



Collaborative on Health and the Environment

eNewsletter -- October 2008



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Contents

[CHE Partnership and Working Group Calls](#)

[CHE Working and Regional Group Updates](#)

[Tools and Announcements](#)

[October Science News](#)

Dear CHE Partners:

Most of you already read Environmental Health News, founded by CHE partner Pete Myers and published by Environmental Health Sciences. A majority of science postings to CHE lists come from EHN, which is an invaluable resources for journalists, scientists, health professionals, patient advocates and many others.

This past month, [EnvironmentalHealthNews.org](#) launched a new home page with significant new features and announced the hiring of an Editor-in-Chief, Marla Cone, one of the nation's leading environmental journalists. Reporting for the Los Angeles Times for almost 20 years, she pioneered a beat that focused on explaining scientific information on the risks that pollutants pose to public health, wildlife and ecosystems around the world. Cone joins Douglas Fischer, editor of [DailyClimate.org](#), another of Environmental Health Sciences's daily news services. Fischer is well known to many CHE partners for his pioneering reporting on [body burden](#) while he was a reporter at the Oakland Tribune.

In addition to providing editorial leadership, Cone and Fischer will be writing enterprise stories for the two publications and soliciting stories from freelance reporters. Since the launch in mid-September, Cone has already reported on [increased risk of prostate cancer](#) in Vietnam vets exposed to Agent Orange, [feminized frogs](#) in Florida, epidemiological links between [bisphenol A exposure and heart disease](#) and type 2 diabetes, and [elevated flame retardant levels in Californians](#).

DailyClimate.org will begin featuring ground-breaking reporting in November, beginning with major stories about the future of climate science and new advances in solar energy. The first of several series of stories by Fischer and freelancers will launch then too, including coverage of the spread of disease in the Andes in response to climate change and a look at the federal government's shifting approach to climate disruption.

In another new feature for EHN, Cone encourages readers to submit op-eds for publication. Two distinguished green chemists -- [Terry Collins](#) and [John Warner](#) -- have each contributed to date, as well as Environmental Working Group Editor-in-Chief [Elaine Shannon](#).

We could not be more enthusiastic about the work Environmental Health News and DailyClimate are doing to transform reporting on environmental health sciences as well as scientific, health professional, and patient understanding of this vital field.

If you do not read EHN already, please consider signing up for these invaluable resources.

Michael Lerner
Founding CHE Partner

CHE Partnership and Working Group Calls

--October CHE Partnership Call--

Environmental Threats to Healthy Aging

Monday, Oct 20, 2008 at 10 AM Pacific / 1 PM Eastern

Are environmental factors affecting the way we age? Leading scientists say yes.

The science of chronic diseases associated with aging, particularly Alzheimer's and Parkinson's, shows that they are related to a number of features of modern society. A new report, "Environmental Threats to Healthy Aging", put out by Greater Boston Physicians for Social Responsibility and Science and Environmental Health Network, exposes the **lifetime influences of environmental risk factors** such as socioeconomic status and exposures to environmental chemicals on those diseases and their underlying pathologic mechanisms. Join CHE and our panel of expert speakers on **Monday, Oct 20, at 10 AM Pacific/ 1 PM Eastern** for a call exploring this pressing topic.

Featured speakers will include:

- **Jill Stein, MD**, President, Massachusetts Coalition for Healthy Communities
- **Ted Schettler, MD, MPH**, Science Director, Science and Environmental Health Network
- **Peter Whitehouse, MD, PhD**, Professor of Neurology, Case Western Reserve University, Author of *The Myth of Alzheimer's*

The call will be moderated by Michael Lerner, President of Commonweal. The call will last one hour and will be recorded for archival purposes.

"Every civilization creates the conditions for its own diseases." -René Dubos

[RSVP for Environmental Threats to Healthy Aging](#)

--CHE Alaska Call--

Uranium Mining and Community Health

Friday, Oct 31, 2008 at 9 AM Alaska Time / 10 AM Pacific / 1pm Eastern

With uranium prices on the rise, multi-national corporations have increased their search for uranium to include areas of northwest Alaska near the Inupiat village of Elim and in southeast Alaska on the southern end of Prince of Wales Island near the Haida villages of Kasaan and Hydaburg. The proposed method for extracting uranium in northwest Alaska is called "in-situ leaching." In-situ leaching for mining uranium in the Lower 48 has resulted in significant and long-term contamination of surface and groundwater. Speakers will discuss **how uranium mining might affect community health**, drinking water supplies, and subsistence resources. Health effects linked with exposure to uranium and associated radionuclides include: lung cancer, kidney damage, bone disease, degenerative nerve disease and birth defects. This call will last one hour.

