



# Initiative on Children's Environmental Health

[of the Collaborative on Health and the Environment](#)



Biweekly Bulletin March 23, 2011

This bulletin lists upcoming events plus recent announcements, news and journal articles, calls for proposals and other items related to children's environmental health. They are archived and searchable on our website:

[http://www.healthandenvironment.org/working\\_groups/childrens\\_health/bulletins](http://www.healthandenvironment.org/working_groups/childrens_health/bulletins).

## in ICEH Highlights

### CHE Calls

Two calls in the next few weeks highlight areas of recent investigation and interest: The aftermath of the nuclear disaster in Japan (March 28th) and the role of chemical contributors to diabetes and obesity (April 15th). Please see events #1 and #10 below for details.

### Practice Prevention Column Updates

Recent updates to CHE's Practice Prevention columns will bring new information to parents, caregivers, advocates and others concerned about children's health. New columns and Spanish translations continue to be added to the [ICEH website](#).

### New Members

The Initiative on Children's Environmental Health welcomes these new members:

- Teresa Noemí Castaneda, Key Largo, Florida
- Albert Donnay, MHS, Maryland
- Seulgi Gu, Seoul, Republic of Korea
- Marilyn Mochel, RN, Merced, California
- Bill O'Driscoll, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
- Marion Olek, MPH, MS, Sewickley, Pennsylvania
- Wilson Rumbelha, PhD, Okemos, Michigan
- Tatiana Santos, MS, Madrid, Spain
- Nancy Sasaki, San Diego, California
- Waheeda Tehseen, PhD, Centreville, Virginia
- Deborah Watkins, MPH, Boston, Massachusetts

## Announcements

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

### [Submit your visionary ideas about environmental health research.](#)

The National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS) is seeking input from the public as well as researchers for its new strategic plan. To get involved, submit an idea for research or nominate a workshop participant.

### [New website: Birth defects, from the CDC.](#)

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has launched a research-based site that is user-friendly, up-to-date, and appealing.

**[New book: They're Poisoning Us.](#)**

Arnold Mann draws our attention to a global health crisis of exponential proportions, a toxic plague that has consumed the lives of tens of millions of Americans, rendering millions housebound. In "They're Poisoning Us!" Mann reveals the ugly truths about cover-ups, lies and deceptions by major corporations and government agencies, even medical organizations.

**[EPA proposes first national standard for mercury pollution from power plants.](#)**

In response to a court deadline, today the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) proposed the first-ever national standards for mercury, arsenic and other toxic air pollution from power plants.

[See a related article: [Many Pa. coal plants not equipped to meet new rules](#)]

**[Request for Information \(RFI\): Needs and approaches for assessing the human health impacts of exposure to mixtures.](#)**

Information provided will be used in planning a workshop for late summer 2011 to help inform the development of intramural and extramural research efforts that address the combined health effects of multiple environmental exposures (mixtures).

**[EPA updates National Air Toxics Assessment.](#)**

The National Air Toxics Assessment (NATA) contains 2005 emissions data submitted primarily from the states for 178 pollutants. Models are used to make broad estimates of health risks for areas of the country.

**[Call for abstracts: Reproductive Health 2011.](#)**

Abstract submissions are invited for Reproductive Health 2011, the annual clinical and scientific meeting of the Association of Reproductive Health Professionals (ARHP), to be held September 15 - 17, 2011.

**[Film director Josh Fox discusses impact of deep drilling on environmental health, March 30, 2011.](#)**

Learn about the health risks of "fracking", a term used to describe a method of natural gas drilling, and the threat it poses to the earth's water supply, when film director Josh Fox presents his documentary film "GASLAND" at Bergen Community College. Paramus Post, New Jersey.

**[Job opening: Baltimore, Maryland.](#)**

The Maryland Pesticide Network and Beyond Pesticides are seeking a project director for on-going project: Integrated Pest Management (IPM) in Health Care Facilities and Community Outreach Project launched in 2006.

