, vol. 143, n° 31, le samedi 1^{er} août 2009. La date limite de présentation au ministre de l'Environnement et au ministre de la Santé des commentaires écrits du public concernant les documents sur l'approche de gestion des risques est le 30 septembre 2009. Pour 3 des 18 substances du quatrième lot, les évaluations préalables finales ont mené à la conclusion que ces substances répondent à un ou plusieurs critères énoncés à l'article 64 de la *Loi canadienne sur la protection de l'environnement de 1999* (LCPE 1999). Le gouvernement propose donc d'ajouter ces substances à l'annexe 1 de la Loi. Les évaluations préalables finales et les documents sur l'approche de gestion des risques concernant les trois substances considérées potentiellement nocives pour la santé peuvent être consultés dans le site Web des substances chimiques, à l'adresse <http://www.chemicalsubstanceschimiques.gc.ca/fr/>. Vous pouvez obtenir des exemplaires imprimés des rapports d'évaluation préalable et des documents sur l'approche de gestion des risques en communiquant avec Andrea Marchylo au numéro de téléphone 613-952-9376 ou à l'adresse courriel Andrea_Marchylo@hc-sc.gc.ca.

NOUVELLES EN MATIÈRE DE SANTÉ ET D'ENVIRONNEMENT