To join this free call and receive the dial-up instructions, please RSVP to Alaska Community Action on Toxics at info@akaction.net or (907) 222-7714.

Resources from recent CHE calls

Resources from recent CHE calls

If you missed any of the following CHE calls, you may listen to MP3 recordings and find supporting materials at the following links:

- Sep 25, 2008 - "[From Lab to Law: The Phthalates Ban, the Precautionary Principle, and How New Science Becomes New Policy](#)"
- Sep 4, 2008 - "[The Future of Cancer: Primary Prevention, the President's Cancer Panel, and the New CHE Cancer Consensus Statement](#)"
- July 15, 2008 - "[Table Matters: How Industrial Animal Production Impacts Health and the Environment](#)"

And of course, you can always explore our [archived resources](#) from past Partnership calls.

CHE Working and Regional Group Updates

CHE EMF

~ coordinated by Cindy Sage, Sage Associates Environmental Consultants, and Nancy Evans, Health Science Consultant, Breast Cancer Fund
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~ No longer a media stepchild, **EMF health effects made news nationally and internationally** in September. Cell phones captured major attention as the largest public health exposure source - 3 billion in use worldwide. More than 260 million people in the U.S. use cell phones, including nearly half (46%) of children ages 8 to 12.

~ On September 25, the U.S. Congressional Subcommittee on Domestic Policy Oversight held a **hearing on "Cell Phone Use and Tumors: What the Science Says"**. Both Dr. David Carpenter, Director, Institute for Health and Environment, University of Albany, and Dr. Ronald Herberman, Director, University of Pittsburgh Cancer Institute, recommended a precautionary approach to the use of cell phones, particularly by children, based on existing science. Dr. Herberman pointed out that over the past 10 years, the incidence of brain tumors has increased among young adults ages 20-29. Mrs. Ellen Marks of Lafayette, California, provided personal insights on her husband's experience with a recently diagnosed brain tumor, which they believe was caused by years of heavy use of cell phones. Representatives of the Federal Communications Commission (which sets standards for cell phone radiation exposure levels) and the National Cancer Institute also testified. The hearing generated a flurry of media stories, including CNN, ABC, Business Week, and others ([More about the media coverage](#) on the CHE EMF webpage). Microwave News' report and analysis of the hearing (and other national and international EMF news) is available at www.microwavenews.com and the video of the hearing, chaired by Congressman Dennis Kucinich (D-OH), can be seen at <http://domesticpolicy.oversight.house.gov/story.asp?ID=2201>

~ **Two recent articles in *Environmental Health Perspectives*** looked at the science on health effects of cell phone use. In the September issue, Dr. Michael Kundi discussed the controversy about the possible link between mobile phone use and cancer. <http://www.ehponline.org/docs/2008/11902/abstract.html> In the October issue, M. Nathaniel Mead's article "Strong signal for cell phone effects," offers a lay analysis of the science, focused on children <http://www.ehponline.org/docs/2008/116-10/forum.html#stro>

~ On the international front, the European Parliament voted 522 to 16 to recommend stronger safety standards for cell phones, saying, "The limits on exposure to electromagnetic fields which have been set for the general public are obsolete." <http://www.marketwire.com/press-release/The-Bioinitiative-Working-Group-901580.html> This move by the Parliament was based in part on the BioInitiative Report www.bioinitiative.org, which has now **tallied 3.5 million hits**, and nearly a billion kilobytes downloaded since it was released one year ago.

~ Early in September, the UK Radiation Research Trust convened an **international conference** entitled "Electromagnetic fields and health - A global issue in London". Held at the Royal Society (National Academy of Science for the UK and the Commonwealth, the

conference brought together leading experts in science, policy and regulation from around the globe as well as concerned citizens. Presentations covered a wide range of issues related to EMF, including mobile phones, towers, and cancer risks. The most widely reported presentation was Dr. Lennart Hardell's reanalysis of 2005 data, which indicated that the risk of brain tumors in those persons who used cell phones before age 20 was 5 times that of those whose cell phone use began after age 20.