**[Job opening: Washington, DC.](#)**

Trust for America's Health (TFAH), a leading public health advocacy group, seeks a Director of Government Relations. Please send resume, cover letter and salary history to Richard Hamburg, deputy director of Trust for America's Health, 1730 M Street, NW, Suite 900, Washington, DC 20036 or [rhamburg@tfah.org](mailto:rhamburg@tfah.org).

## Upcoming Events

**Online Calendar.** These and more upcoming events, including requests for proposals and abstracts, are listed in a searchable calendar:

<http://www.healthandenvironment.org/cgi-bin/searchevents.cgi>

**1) Radiation and Human Health: In the Shadow of the Japan Disaster**

Monday March 28, 2011

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

Sponsor: Collaborative on Health and the Environment

Radiation has long been identified as a serious risk factor in various human diseases. Previous disasters at Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Chernobyl, and Three Mile Island have highlighted the risks and fears, but now another tragedy has occurred, with implications yet to be determined. The earthquake and tsunami in Japan, and the resultant ongoing struggles to contain radiation released from reactors there, has brought radiation to the forefront again. What are the primary risks to human health, of both acute high-level and lower-level exposures? Are there scientifically valid strategies for minimizing harm in those exposed? And how might such disasters best be avoided in the future? This call will present two leading experts on these issues: Arjun Makhijani, PhD, president of The Institute for Energy and Environmental Research, and Ira Helfand, MD, past president of Physicians for Social Responsibility. There will be opportunity for some questions and answers.

Price: free

[Visit the website](#)

Contact: CHE, [info@healthandenvironment.org](mailto:info@healthandenvironment.org)

## **2) Mercury Effects on Human Health**

Tuesday March 29, 2011

8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Seattle, Washington  
at the Holiday Inn

Sponsor: EOS Alliance

Both organic and elemental mercury create a wide spectrum of human health concerns. Mercury spills cost public and private entities millions of dollars a year in cleanup and health care costs. This series of courses addresses concerns mercury causes by providing participants with a foundation in the science of environmental mercury and presents solutions for mitigating the impacts of this ubiquitous contaminant.

Price: \$275 or \$225 for employees of Native American tribes, government agencies, nonprofits, students, and NAEP, NEBC, NWAEP members

[Visit the website](#)

Contact: Northwest Environmental Training Center, 425-270-3274

## **3) Biomonitoring: Measuring the Pollution in Women's Bodies to Build Healthier Communities**

Wednesday March 30, 2011

12:00 - 1:00 p.m. Eastern / 9:00 - 10 a.m. Pacific time

Sponsor: Canadian Women's Health Network the National Network on Environments and Women's Health and the National Network on Environments and Women's Health

Sharyle Patton will explore the uses of biomonitoring - the testing of one's body for chemical exposure. She will look at how the experience of knowing one's body burden (the total amount of chemicals present in the human body at any given time) can help inform personal choice and political engagement. While the findings from biomonitoring may be devastating to some on an individual level, Patton suggests that if the information is used with sensitivity and respect for tradition, it can be quite powerful in helping groups work for change in toxic chemical policy. A storyteller, Patton will illustrate her message with the experiences of women she has encountered through her work. Patton is Director of the Health and Environment Program and Biomonitoring Resource Center at Commonweal in Bolinas, California. She is also Director of Special Projects at Collaborative on Health and Environment.

Price: free

[Visit the website](#)

Contact: Canadian Women's Health Network, [info@cwhn.ca](mailto:info@cwhn.ca)

#### **4) Atmospheric Toxics Webinar Series**

Thursday March 31, 2011

10:00 a.m. - noon Eastern time

Sponsor: Great Lakes Commission

Over the last six years, the Great Lakes Commission (GLC), under funding from the US Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) and in cooperation with the eight Great Lakes states, has awarded research grants dealing with atmospheric toxic pollutants affecting the Great Lakes and their tributary watersheds. Thirty-five research grants have been awarded since 2004 addressing a diverse array of research concerning atmospheric pollutant loadings and movement within the basin and the associated impacts of numerous persistent, bioaccumulative, and toxic (PBT) chemicals on wildlife and human health. A substantial amount of new scientific knowledge has been attained through these research activities. The GLAD webinar series is intended to provide a forum for GLAD Principal Investigators (PIs) to disseminate information on their respective research activities, including specific findings, recommended follow-up actions, and potential public policy actions to foster elimination of PBT threats to the region. The presenters and topics will be listed on the website.

