



Collaborative on Health and the Environment

eNewsletter -- July 2009



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Dear CHE Partners:

The Endocrine Society is certainly not a 'household' name-nor an organization you may have even thought about before. But no one concerned about public health and the environment can overestimate the significance of The Endocrine Society's new scientific report stating that exposures to endocrine disrupting chemicals (EDCs) are a growing threat to human health and well-being (find the report from the [CHE website](#)). EDCs are synthetic chemicals found in everyday products-from lotions to can linings-that can disrupt the hormonal messaging system that choreographs the development and maintenance of the body's biological systems.

The Endocrine Society's statement, based on a thorough analysis of the peer-reviewed data from animal and human studies, indicates that exposures to EDCs are contributing to a wide range of public health concerns, including various cancers, reproductive health problems, diabetes, obesity, heart disease and neurological disorders. Of particular concern, the report states, are minute exposures to EDCs in the womb and early childhood during critical windows of development, which can have lifelong adverse health impacts.

The statement also emphasizes that disease prevention is predicated on reducing exposures to EDCs, and asserts that "Our chemical policies at the local, state and national levels, as well as globally, need to be formulated, financed and implemented to ensure the best public health." In addition, the report explicitly states that "the precautionary principle is critical to enhancing health."

This report, of course, is not the first time these issues have been raised-the seminal book, *Our Stolen Future*, co-authored by Theo Colborn, Dianne Dumanoski, and John Peterson Myers and published in 1996, clearly lays out the accumulated science over 50 years related to these concerns. However, this is the first time such a highly respected international medical society-an organization of over 14,000 members in 100 countries-has taken such an unqualified stance on EDCs.

Given the stature of The Endocrine Society, this ground-breaking statement sends a clear signal to other health professionals as well as policymakers that we simply cannot ignore environmental contributors to a wide range of diseases and disabilities. As members of CHE, we can bring this message to our own constituencies. For some, that might mean urging a health-related professional society to publicly endorse The Endocrine Society's statement or develop its own resolution highlighting these findings. For others, this might mean using this statement to press for chemical policy reform on state, national and international levels.

Whatever you choose to do, know that this statement is not just another inscrutable scientific treatise (see related New York Times article: http://www.nytimes.com/2009/06/28/opinion/28kristof.html?_r=1&em), but a call to action to improve the health of our families and communities as well as future generations. To learn more about the implications of this statement and other ways the precautionary principle is being invoked and implemented, please join us for our next CHE Partner call, [Precaution's Reach: A Principle in Action](#), on July 28th.

With best wishes,

--

Elise Miller, MEd
Director
Collaborative on Health and the Environment

CHE Partnership Calls

CHE invites you to participate in this upcoming CHE Partnership call:

Precaution's Reach: A Principle in Action

Tuesday, July 28, 2009 at 10 AM Pacific / 1 PM Eastern

Join CHE on **Tues July 28, 2009 at 10 AM Pacific / 1 PM Eastern** for a call exploring a cornerstone of CHE's original consensus statement, the precautionary principle. On this call we will discuss various ways the precautionary principle is currently being implemented. Presenters will primarily focus on a new report from the Science & Environmental Health Network ([SEHN](#)), examining the role of the precautionary approaches across sectors. The report, "[Advancing The Precautionary](#)" draws a picture of shared ideas, challenges, and hopes for integrating precaution in a broad-based fashion. Also to be highlighted is [The Endocrine Society's recent and seminal report on endocrine disruptors](#), which also evokes the precautionary principle-an extraordinary step for a major medical society.

[RSVP for This Call](#)

Featured speakers:

- **Patrice Sutton**, MPH, Research Scientist, University of California San Francisco Program on Reproductive health and the Environment and consultant to the Science and Environmental Health Network, author of SEHN's report "Advancing the Precautionary Principle"
- **Tom Zoeller**, PhD, Professor, Biology Department, University of Massachusetts-Amherst, co-author of The Endocrine Society's "Endocrine-Disrupting Chemicals: An Endocrine Society Scientific Statement"
- **Carolyn Raffensperger**, Executive Director, Science and Environmental Health Network

The call will be moderated by Elise Miller, CHE Director. Pete Myers, founder, CEO and Chief Scientist of Environmental Health Sciences will provide a science update at the start of the call. The call will last one hour and will be recorded for archival purposes.