CHE Cancer

~ coordinated by Jeanne Rizzo, RN, Executive Director of the Breast Cancer Fund, Diana Zuckerman, PhD, President of the National Center for Policy Research (CPR) for Women & Families, and Michael Lerner, PhD, President of Commonweal
For more information about this group, contact Shelby Gonzalez, CHE Administrative Coordinator, at shelby@healthandenvironment.org

~ On September 16, 2008 in New Brunswick, NJ, CHE Partners Dr. Richard Clapp, Dr. Devra Davis, and Jeanne Rizzo gave outstanding presentations at the **first meeting of the President's Cancer Panel**, which focused on industrial and manufacturing contributors to cancer. This meeting was the first of four public meetings on environmental contributors to cancer causation hosted by the Panel, a part of the National Cancer Institute. After the meeting, a reception was held by CHE, the New Jersey Work Environment Council, the Breast Cancer Fund and the Lowell Center. At the reception, CHE Partners, members of the President's Cancer Panel and the public shared highlights from the day's events and discussed opportunities for future collaboration.

~ The **next meeting** of the President's Cancer Panel will focus on agricultural exposures and cancer. CHE Partners Dr. Sandra Steingraber and Dr. Tyrone Hayes will be providing expert testimony. The meeting will take place on Tuesday, October 21, 2008 at the Omni Severin Hotel in Indianapolis, Indiana. The meeting is free and open to the public, with 30 minutes reserved for public comment. CHE will be hosting a reception immediately after the event; if you are interested in attending, contact eleni@healthandenvironment.org.

We encourage CHE Partners and friends to **submit written testimony to the Panel** so that it becomes part of the Panel's official record and is taken into consideration as the final report is written and ultimately submitted to the President of the United States.

You may submit comments to Karen Parker at KLParker@mail.nih.gov.

For more information on the President's Cancer Panel meeting series, visit CHE's PCP resource page:
<http://www.healthandenvironment.org/articles/doc/4199>

CHE Fertility

~ coordinated by Julia Varshavsky, CHE Program Associate
julia@healthandenvironment.org

We are pleased to announce **three new publications on fertility, reproductive health and the environment** this fall.

1) The NEW science manuscript from the Women's Reproductive Health and the Environment Workshop has been published and is available online in the October issue of *Fertility and Sterility*. The abstract of the journal article, titled "**Female reproductive disorders: the roles of endocrine-disrupting compounds and developmental timing**" is available at: [http://www.fertstert.org/article/S0015-0282\(08\)03555-3/abstract](http://www.fertstert.org/article/S0015-0282(08)03555-3/abstract). Authors include Drs. Drew Crain, Lou Guillette, Linda Giudice, Shanna Swan, Pat Hunt and others who have played a role in building the amazing CHE Fertility community.

Leading researchers gathered for the workshop in January 2008 at Commonweal in Bolinas, California to debate and discuss what we know about how endocrine disruptors impact the reproductive health of women and girls, and where the gaps in our understanding are. Note the authors' conclusions:

understanding are. Note the authors' conclusions.

"The data reviewed illustrate that EDCs contribute to numerous human female reproductive disorders and emphasize the sensitivity of early life-stage exposures. Many research gaps are identified that limit full understanding of the contribution of EDCs to female reproductive problems. Moreover, there is an urgent need to reduce the incidence of these reproductive disorders, which can be addressed by correlative studies on early life exposure and adult reproductive dysfunction together with tools to assess the specific exposures and methods to block their effects. This review of the EDC literature as it relates to female health provides an important platform on which women's health can be improved."

2) A primer titled *Hormone Disruptors and Women's Health: Reasons for Concern* highlights and translates the science from the workshop and is intended for a general audience. We are also producing a longer lay report of the science published in F&S that will be available later this fall. You can learn more and download the primer at www.healthandenvironment.org/reprohealthworkshop

3) The report, Shaping Our Legacy: Reproductive Health and the Environment, a lay summary of the science from the 2007 Summit on Environmental Challenges to Reproductive Health and Fertility. The report was written and produced by the Program on Reproductive Health and the Environment (PRHE) at the University of California, San Francisco (UCSF), who jointly sponsored the Summit with CHE. CHE is working with PRHE this fall to distribute the report to a variety of constituencies.

To request hard copies of these new materials, please send an email to julia@healthandenvironment.org. We have a limited number of copies available.

Health and Environment Alliance

~ coordinated by Lisette van Vliet, Toxics Policy Advisor, Health and Environment Alliance, Health Care Without Harm
lisette@env-health.org

~ New European study: "The co-benefits to health of a strong climate change policy"

The Health and Environment Alliance (HEAL), Climate Action Network Europe (CAN-E) and WWF have commissioned and published a new report showing that **health savings of up to 25 billion euros could be achieved every year in Europe if the European Union immediately opted for stronger climate policies**. The report analyses the health benefits brought about by reduced climate pollution if the European Union increased without any delay its 2020 target for domestic greenhouse gas emission cuts from 20 to 30 percent, in line with recommendations of the International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). Launched on October 2nd, the study clearly demonstrates that tougher targets and action on climate change produce win-win-win scenarios: a win for the planet, a win for citizen's health and a win for industry in reducing air pollution control costs.