Price: free

[Visit the website](#)

Contact: GLC, 734-971-9135

#### **5) National Environmental Justice Advisory Council National Public Teleconference Meeting**

Thursday March 31, 2011

1:00 - 4:00 p.m. Eastern time

Sponsor: National Environmental Justice Advisory Council

The discussion topic will be how to best ensure long-term engagement of communities in Gulf Coast restoration efforts. A public comment period will begin promptly at 2:30 p.m. until 4:00 p.m.

Price: free, but advance registration is required

[Visit the website](#)

Contact: NEJAC, [March2011NEJACMeeting@AlwaysPursuingExcellence.com](mailto:March2011NEJACMeeting@AlwaysPursuingExcellence.com)

#### **6) Toxic Earth: Toxic Bodies - Binational Perspectives in Environmental Health**

Tuesday April 5, 2011

registration at 8:00 a.m., with the symposium beginning at 8:30

Riverside, California

at UC Riverside, HUB Room 355

Sponsor: University of California Institute for Mexico and the United States (UC MEXUS), Mexico's National Commission for Science and Technology (CONACYT), and the One Health Center of the UC Global Health Institute

This one-day symposium will highlight research advances and insights for human health and the environment as related to toxic exposure and contamination in Mexico and the United States. The symposium will convene experts from the University of California and Mexico with binational research ties and with perspectives from the medical, health and environmental sciences. The symposium is open to the public.

Price: free

[Visit the website](#)

Contact: UC MEXUS, 951-827-3519 or [ucmexus@ucr.edu](mailto:ucmexus@ucr.edu)

#### **7) Rx for Survival: Social Justice and Medical Advocacy**

Friday through Sunday, April 8 - 10, 2011  
Washington, DC  
at George Washington University

Sponsor: Physicians for Social Responsibility's student-led division, SPSR

Rx for Survival 2011 seeks to create a unique forum that promotes social responsibility and smart policy from the medical perspective. It seeks to encourage participants to look beyond the traditional realms of their medical or public health professional careers by becoming change makers in both the medical and policy world.

Price: \$30 for students or \$90 for health professionals and the general public

[Visit the website](#)

### **8) National Healthy Schools Day**

Monday April 11, 2011

Sponsor: Healthy Schools Network and many others listed on the website

National Healthy Schools Day is a day for everyone to celebrate and promote healthy and green indoor school environments for all children and staff. For more than five years parents, personnel, advocates, and agencies have held National Healthy Schools Day activities nationwide to highlight the importance of clean indoor air in schools. Whether you are at the beginning stages of investigating issues or have an established IAQ program, we invite you to create an activity that educates others and celebrates your successes.

Price: free

[Visit the website](#)

### **9) 3rd Paris Appeal International Congress**

Tuesday and Wednesday, April 12 - 13, 2011

Paris, France

at UNESCO, 125 avenue de Suffren

Sponsor: Organised by the Association for Research and Treatments Against Cancer (ARTAC), in partnership with HEAL and the International Society of Doctors for the Environment, under the technical support of the World Health Organization

