



Collaborative on Health and the Environment eNewsletter - May 2013

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Dear CHE Partners:

"Patience is a virtue," or so we are told. For environmental health work, it is essential. Progress, in both science and the policies hopefully based upon science, is almost always unavoidably incremental. And thus we tend to develop a "long run" perspective out of necessity, celebrating small or large advances and not letting the oft-glacial pace of progress cause too much cynicism.

Over a decade into working with CHE, I seek inspiration among the continual flow of bad, or at least potentially bad, news. Keeping track of the broader "chemical policy" arena, as many CHE partners probably do, is illustrative. An excellent recent review paper titled "[Environmental exposures: an under-recognized contribution to noncommunicable diseases](#)" summarizes the arena as succinctly as possible, and concludes: *Previous attempts to determine the degree to which exposure to environmental factors contribute to noncommunicable diseases (NCDs) have been very conservative and have significantly underestimated the actual contribution of the environment...Prevention needs to shift focus from individual responsibility to societal responsibility and an understanding that effective prevention of NCDs ultimately relies on improved environmental management to reduce exposure to modifiable risks.*

Those are obviously some tall tasks, for many reasons. Which reminded me of our fairly recent CHE discussion with [Dr. Richard Denison](#) on the prospects and pitfalls for truly new chemical policy reform and an even more recent call, "[Late Lessons from Early Warnings: A Retrospective Look At Learning About Precaution](#)," is also well worth a listen. It is hardnot to notice a couple things about these expert resources; first, that they are rarely saying much that is truly new with respect to the policy implications of environmental health science--prevention is key, and the evidence for that grows and grows; and second, that many of the same people who have been working and warning about this are still soldiering on, pushing the evidence base and



The 2013 Late lessons from early warnings report is the second of its type produced by the European Environment Agency (EEA) in collaboration with a broad range of external authors and peer reviewers.

policy imperatives for years and decades.

Take a look at our most recent (admittedly subjective) CHE quarterly [Top 10](#) list for more examples, both encouraging and daunting; see *Environmental Health News's* new special report "[Chemicals of high concern found in thousands of children's products](#)" for more indication on how much work is to be done--as if such reminders were necessary.

So, my real message here, on behalf of those of us at the decentralized "CHE central," is one of gratitude to those who continue the hard, long work of positive change--including so many CHE partners. Thank you for your perseverance--and patience.

By Steve Heilig, MPH, CHE Director of Public Health & Education, and Director of Public Health & Education, San Francisco Medical Society

CHE Partnership Calls

CHE Partnership call: 25 Years of the Superfund Research Program: Highlights and Hopes

Thursday May 23, 2013 at 10:00 am Pacific / 1:00 pm Eastern

[Read more and RSVP for this call](#)

CHE presents the second in a series of calls featuring the Superfund Research Program.

From Love Canal in New York to the Palos Verde Shelf in California, more than 1,300 locations have been federally designated as Superfund sites since the program's inception in 1980. Many people are unaware that in addition to cleaning up hazardous waste, the Superfund program also includes a critical research component investigating health effects of toxic substances found at these sites, as well as translating this research for affected communities and others. In 2012, the NIEHS Superfund Research Program celebrated its 25th anniversary of research to protect human health and the environment. This call will include an overview of the program's history, highlighting some of the accomplishments of scientists, trainees and research translation efforts.

CHE Partnership call: Cancer: The Professional and the Personal: A Conversation with Dr. Susan Love and Susan Braun

Tuesday May 28, 2013 at 10:00 am Pacific / 1:00 pm Eastern

[Read more and RSVP for this call](#)

Susan Love, MD, MBA, is one of the leading figures in confronting breast cancer in our time. She is President and Medical Director of the

Dr. Susan Love Research Foundation, with a mission "to eradicate breast cancer and improve the quality of women's health through innovative research, education and advocacy." She is a clinical



Dr. Susan Love

professor of surgery at the David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA. Her books *Dr. Susan Love's Breast Book* and *Dr. Susan Love's Menopause and Hormone Book* have been helpful to countless women. Herself diagnosed with leukemia last year, she took time out for treatment and now says she is "back in action" and "getting stronger by the minute."