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:

- June 23, 2009 - [A Common Agenda for Health and the Environment: Goals for the Next Generation and Steps to Get There](#)

June 4, 2009 - CHE Science Café call with Dr. Steve Gilbert

- June 4, 2009 - [CHE Science Care Call with Dr. Steve Gilbert](#)
- May 7, 2009 - [Metabolic Syndrome: At the Crossroads of the Western Disease Cluster](#)

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

CHE Working and Regional Group Updates

CHE EMF

~ coordinated by Nancy Evans, nancywrite@comcast.net and Cindy Sage, sage@silcom.com

~ **FDA guts website on cell phone risks and safety issues:** FDA's Abiy Desta, who is in charge of cell phone safety for the FDA Center for Devices and Radiological Health, invited a briefing from Cindy Sage and David Carpenter last April at FDA headquarters in Rockville, MD. Sage and Carpenter were co-editors and authors of the BioInitiative Report. Instead of providing warnings to consumers that reflect the new studies linking cell phone use to increased risk of gliomas and acoustic neuromas, the FDA has now reversed itself, and gutted its webpage on consumer advice.

"The FDA should take into account all the new tumor studies and issue tougher warning statements like the rest of the world is doing," says Sage in Microwave News. "I never dreamed they would gut it."

Read Louis Slesin's full analysis of the FDA action at www.microwavenews.com

Read Cindy Sage's commentary on the FDA action on the CHE EMF webpages at http://www.healthandenvironment.org/working_groups/emf

~ **Researchers from the Department of Psychiatry**, University of Mainz, Germany, have published a report linking electrosensitivity to blood markers that may serve as reliable indicators of physiological EHS symptoms. Results identified laboratory signs of thyroid dysfunction, liver dysfunction and chronic inflammatory processes in small but remarkable fractions of EHS sufferers as potential sources of symptoms that merit further investigation in future studies. In the cases of TSH and ALT/AST, there were significant differences between cases and controls (N=132).

Bioelectromagnetics 30:299-306, 2009. © 2009 Wiley-Liss.

~ France's newly elected Secretary of State for Ecology, Chantal Jouanno has announced she is in favor of a **trial reduction of cell phone antenna emissions in certain towns in France** to 0.6V/m (by implication in accordance with the BioInitiative consortium recommendations) while awaiting the results of a new study from the French government health agency AFFSET.

~ **A Conditional Use Permit for a proposed 345 kV transmission line in Utah was denied by Willard City on EMF health and safety grounds.** On June 29th, Willard City, Utah denied the permit to build a high-voltage transmission line through the city because of concerns that electric and magnetic fields from the project could harm the health of nearby residents and damage property values. The electric utility, Rocky Mountain Power, immediately filed a court action naming the city and its city council members, to set aside the local agency's decision. A judge ruled on July 2nd that the power company can continue building the line while the issue is debated. It is unusual for a local city to have any permit authority over a major multi-state project. In Utah, however, each city affected by the transmission line must issue a permit. Willard City's ordinances require that projects it approves are consistent with protection of public health, safety and general welfare. The City Council could not make those findings, given the concerns over EMF health risks.

CHE Fertility

~ coordinated by Julia Varshavsky, CHE Program Associate,

julia@healthandenvironment.org

~ CHE-Fertility Working Group participants are encouraged to participate in the upcoming CHE-Fertility Call -- **Know Your ABC's: The Fundamentals of Reproductive Health and the Environment** -- **Monday, July 13 at 11 AM Pacific / 2 PM Eastern.**

Do You Know Your ABC's? Join us on this call to discuss the basics of environmental reproductive health science. This call is intended to help refresh continuing participants as well as inform those who are new to the information.

On this call presenters will discuss what we know about:

- how rates of infertility and other reproductive health problems have changed as industrial chemical production has proliferated over the last 70 years;
- what sound scientific evidence is increasingly revealing about links between environmental contaminants and these health problems;
- where the limitations are in our health tracking and exposure data;
- how policies can change to reflect what we know, even in the face of inevitable scientific uncertainty; and
- what health professionals.