The Paris Appeal, an international declaration on the sanitary dangers of chemical pollution, has now been signed by thousands of scientists, several Nobel Prizes in Medicine, the medical governing bodies of the 25 EU member states at the time, which amounts to over 2 million European doctors, by close to 1,500 non-governmental organizations and approximately 350,000 European citizens. In 2006, the second Congress of the Paris Appeal brought together about a thousand doctors, scientists, environmentalists and representatives of the civil society. The ARTAC presented a Memorandum stating 164 practical measures drawn up by 68 international specialists in an attempt to curb chemical pollution in our environment and the numerous chronic diseases and affections that result from it. The third Congress of the Paris Appeal will focus on children's health in relation with the environment. This Congress will bring together several of the best international specialists and will review the latest scientific breakthroughs in that field. Not only will the whole set of chemical pollutants involved be tackled, but also sanitary effects of electromagnetic fields. This Congress will focus more specifically on transgenerational risks caused by in utero contamination of the embryo and fetus, which results in the onset of diseases and affections not only in children, but also in adults. Thus, it will deal with factors contributing to current public health scourges that we now need to halt and that may get worse tomorrow if no laws are enforced to cut back on pollution in our environment.

Price: see the [Registration page](#)

[Visit the website](#)

Contact: Genon Jensen, 0032 2 234 3641 or [genon@env-health.org](mailto:genon@env-health.org)

### **10) Diabetes and Obesity: Evaluating the Science on Chemical Contributors**

Friday April 15, 2011

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

Sponsor: Collaborative on Health and the Environment

Emerging scientific studies suggest environmental chemicals may be contributing factors to the epidemics of diabetes and obesity. The National Toxicology Program (NTP) headquartered at the National Institute for Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS) sponsored a workshop in January 2011 to evaluate the science associating exposure to certain chemicals or chemical classes with the development of diabetes and/or obesity in humans. In a variety of targeted plenary and workgroup sessions, participants evaluated the strength/weaknesses, consistency, and biological plausibility of findings reported in humans and experimental animals for certain environmental chemicals. On this national conference call open to all who are interested, CHE is very pleased to have three leaders in this growing field of interest who were also instrumental in the shaping the scope of the NTP workshop: Kristina Thayer, PhD, director of the Center for the Evaluation of Risks to Human Reproduction; Bruce Blumberg, PhD, professor in the Department of Developmental and Cell Biology and Pharmaceutical Sciences at the University of California, Irvine; and Jerry Heindel, PhD, program administrator and acting branch chief in the NIEHS Division of Extramural Research and Training. They will present a summary of the conference findings, highlight current research indicating possible links between some chemicals and diabetes and obesity, and discuss future plans to address research gaps, including ongoing evaluation of relevant pathways and biological assays for the Toxicology Testing in the 21st Center high throughput screening initiative (?Tox21?).

Price: free

[Visit the website](#)

Contact: CHE, [info@healthandenvironment.org](mailto:info@healthandenvironment.org)

### **11) NYU Forum on Theatre for Public Health**

Thursday through Saturday, April 21 - 23, 2011

New York, New York

Sponsor: Steinhardt School of Culture, Education, & Human Development, New York University

The goal of this forum is to facilitate a dialogue on the intersections between drama and public health education. The forum will also investigate the perceived boundaries and barriers for artists and educators when delving into health education, as well as those for health professionals when utilizing drama in their work. By public health, we refer to the interdisciplinary field which focuses on protecting, promoting, and improving health and well-being of populations, especially vulnerable ones. The social justice foundation of public health leads the field to consider social, economic, political, and medical care conditions when addressing health issues.

Price: \$20 - \$100; see the website for details

[Visit the website](#)

Contact: Dr. Nancy Smithner, [theatreforpublichealth@gmail.com](mailto:theatreforpublichealth@gmail.com)

## **News and Journal Articles**

### **[Environmental justice: An old idea with a new emphasis.](#)**

*Tuesday, March 22, 2011*

Environmental justice is an old mandate getting a new life under Lisa Jackson, the first African-American head of the Environmental Protection Agency. Seattle Post-Intelligencer, Washington.

### **EPA warns online shoppers about illegal, harmful pesticide sales.**

*Tuesday, March 22, 2011*

The US Environmental Protection Agency announced today that it has warned more than 2,800 customers across the United States about risks associated with a banned pesticide in an ant-control product they purchased online through fastpestcontrol.com. The product, Fast Ant Bait, contained mirex, a pesticide that was banned in 1978 because it can cause liver, skin, reproductive and nerve damage.