Susan Braun is CEO of The V Foundation for Cancer Research, one of the nation's leading cancer research foundations. Prior to taking that position last year, she was the head of Commonweal, CHE's organizational home. She has been executive director of The American Society of Clinical Oncology Cancer Foundation, CEO of the CURE Media Group and President and CEO of the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation (now Susan G. Komen for the Cure).

On this call Dr. Love will tell her story of how she has learned "The only difference between a researcher and a patient is a diagnosis." The two Susans will then engage in wide-ranging dialogue about cancer issues--treatment, prevention, politics--whatever they wish to address, we are certain it will be fascinating, informed, and even moving.

CHE Partnership call: Stress as an Endocrine Disruptor: Maternal Psychosocial Stress During Pregnancy and Fetal Development

Hosted by the CHE Fertility and Reproductive Health Working Group

Thursday June 6, 2013 at 10:00 am Pacific / 1:00 pm Eastern

[Read more and RSVP for this call](#)

Stress during pregnancy has long been considered detrimental to the developing fetus. New data supports the idea that psychosocial stress in utero affects fetal development. This call will examine current research on prenatal stress in relation to neurodevelopment and reproductive development, discuss how stress may alter endocrine function, and present data from recent studies that illustrate these concepts.

Special Announcements

CHE Quarterly Top 10 List

For CHE's third quarterly Top 10 list, CHE again selected from several dozen candidate news articles, journal articles, policy decisions and reports that have had a significant impact or are likely to have a significant impact on thinking and action in the field of environmental health. CHE considers these selections to be the biggest contributors toward new insights, toward changing the conversation or expanding the scope of the conversation on a topic to a new audience or awareness, or toward defining a new trend.

View the current Top 10 list on [CHE's blog](#)

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:

- May 2, 2013 - [When There Is No Epidemiologist](#)
- April 16, 2013 - [Late Lessons from Early Warnings: A Retrospective Look About Learning About Precaution](#)
- April 11, 2013 - [A Conversation with Dan Fagin, Author of Tom's River: A Story of Science and Salvation](#)
- April 3, 2013 - [Breast Cancer and the Environment: Prioritizing Prevention](#)

You can subscribe via podcast to receive notifications of new call recordings added to the CHE archives. [View a list of past calls and subscribe to the podcast.](#)

CHE Working and Regional Group Updates

Stay in touch with CHE through social media:

Visit [CHE's blog](#) to read recent posts.

Visit CHE's [Facebook page](#).

Join CHE on [Twitter](#). Update: CHE now tweets during Partnership calls. Join the online conversation by following CHE on Twitter.

CHE Asthma

~ coordinated by Genon Jensen, for more information contact info@healthandenvironment.org

~ **HEAL calls on EU Environment Ministers to consider the benefits for health from cleaner air:** On April 12th, HEAL sent a letter to EU Environment Ministers ahead of the Informal Environment Council, urging them to consider the significant benefits for public health, well-being, and for the climate that can be gained through ambitious EU measures to reduce air pollution.

[Read more](#)

~ **Stakeholders back tighter air pollution controls:** A summary of responses to the European Commission's latest consultation on air quality policy was recently presented to stakeholders at a meeting in Brussels. According to the responses, the EU should tighten emission controls to comply with air quality standards. HEAL highlighted three priority actions to the European Commission in a [joint position paper](#).

[Read more](#)

CHE Climate Change

~ coordinated by Genon Jensen, for more information contact info@healthandenvironment.org

~ **Report: The Unpaid Health Bill launched in Germany:** Coal power plants in Germany, Poland and Romania are together responsible for more than half of the total health impacts in Europe. On 24 April, HEAL launched its European coal and health report in German at a press conference in Berlin with high level medical and scientific panel participants.