Download the report [PDF]:

http://www.env-health.org/IMG/pdf/Co-benefits_to_health_report_-september_2008.pdf

CHE LDDI

~ coordinated by Elise Miller, Executive Director, Institute for Children's Environmental Health
emiller@iceh.org

~ **LDDI Policy Consensus Statement released**. On September 16, LDDI published its new Policy Implications Based on the Scientific Consensus Statement on Environmental Agents Associated with Neurodevelopmental Disorders. This statement, signed by almost 100 scientists, health professionals and advocates nationally and internationally, provides policy recommendations based on the latest science regarding environmental contaminants associated with neurodevelopmental disorders, such as learning disabilities, autism spectrum disorder, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), intellectual disabilities and developmental delays. Additional signatories are welcome. To read the full press release, the policy statement or the scientific consensus statement on which the

press release, the policy statement or the scientific consensus statement on which the policy was based, or to sign on to the policy statement, please visit the LDDI website: <http://www.iceh.org/LDDI.html>

~ The American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Environmental Health Initiative (AAIDD), an LDDI member, presented a **teleconference, Environmental Contaminants and ADHD**, on Tuesday, Oct 7, 2008. Sponsored by The John Merck Fund, this free teleconference featured Daniel A. Axelrad leading the discussion. To download the Powerpoint and an audio-recording of this teleconference or previous teleconferences organized by AAIDD, please see http://www.ehinitiative.org/Projects/tele_con.htm, or contact Laura Abulafia, 800-424-3688 or Laura@aaidd.org

~ The Institute for Children's Environmental Health (ICEH), an LDDI member, is one of the sponsors of a free **book signing, discussion and call to action** in Pasadena, California. In *Poisoned Profits: The Toxic Assault on Our Children*, journalists Alice Shabecoff and Philip Shabecoff directly and definitively link industrial toxins to the current rise in childhood disease and death. The book was researched and written under the sponsorship of PSR-LA's sister chapter, Greater Boston Physicians for Social Responsibility (GBPSR). Discussion of the evening will include how climate change will impact children's environmental health, the corporatization of scientific/ environmental health research, and how to move the market and hold government accountable. Policy advocacy opportunities regarding climate change, chemical policy reform and pesticides will also be presented. The event will be held at **6:30 PM on Tuesday, October 14, 2008**, at All Saint's Church, 132 North Euclid Avenue, **Pasadena, California**. Please see the website: <http://www.psrla.org/calendar.htm> or contact Ana, 213-689-9170 or amascarenas@psrla.org

~ The **Learning Disabilities Association of America's Healthy Children Project** is gearing up for a new year of "mini-grants" to LDA state and local affiliates interested in getting involved with children's environmental health issues related to learning disabilities. The **deadline for applying is November 14th**. Funding is earmarked each year as part of the John Merck Fund's grant to the HCP. Please contact Maureen Swanson at mwsanson@ldaamerica.org for more information.

~ The National Association for the Dually Diagnosed (NADD), AAIDD, LDA and ICEH are working together to update the LDDI **fact sheet on environmental contributors to mental health issues** based on peer-reviewed literature. We intend to publish this new version by early November 2008.

~ **NADD is holding its 25th annual conference** entitled: "A Quarter Century of Awareness: Assessment, Treatment and Policy Advances on November 12 - 14, 2008 at the Sheraton Fallsview Hotel, Niagara Falls, ON, Canada. LDDI members--AAIDD, LDA and ICEH--will have representatives presenting on environmental health at the conference. For more information, please see <http://www.thenadd.org/pages/conferences/25th/index.shtml> or contact Robert Fletcher at rfletcher@thenadd.org

~ AAIDD, LDA and ASA members in Minnesota are co-sponsoring a forum on **environmental contributors to disabilities** on Saturday, November 15th in Minneapolis. For more information, please contact Maureen Swanson at mwsanson@ldaamerica.org or Laura Abulafia at Laura@aaidd.org

Tools, Announcements and Resources

Mini-Grant Program for Nurses

--Health Care Without Harm--

Health Care Without Harm is announcing round nine of the Nurse's Workgroup Mini-Grant Program. The Mini-Grant program is designed to support innovative efforts to expand and deepen the involvement of nurses in environmental health issues, to promote advocacy activities and to encourage those initiatives that showcase collaborative efforts between nurses and environmental organizations.

nurses and environmental organizations.