*[See other articles about pesticides: [Pesticides in house dust from urban and farmworker households in California: an observational measurement study](#) and [The Midas touch, the Midas effect](#)]*

### **The high health costs of a Seattle Superfund site: It can take years off your life.**

*Monday, March 21, 2011*

An examination of county health records shows that residents near the Duwamish River Superfund site have the highest hospitalization rates for asthma for children and adults in the county and a significantly lower life expectancy. This little-known data could help shape a massive, potentially billion dollar decision about how best to clean up the site. Investigate West.

*[See other articles about contaminated sites: [Lead poisoning is theme of legislative hearing in New Orleans](#); [Petroleum spills attract few headlines, but leave behind polluted indoor air, contaminated water and disrupted lives](#); [GM makes progress removing PCBs from Indiana site](#); [EPA public comment period begins on proposed permit for Clinton Landfill: public meeting on April 13](#); [Bayer will halt production of toxic gas: town's long fight, looming fears of 2nd Bhopal over](#) and [Source of 30-mile oil spill in Gulf puzzles officials](#)]*

### **Trash, toxic emissions up at local landfills.**

*Sunday, March 20, 2011*

With more trash coming into Keystone Sanitary Landfill in Dunmore, dangerous air emissions are on the rise, a Sunday Times analysis of state records found. The review also found the state Department of Environmental Protection relies upon the landfills to monitor air quality and report problems. Scranton Times Tribune, Pennsylvania.

*[See other article about waste: [Recession slows hazardous-waste growth in Idaho](#) and [Radioactive waste may be bound for state](#)]*

### **Experts at UN meeting urge action to combat environmental causes of cancer.**

*Saturday, March 19, 2011*

Medical experts attending a United Nations-convened scientific meeting today called for action to address preventable environmental and occupational causes of cancer, noting that nearly one in five of all cases of cancers are attributable to the environment, including work settings. UN News Centre.

*[See another article about cancer risk: [Yale study links obesity and early uterine cancer](#)]*

### **Radiation Risks to Health.**

*Saturday, March 19, 2011*

To help Americans understand their radiation-related health risks, the American Association of Clinical Endocrinologists (AACE), the American Thyroid Association (ATA), The Endocrine Society and the Society of Nuclear Medicine (SNM) issued a joint statement.

*[See related articles: [Damaged nuclear-power plants could spew range of emissions](#); [Nuclear contamination: The options](#); [Japan radioactivity could enter food chain](#); [What will Japanese near reactors face long-term?](#); [Nine states don't deploy radiation safeguards](#); [U.S. to review drug supply after Japan reactor breach](#); [Higher cancer risk continues after Chernobyl](#); [Radiation, once free, can follow tricky path](#) and [Cancer risk of airport scans tough to gauge](#)]*

### **Doctors: More measles ahead in Minnesota.**

*Saturday, March 19, 2011*

For years, health officials have been warning that diseases like measles could make a comeback if families stopped vaccinating their children. Now, they're trying to contain an

outbreak in Minneapolis that has already sickened six children and appears to be spreading, especially in the Somali community. Minneapolis Star Tribune, Minnesota.

### **[Product-safety database a hard-fought victory for consumers.](#)**

*Friday, March 18, 2011*

It's like a regulatory version of "Survivor." A federal database of product-safety complaints is now operational after withstanding repeated attempts by manufacturers and Republican lawmakers to cripple or kill the resource. Los Angeles Times, California.