[Read the German medical journal report](#)

[Download press release and report in German](#)

CHE Diabetes-Obesity Spectrum

~ coordinated by Sarah Howard, for more information contact info@healthandenvironment.org

~ **American Diabetes Association's 73rd Scientific Sessions:** There will be a symposium on "Environmental risk factors for type 2 diabetes--epidemiologic and mechanistic evidence" at the American Diabetes Association's 73rd Scientific Sessions, at 4:30-6:30 on Sunday June 23. The conference runs from June 21-25th in Chicago, Illinois.

[Read more](#)

~ **New articles and research published in academic and scientific journals**

[Urinary Bisphenol A and Obesity in US Children](#). Bhandari R, Xiao J, Shankar A. 2013. Am.J.Epidemiol.

[Bisphenol A and Metabolic Syndrome: Results from NHANES](#). Teppala S, Madhavan S, Shankar A. 2012. Int.J.Endocrinol. 2012:598180.

[Relationship between urinary bisphenol A levels and prediabetes among subjects free of](#)

[diabetes](#). Sabanayagam C, Teppala S, Shankar A. 2013. Acta Diabetol.

[Gestational Diabetes and Preeclampsia in Association with Air Pollution at Levels below Current Air Quality Guidelines](#). Malmqvist E, Jakobsson K, Tinnerberg H, Rignell-Hydbom A, Rylander L. 2013. Environ.Health Perspect. 121(4):488-493.

Related article: [When Blood Meets Nitrogen Oxides: Pregnancy Complications and Air Pollution Exposure](#)

[Risk of Incident Diabetes in Relation to Long-term Exposure to Fine Particulate Matter in Ontario, Canada](#). Chen H, Burnett RT, Kwong JC, Villeneuve PJ, Goldberg MS, Brook RD, van DA, Jerrett M, Martin RV, Brook JR, Copes R. 2013. Environ.Health Perspect.

CHE Fertility and Reproductive Health

~ coordinated by Karin Russ, karin@healthandenvironment.org

~ New articles and research published in academic and scientific journals

Review: [Cryptorchidism](#). The literature reviewed in this article approach cryptorchidism from multiple aspects. Reports regarding cause include studies of molecular genetics [and] endocrine chemical disruptors. Curr Opin Endocrinol Diabetes Obes. 2013 Jun;20(3):210-6.

[Glyphosate's suppression of cytochrome P450 enzymes and amino acid biosynthesis by the gut microbiome: Pathways to modern diseases](#). The authors show how interference with CYP enzymes acts synergistically with disruption of the biosynthesis of aromatic amino acids by gut bacteria, as well as impairment in serum sulfate transport. Entropy 2013, 15(4), 1416-1463.

[Perfluorinated compounds in umbilical cord blood and adverse birth outcomes](#). An adverse dose-dependent association was observed between prenatal PFOS exposure and birth outcomes. PLoS One.

[Air pollution and congenital heart defects](#). The authors show results for PM10 and congenital heart defects confirm results from previous studies. The results for PM2.5 need further investigations. Environmental Research.

[Residential proximity to major roads and adverse birth outcomes: A hospital-based study](#). The present study demonstrated that air pollution is an independent risk factor for adverse birth outcomes. Environmental Health 2013, 12:34.

~ New resources and tools

[Be Fruitful: The Essential Guide to Maximizing Fertility and Giving Birth to a Healthy Baby](#). The increase in environmental toxins, processed foods, and stress, as well as the advancing ages at which couples seek to have children, have made it more difficult for women to conceive.

[TEDX's Critical Windows of Development website tool now displays perfluorinated compounds](#). Perfluorinated compounds are in our cookware, carpets, clothing, and

TEDX

The Endocrine Disruption Exchange

cosmetics, as well as in our food, water, soil and of course, our bodies. Now, they can be found in TEDX's Critical Windows of Development website tool.

~ Editorials

[Ethics and the Ecology of Pregnancy](#). Pollutants can arrive to the fetus when they are inhaled or ingested by the mother, but scarce or no warnings exist to inform mothers against these risks. Dr. Carlo Bellieni serves as a member of the Pontifical Academy for Life as well as the European Society for Pediatric Research.

[A pre-baby detox: Necessary or just a fad?](#) Whether or not you're baby-minded right now, it can sometimes be hard to summon up huge excitement at the idea of bringing a child into a world far more toxic than the one into which our parents--not to mention

our grandparents--brought us. Take Part.