Members of the HCWH Nurses Workgroup as well as members of other HCWH Workgroups, which seeks to work substantially with nurses on environmental health issues; The HCWH Mini-Grant program welcomes all applications for funding from members of the HCWH Nurses Workgroup, participants of any RN-No-Harm Workshops or HCWH mini-grant funded workshops; American Nurses Association's Constituent Member Associations; Specialty Nursing Organizations; Schools of Nursing; Labor organization that represent nurses; Luminaries and Beacons of the Luminary Project; Schools of Nursing; and Nurse participants of any Clean Med meeting.

The awards will range from \$500 to \$3,000 and will be for one-year only.

The proposal is due December 1, 2008. The proposal may not exceed five pages. Applicants of accepted proposals will be notified by December 22, 2008. If awarded, you will be required to submit a mid-year and final report by e-mail. Applicants accepted by E-mail to Brenda Afzal at bafzal@son.umaryland.edu. If you have questions regarding the RFP, or your eligibility to apply, please contact Brenda Afzal by email at bafzal@son.umaryland.edu or at 410-706-1778; or contact Jolie Patterson Rosst at jprosst@hcwh.org.

Environmental Health Sciences and Green Chemistry: Problems Meet Solutions

November 10, 2008

Advancing Green Chemistry (www.AdvancingGreenChemistry.org) and Environmental Health Sciences (www.EnvironmentalHealthNews.org) are pleased to invite you to a day-long public conference at the Beckman Center of the National Academies of Science in Irvine, CA. The conference will explore the interactions between green chemistry and the environmental health sciences.

Thanks to our sponsors, attendance is without charge. We do request that you register here: <http://www.gcandehs.org> Space is limited, so please sign up soon. Please do forward this announcement.

--New CHE Partner Spotlight: Philip and Alice Shabecoff-- Exposing the "Toxic Assault" on Our Health

According to a new book by CHE Partners Philip and Alice Shabecoff, the U.S. now makes or imports 42 billion pounds of chemicals per day. That figure does not include pesticides, polymers, food additives or pharmaceuticals. To put it another way, **every day the U.S. makes or imports a quantity of chemicals roughly equivalent in weight to:**

- **57 Empire State Buildings**
- **215 Nimitz Class aircraft supercarriers**
- **4,880,000 Hummer H2s**

Most of these chemicals have never been tested for their potential effect on human health. [Read more](#)

Recent Environmental Health Science News

Articles gleaned from [Environmental Health News](#)

Feminized toads linked to farms

Along the shore of Florida's Lake Okeechobee, male toads seem more like females. Most have ovaries as well as testes, the mottled skin of a female and depleted testosterone. Environmental Health News
Sep 15, 2008

Health facilities flush estimated 250M pounds of drugs a year

U.S. hospitals and long-term care facilities annually flush millions of pounds of unused pharmaceuticals down the drain, pumping contaminants into America's drinking water.
Associated Press
Sep 15, 2008

Tighter lead rule for kids' items

All children's products must meet a new, tougher lead standard by Feb. 10, according to a legal opinion expected today from the Consumer Product Safety Commission. The ruling has implications for phthalates, also.
Washington Post
Sep 15, 2008

With federal disagreement over bisphenol A, what's a parent to do?

Even federal government agencies don't agree about the hazards posed by bisphenol A, an estrogen-like chemical used in plastic that has been detected in the bodies of 93% of Americans tested.
USA Today
Sep 15, 2008

California launches broad effort to control hazardous chemicals

California today launched the most comprehensive program of any state to evaluate, label and, in some cases, ban industrial chemicals that are linked to cancer, hormone disruption and other deadly effects on human health.
Los Angeles Times, California
Sep 30, 2008

New Partners

We welcome the many new CHE Partners who have joined since the September newsletter. To see the list of new CHE Partners and the growing list of all CHE Partners, please visit <http://www.healthandenvironment.org/base/partners-recent>.

Thank you for taking the time to read the latest about CHE. As always, we welcome your questions and suggestions. Please direct comments to Eleni Sotos, CHE Program Director, at Eleni@HealthandEnvironment.org.

Best wishes,

Eleni Sotos, MA, Program Director
Shelby Gonzalez, Administrative Coordinator
Julia Varshavsky, Program Associate

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