[See other articles about hazards in consumer products: [Germs lurking in old makeup: It isn't pretty](#); [Dark-colored sodas may have toxic backwash, or not.](#); [Senate OKs bill banning sale of baby products with BPA](#); [Arkansas legislature: Plastics additive \[BPA\] ban fails](#); [Tween Brands to limit toxic cadmium in its jewelry](#) and [Measure would ban toxic pavement sealant \[coal tar\]](#)]

### **[Phone users' exposure to radiation injurious, say experts](#)**

*Thursday, March 17, 2011*

Cell phone safety warnings are generally designed for a large man with a big head who talks less than half an hour a day. Chicago Tribune.

[See another article about cell phone use: [Text -- don't call! Government updates health advice for mobile phone users after admitting 'We don't know whether they are dangerous'](#)]

### **[Mediterranean diet helps prevent, slow metabolic syndrome.](#)**

*Saturday, March 12, 2011*

Patients who eat a Mediterranean diet -- rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and olive oil -- lowered prevalence and progression of metabolic syndrome and its components, according to results from a meta-analysis of 50 studies. MedPage Today.

[See other articles about diet: [The importance of a healthy diet during pregnancy](#); [Eco-sexy nutrition: An apple a day increases lifespan by 10%](#); [New cancer fighters? Mustard, wasabi, horseradish](#) and [Omega-3 may reduce risk of AMD vision loss](#)]

### **[EPA rejects city timeline on PCBs.](#)**

*Saturday, March 12, 2011*

New York City's 10-year plan to identify and replace school-building light fixtures that are leaking toxic chemicals should be handled in a speedier and more comprehensive fashion, the Environmental Protection Agency said Friday. New York Times.

[See articles about PCBs: [Maternal exposure to polychlorinated biphenyls and the secondary sex ratio: an occupational cohort study](#) and [Ashwaubenon, Oneidas air concerns with PCB plan](#)]

### **[Inside story: How illuminating.](#)**

*Saturday, March 12, 2011*

Scientists have uncovered the biochemical mechanisms used by living organisms to produce light, known as bioluminescence. They are putting those tricks to a dazzling range of uses, including the detection of viruses and pollution. Economist.

### **[Maryland Health Department investigating destruction of lead paint records.](#)**

*Saturday, March 12, 2011*

The state's health secretary said Friday that his department's laboratory has destroyed test results dating back to the 1980s documenting lead poisoning of Maryland children -- potentially thousands of records that are crucial to lawsuits seeking damages on behalf of poisoned children. Baltimore Sun, Maryland.

### **[Chemical review.](#)**

*Saturday, March 12, 2011*

Forty-five million different chemicals are commercially available around the world -- and many of these chemicals go untested. Patricia Hunt from Washington State University has called for more stringent review of chemicals. Her letter to the journal Science was co-signed by scientific societies representing 40,000 researchers and clinicians. Living On Earth.



[See other articles about chemicals and health: [Chemistry that's less toxic, and profitable too](#) and [New robot system to test 10,000 chemicals for toxicity](#)]

### **Cigarette displays to be banned in English stores.**

Thursday, March 10, 2011

The cigarette packs piled into prominent displays behind store counters help to keep addicts hooked and quitters tempted. But the British government announced a ban on them Wednesday, a move that will keep cigarettes hidden away and make it just a tad more difficult for smokers to find their fix. Associated Press.

[See other articles about tobacco use: [A prospective study investigating the association between environmental tobacco smoke exposure and the incidence of type 2 diabetes in never smokers](#); [Obesity, parental smoking cause asthma among kids: Study](#); [Smoking videos cause concern](#) and [Two decades after Pinellas lawmaker proposed it, Florida's prisons ban smoking](#)]

### **Sludge storm: Conference organizers want biosolids out of Nova Scotia.**

Thursday, March 10, 2011

Kiln-baked sewage sludge, also known as "biosolids", is being marketed and sold across Nova Scotia as fertilizer. Montreal Dominion, Quebec.

### **Environmentalists accuse Kentucky mining company of faking data.**

Thursday, March 10, 2011

Environmentalists combing through public records allege they have found a third Kentucky coal company that has submitted potentially fraudulent water-pollution monitoring data to state agencies. Louisville Courier-Journal, Kentucky.