CHE Regional Working Groups Updates

CHE Alaska

~ coordinated by Pamela Miller, pamela@akaction.org

~ **CHE Alaska call: The Story of Camp Lejeune: Contaminated Drinking Water, Cancer Clusters, and the Struggle for Justice** Wednesday May 29, 2013 at 9:00 am Alaska / 10:00 am Pacific / 1:00 pm Eastern

[RSVP for this call](#)

A one-hour discussion with special guest Jerry Ensminger, a retired Marine Master Sergeant of 24 years. Jerry's family is one of hundreds of thousands who bathed, drank, and cooked with water contaminated with cancer-causing chemicals at the North Carolina Marine Corps base Camp Lejeune. He lost his nine year old daughter, Janey, to leukemia in 1985. Jerry has dedicated his life to helping other victims of the contamination at Camp Lejeune, many of whom are men who developed breast cancer. In his pursuit of justice, Jerry illuminates how current policies contribute to disease clusters and works for policies that will prevent contamination and protect community health. His story, along with others who suffered tragedy from the water at Camp Lejeune, has been documented in the film, *Semper Fi: Always Faithful*.



CHE HEAL

~ coordinated by Lisette Van Vliet, lisette@env-health.org

~ **HEAL welcomes Member of the European Parliament vote for better health protection in the 7th Environmental Action Programme:** European parliamentarians strengthened health considerations in the EU's new roadmap for environmental policy in their vote on April 25th. This includes a focus on reducing asthma and allergies related to indoor air pollutants and reducing exposure to harmful chemical substances, such as endocrine disrupting chemicals. Read [HEAL's press release](#) for more information.

~ **Joint letter to EFSA Executive Director draws attention to two ZMWG reports:** HEAL, the European Environmental Bureau (EEB) and the Zero Mercury Working Group (ZMWG) recently raised concerns about the European Food Safety Authority's (EFSA) recent opinion on methyl mercury, particularly in light of new EU human biomonitoring data which found for one third of the people in 17 EU member states, levels of mercury were above the 0.58 µg/g hair level shown to be safe in the most recent scientific studies. This suggests that 1.8 million of the 5.4 million babies born in European countries each year may be affected by unsafe maternal mercury levels, safety being referenced to the 0.58 µg/g hair level.

[Read more](#)

~ **Event: Brussels, Belgium: EU Green Week - Cleaner air for all, June 4-7th:** This year HEAL will bring its partner's expertise to two events at EU Green Week where the theme is cleaner air for all in light of the 2013 EU Year of Air. On June 5th HEAL is participating at a session focused on air quality, energy and climate change: triple challenge, triple opportunity and a session looking at the planetary boundaries in the context of air quality: empowering actors to act, urgently.

[More information and registration information](#)

CHE Oregon

~ coordinated by Sarah Petras, sarahp@oeconline.org

~ **Toxics in Everyday Products Community Forums:** Toxic chemicals have been

found in thousands of children's products. This spring, Oregon will decide whether to take action. Experts will discuss what toxics mean to our health and how to make your voice heard on pending laws in Oregon.

[Salem Community Forum](#): Kroc Community Center, Fir/Maple Room, 1865 Bill Frey Dr. NE, Salem, OR; Wednesday, May 15, 2013, 6:30-8:00 pm. Featuring Salem's Jane Orłowski, RN.

[Pendleton Community Forum](#): Prodigal Son Brewery, Theater Room, 230 SE Court Ave, Pendleton, OR; Sunday, May 19, 2013, 6:00-7:30 pm. Featuring Pendleton radiologist Dr. Frank Erickson.

[Hood River Community Forum](#): Hood River County Library, Meeting Room, 502 W State St., Hood River, OR; Thursday, May 23, 2013, 6:30-8:00 pm. Featuring Hood River pediatrician Dr. Rich Martin.