Featured presenters:

- **Ted Schettler**, MD, MPH, Science Director, Science and Environmental Health Network and CHE
- **Tracey Woodruff**, PhD, MPH, Program on Reproductive Health and the Environment, Department of Obstetrics, Gynecology, and Reproductive Sciences, University of California, San Francisco; and Philip R. Lee Institute for Health Policy Studies, University of California, San Francisco
- **Rivka Gordon**, PA-C, MHS, Director, Strategic Initiatives, Association of Reproductive Health Professionals

Dial-in #: 1-800-371-8200

Passcode: 34643#

More information about this call <http://healthandenvironment.org/articles/doc/6166>

Please email julia@healthandenvironment.org if you plan to attend so that we can reserve the correct number of lines.

~ **View CHE-Fertility's [searchable calendar](#)** of environmental reproductive health events from throughout the US and around the world. Visitors can search by type of event, month, location and other fields.

~ **CHE-Fertility Researchers: Passport Foundation Science Innovation Fund** provides rapid, modest sized grants (\$5K to \$50K) to scientists at universities and not-for-profit organizations in support of scientific research in the environmental health sciences that has strong, demonstrable potential to inform and build support for changes in public health policy and clinical care policies/practices (and to be published in a peer-reviewed publication). The second round of applications is due July 10, 2009.

For more information please see:

<https://online.foundationsource.com/public/home/passport>

To request a copy of the RFP please email Foundation Source at:

info@passportfoundation.org

CHE HEAL

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

~ **Network launched to defend those suffering from exposure to pesticides**
French non-governmental organisation, [MDRGE](#) (Movement for the Rights and Respect of Future Generations) and [HEAL](#) (the Health and Environment Alliance) have launched what is probably Europe's first network for people with health problems related to pesticide exposure. The launch took place at a press conference on Thursday 18 June 2009 in Paris.

Aurèle Clémencin, who is joint pesticides campaign coordinator for MDRGF and HEAL in France, said: "We want to help people who are affected, by raising awareness of the dangers of exposure and calling for reductions in exposure and for substitution of the most harmful pesticides in current use."

The campaign by will be known as "Victimes des pesticides - votre santé, notre priorité" (Pesticide sufferers - your health, our priority).

For more information and a press kit, contact Aurèle CLÉMENCIN, Pesticides & Cancer HEAL - MDRGF, aurele@env-health.org or +33 1 45 79 07 59. Website: <http://www.victimes-pesticides.org>. Aurele is also joint coordinator for HEAL and MDRGF on the Pesticides and Cancer campaign, see www.pesticidescancer.eu

~**European Commission releases official Communication on Cancer**, Brussels 24 June 2009 - The European Commission's Communication on Cancer takes an important step forward in recognising the environmental dimension of cancer prevention. For the first time, the Commission officially acknowledges that cancer prevention should address lifestyle, occupational and environmental causes on an equal footing. [Read the communication](#)

CHE LDDI

~ coordinated by Laura Abulafia, laura@healthandenvironment.org and Elise Miller, CHE Director, elise@healthandenvironment.org

~ **LDDI held a working group call on June 23rd**. Highlights of the discussion included updates on LDDI federal policy activities, mental health working group, communications development, biomonitoring, and the educational workshop to be held in Illinois. For the full notes, please contact Laura Abulafia at: laura@healthandenvironment.org or Elise Miller at: elise@healthandenvironment.org

~ **LDDI's Mental Health working group** held a conference call yesterday, July 7 hosted by the National Association for the Dually Diagnosed (NADD). For more information, please contact Ed Seliger at: eseliger@thenadd.org

~ **The American Association for Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities** (AAIDD) will be holding its next teleconference call on July 14th, which is titled "Association of Early-life Exposure to Household Gas Appliances and Indoor Nitrogen Dioxide With Cognition and Attention Behavior in Preschoolers," with Dr. Jordi Sunyer. For more information please contact Laura Abulafia at: laura@aaidd.org

~ **The Autism Society of America** (ASA) will hold its annual conference July 22-25 in St. Charles, Illinois. Environmental health sessions will be included. For more information, contact Donna Ferullo at: dferullo@autism-society.org