[See other articles about water quality: [Alberta oilsands committee calls for more rigorous standards](#); [W.Va. communities possibly unprepared for radioactivity in water](#); [Myrtle Beach officials consider legal action over AVX pollution](#); [Study: Pharmaceutical chemicals widespread in Minn. streams](#); [Bromide: A concern in drilling wastewater](#); [Socioeconomic status and exposure to disinfection by-products in drinking water in Spain](#); [Absorbing chlorinated water 'a cancer risk'](#); [Delaware proposes stricter limits on 3 toxins in drinking water](#); [Report: Nitrate-polluted ground water widespread in San Joaquin Valley](#); [Antibiotic pollution may increase groundwater nitrate](#) and [Leading water fluoridation expert Prof Paul Connett to tour New Zealand](#)]

### **Health Ministry launches first-ever study into impact of environmental toxins.**

Thursday, March 10, 2011

The Israel Health Ministry has launched its first-ever research project into the extent to which environmental toxins affect local residents. Haaretz, Israel.

### **Toxic avenger: In the war between the Feds and Texas, EPA Chief Al Armendariz has science on his side. Is that enough?**

Thursday, March 10, 2011

Earlier this year, Texas Monthly named him one of their "25 Most Powerful Texans" and the Houston Chronicle called him "the most feared environmentalist in the state." Dallas Observer, Texas.

### **Americans have higher rates of most chronic diseases than same-age counterparts in England.**

Wednesday, March 09, 2011

Researchers announced today in the American Journal of Epidemiology that despite the high level of spending on healthcare in the United States compared to England, Americans experience higher rates of chronic disease and markers of disease than their English counterparts at all ages. ScienceDaily.

### **Scientists find link between maternal diet and diabetes.**

Wednesday, March 09, 2011

Scientists say they have found a mechanism which may explain why a poor diet during pregnancy can increase the risk of offspring developing diabetes in later life. BBC News.

[See other articles about diabetes: [Are particulate matter exposures associated with risk](#)]

[of Type 2 diabetes?; Traffic-related air pollution and incident Type 2 diabetes: Results from the SALIA Cohort Study; NIH announces new strategic plan to combat diabetes and Medical profession 'oblivious' to role of chemicals in diabetes and obesity\]](#)

### **[Report: U.S. coal power plants emit toxic air pollutants.](#)**

Wednesday, March 09, 2011

Coal-burning power plants release more toxic air pollutants such as arsenic and lead than any other U.S. industrial pollution source, says a report Tuesday by the American Lung Association. USA Today.

[See other articles about air quality: [Pinpointing air pollution's effects on the heart](#); [Effect of hourly concentration of particulate matter on peak expiratory flow in hospitalized children: A panel study](#); [New study calls region's air quality 'unacceptably poor'](#); [County considering stricter rules for furnaces that burn wood](#); [National study ranks Puget Sound region in the Top 5 percent of risk for toxic air pollution](#); [Smoke from wood fireplaces, stoves raises new health concerns](#); [Want to keep your heart and lungs healthy? Don't sit next to the photocopier](#); [A superhero scrubs the air: the mighty houseplant](#); [Scented candles can cause 'indoor air pollution'](#); [Giant refinery becoming unwelcome guest in Curacao](#); [EPA toxics report sparks fight over diesel emissions](#); [What effect does smog really have on your children?](#); [Car and truck exhaust, wood smoke and solvents top Oregon's list of toxic air pollution risks](#) and [Kriged and modeled ambient air levels of benzene in an urban environment: an exposure assessment study\]](#)

### **[Food sold in recycled cardboard packaging 'poses risk.'](#)**

Wednesday, March 09, 2011

Leading food manufacturers are changing their packaging because of health concerns about boxes made from recycled cardboard, the BBC has learned. Researchers found toxic chemicals from recycled newspapers had contaminated food sold in many cardboard cartons. BBC.