CHE Washington

~ coordinated by Steve Gilbert and Aimee Boulanger, info@healthandenvironment.org

~ CHE-WA Children's Environmental Health Working Group meeting

Thursday May 9, 2013, 9:30 am to 11:30 am Pacific

The May meeting of the CHE-WA Children's Environmental Health Working Group is hosted by the Institute of Neurotoxicology and Neurological Disorders and the Washington Toxics Coalition. It will include a presentation titled "Nuclear Reactor in Our Backyard: The Columbia Nuclear Generating Station--All You Really Didn't Want to Know". There will also be a discussion of legislative updates relevant to children's and environmental health.

The meeting will take place at the Washington Toxics Coalition at 4649 Sunnyside Ave. N., Suite 540, Seattle, WA 98103 (Room 202). To RSVP or to participate by phone contact Gail Gensler, gail.gensler@kingcounty.gov or 206-263-3082.

~ **Particles on the Wall is going to Portland!**: A modest installation of the [Particles on the Wall](#) exhibit, hosted by Oregon Physicians for Social Responsibility, will be on display at the Ecotrust Building, in Portland, OR. The exhibit will be open for viewing from May 3 - June 14, 2013.

Announcements and News Highlights

Judge removes BPA from California's Prop 65 list A California judge granted a preliminary injunction Friday in the American Chemistry Council's case against a division of the state's Environmental Protection Agency. The Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment had quietly announced its decision to include the controversial polycarbonate component on the so-called Proposition 65 list on April 11. But ACC asked the courts to freeze the listing until after a decision in its pending lawsuit, filed against OEHHA in Sacramento County Superior Court on March 15. Read the [full article](#) in *Plastic News*

AAP endorses legislation to protect children from unhealthy chemical exposures

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) endorsed the Safe Chemicals Act of 2013, a bill introduced by US Senators Frank Lautenberg (D-NJ) and Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY) that would reform chemical management policy in the United States.

[Read more](#)

7th annual "Sense of Wonder" Rachel Carson contest

This annual contest has been announced, and is co-sponsored by the US EPA Aging Initiative and others. Music has been added to the areas of creative expression that also include poetry, dance, essay, photo, and songwriting. The deadline for entries is June

10th, 2013.

[Contest details and submission guidelines](#)

EHN and its sister site, The Daily Climate, offer a wealth of valuable information each day at no cost to subscribers. The daily email subscriptions and the 350,000-item news archive have recently been supplemented by a Facebook page and Twitter feed.

Environmental Health News: email, Facebook, Twitter and a website archive

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May 2013 issue of *Environmental Health Perspectives* available online

[Read more](#)

May 2013 issue of *Environmental Factor* available online

[Read more](#)

CHE maintains a [news feed](#) of environmental health related news announcements and events collected from a multitude of sources on CHE's website.

Reports, Resources and Other Updates

Tool allows users to view environmental-related health issues

The California Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment has launched an [online mapping tool](#) that shows which communities across the state are most at risk for health problems caused by the environment, [HealthyCal reports](#).

New report: State Chemicals Policy: Trends and Profiles

This report describes recent state legislative and policy efforts to prevent the hazards and risks associated with toxic chemicals, which are often known as "chemicals of concern." It also highlights state actions and experiences to advance needed reforms of federal chemicals policy.

[Read more](#)

Women's Voices for the Earth releases *Secret Scents* report

The new report, [Secret Scents: How Hidden Fragrance Allergens Harm Public Health](#), finds that millions of people are affected by skin allergies caused by chemicals in fragrance.

Chemical Hazard Assessment Database

The IC2 has developed the [Chemical Hazard Assessment Database](#) to enable users to search for GreenScreen™ and Quick Chemical Assessment Tool (QCAT) assessments.

CHE lists hundreds of reports, books, videos, databases and other resources in a searchable [Portal to Science](#) on CHE's website.

Thank you for taking the time to read the latest about CHE. As always, we welcome your questions and suggestions. Please direct comments to Elise Miller, Director of CHE, at elise@healthandenvironment.org.

Best wishes,

Elise Miller, MEd, Director

Steve Heilig, Director of Public Health and Education at San Francisco Medical Society and CHE

Erika Sanders, Administrative Coordinator

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