~ **The Learning Disability of America's (LDA's) Research Committee** which focuses on environmental health research will be holding its call today, July 8th, to discuss plans for its annual medical symposium on environmental health issues and participation in the new coalition "Safer Chemicals, Healthy Families." For more information, contact Maureen Swanson at: mawanson@ldaamerica.org

CHE Regional Working Groups Updates

CHE Washington

~ Now coordinated by Steve Gilbert, sgilbert@innnd.org or contact info@healthandenvironment.org

~ CHE-WA's Children's Environmental Health working group is hosting a **Northwest Children's Environmental Health Forum October 1-2, 2009** at the Tukwila Community Center. Confirmed national speakers include Ted Schettler, MD who will provide an overview of children's environmental health issues, Shanna Swan, PhD speaking on endocrine disruptors and children's health, Bruce Lanphear, PhD speaking on neurotoxicants and children's brain development, and Michael Skinner, PhD addressing multigenerational health impacts linked to environmental exposures. Anyone interested in

being involved with this event, or who would like to learn more about the efforts of the CHE-WA children's environmental health working group may contact Margo Young at young.margo@epamail.epa.gov, Gail Gensler at gail.gensler@kingcounty.gov, or Aimee Boulanger at aboulanger@iceh.org.

~ **CHE-WA adds new feature to bi-weekly bulletins:** *Lessons Learned* is a CHE-WA bulletin feature focusing on an historical event that provides an important lesson for ensuring a more sustainable and healthy environment. Please feel free to send suggestions to Steve Gilbert at: sgilbert@innnd.org

To receive the CHE-WA bulletin please contact: info@healthandenvironment.org

Announcements and News Highlights

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."

The paper also asserts that in order to prevent disease, "Our chemical policies at the local, state and national levels, as well as globally, need to be formulated, financed and implemented to ensure the best public health." Given the stature of The Endocrine Society, as well as its "Sister Societies", such as the American Diabetes Society and the American Obesity Society, this report sends a clear signal to other health-related professional societies as well as policymakers that we can no longer ignore environmental contributors to a wide range of diseases and disabilities-in fact, we need to take a precautionary approach on every level of decision-making.

For more information on the report, please see: <http://www.endo-society.org/journals/scientificstatements/index.cfm>

First teleconference for new CHE Metabolic Syndrome Discussion Group planned

The first teleconference for the newly forming metabolic discussion group will take place on **Thursday, July 16, 2009 at 11 AM Pacific / 2 PM Eastern**. An agenda and dial-in information will be distributed to those who have signed up to participate in this group within the coming week. If you are interested in participating please contact info@healthandenvironment.org.

[Listen to the CHE Partnership call on metabolic syndrome](#)

If you have any questions, please contact Ted Schettler at tschettler@sehn.org or Elise Miller at elise@healthandenvironment.org.

Reports, Resources and Other Updates

CHE's searchable calendar

CHE provides a searchable calendar of environmental health events from throughout the US and around the world: <http://www.healthandenvironment.org/cgi-bin/searchevents.cgi>

Because the calendar typically includes several dozen conferences, lectures, meetings, trainings and other events, visitors can search by the type of event, the month, the location, and other fields. Events have also been coded so that visitors can **select those of interest to each of CHE's various working groups**.

Lowell Center for Sustainable Production releases "A Common Agenda for Health

and Environment"

In 2007, nearly 100 leaders of healthcare, community development, environmental, labor and agriculture organizations began a conversation about the world we want leave our children, and what it will take to get there within a generation. These leaders have now produced the report "A Common Agenda for Health and Environment" and are asking for signatories as well as help in prioritizing the agenda's goals.

[Read the report](#)

CDC launches National Environmental Public Health Tracking Network

The Environmental Health Tracking Network <http://ephtracking.cdc.gov> is the first program available to the general public, as well as scientists and health professionals, that follows environmental exposures and chronic health conditions on the CDC's website.

Pesticide Action Network launches new database linking government food test results to pesticide toxicology science

What's On My Food? Database: <http://www.whatsonmyfood.org>

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

Julia Varshavsky, Program Associate

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