[See other articles about contaminated food: [Delhi HC for surprise check on veggie vendors](#); [BSE fears prompt tougher cattle regulations](#); [DNR faces criticism over handling of chronic-wasting deer disease](#) and [Tokyo suspends more food shipments\]](#)

### **[The government of Canada and the Home Depot team up to educate Canadians about potential environmental hazards in the home.](#)**

Wednesday, March 09, 2011

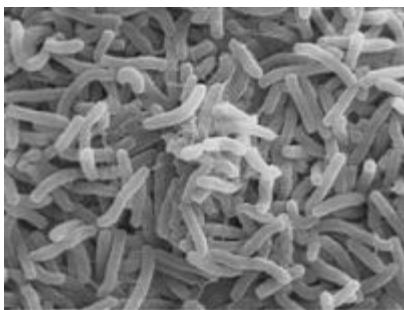
The guide provides information on environmental health hazards and simple steps Canadians can take to reduce risks to their health.

## **Lessons Learned**

### **Connecting a Pump Handle to Cholera in 1854**

by Steven G. Gilbert, PhD, DABT

"May God be with me! May Heaven bless this New Year. May it be a year of fruitfulness, of peace and prosperity; may it be a year of peace and unity for all mankind; may the world be freed of cholera." ~ Giacomo Meyerbeer (September 05, 1791 - May 02, 1864)



We are not free of cholera, as we recently learned from the outbreak of cholera infections in Haiti that affected over 250,000 people, killing over 4,500. Worldwide in 2010, mostly in developing countries, it affected 3 to 5 million people and caused 100,000 to 130,000 deaths, a typical year. Cholera is an ancient disease originating in the Indian subcontinent and prevalent in the Ganges delta since ancient times. Throughout history it has killed millions of people; for example, eight million died in India between 1900 and 1920.

## Cholera bacterium

A normal, healthy adult needs to ingest a dose of about one hundred million cholera bacteria to become infected. Those more susceptible to infection include people with lower acidity in their gut or with type O blood, or children two to four year of age.

Imagine the 1850s before it was known that cholera was caused by the bacterium *Vibrio cholerae*, which was discovered by Robert Koch in 1885. Imagine further you are in London, England, in the 1850s and your neighbors seem to be randomly contracting cholera and dying, which some thought was caused by pollution or a noxious form of "bad air." And then there was John Snow, a London physician, who in 1849 publicized his theory that cholera was transmitted by water in an essay *On the Mode of Communication of Cholera*. This was not a popular or well-accepted theory. Snow plotted the incidence of cholera on a map and noticed the increased incidence around a single source of water. As Snow stated "On proceeding to the spot, I found that nearly all the deaths had taken place within a short distance of the [Broad Street] pump." The Broad Street pump handle was removed and the epidemic stopped. John Snow made this enormous contribution to public health and started the discipline of epidemiology all before the exact cause and effect had been discovered.



John Snow



Broad Street pump  
(by S. Gilbert)

The Broad Street Pump can be found in London near the John Snow Tavern. From a public-health perspective this is a pilgrimage worth making. In developed countries cholera infections are rare and treatable. We know very well how to keep our water supply and food safe from this common bacterium. The tragedy is that many children in developing countries are still dying from cholera because they are not growing up in an environment in which they cannot reach and maintain their full potential.

John Snow at Toxipedia - <http://toxipedia.org/x/Yqtb>  
Cholera at Toxipedia - <http://toxipedia.org/x/cMNb>

### Looking back to go forward

Lessons Learned is a 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](mailto:Steve.Gilbert@iceh.org).

Past Lessons Learned: <http://toxipedia.org/x/O6Jb>

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 environmental health as it relates to learning and developmental disabilities: <http://www.iceh.org/LDDIbulletins.html>
- For those interested in environmental health in Washington State and the Pacific Northwest: <http://washington.chenw.org/bulletins.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 ICEH Working 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 Initiative on Children's Environmental Health Working Group at the bottom of the application.

Nancy Snow  
**Collaborative on Health and the Environment**

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