



# Learning and Developmental Disabilities Initiative

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



**Biweekly Bulletin March 10, 2010**

This bulletin lists upcoming events plus recent announcements, news and journal articles, calls for proposals and other items related to learning and developmental disabilities and environmental health. They are archived and searchable on LDDI's website: [www.healthandenvironment.org/working\\_groups/learning/r/bulletins](http://www.healthandenvironment.org/working_groups/learning/r/bulletins) (Note the new URL).

## LDDI Highlights

### **New CHE Blog**

CHE has launched a blog to promote dialogue on issues at the intersection of human health and environment. Main blog posts are invited essays from CHE partners. Comments and discussion are welcome from all.

<http://ourhealthandenvironment.wordpress.com/>

### **CHE on Facebook**

In addition to a new blog, CHE has also created a Facebook page to be updated several times a week with CHE announcements, important new reports and news and other information that may be of interest to our Partners. We invite you to visit and join the [Facebook page](#).

### **Biomonitoring Study Resource**

In response to the release of LDDI's body burden/biomonitoring report and several other recent reports, the [Biomonitoring Reports web page](#) on the LDDI website has been updated, compiling reports to give visitors easy access.

### **Mental Health Guide for Healthcare Providers**

The Mental Health working group has released an educational brochure on "Mental Health Effects Arising from Pesticide Exposure: A Guide for Healthcare Providers and Mental Health Practitioners." To download the brochure, visit the [Mental Health Working Group web page](#).

### **New Members**

The Learning and Developmental Disabilities Initiative welcomes these new members:

- Vickie Carper, Mercer Island, Washington
- Rey Sabio, Baguio, Philippines
- Richard Krein, DC, Portland, Oregon
- Angie Sturm, South Lake Tahoe, California

## Announcements

A daily news feed with articles and announcements is available on CHE's website:

<http://www.healthandenvironment.org/news/announce>.

### **EPA requests public comments on vessel water discharges report.**

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is seeking public comments on a draft report that, when made final, will provide Congress with information it may use for the regulation of incidental discharges from certain vessels.

**[EPA announces environmental justice video contest: Faces of the Grassroots.](#)**

The Faces of the Grassroots contest is an opportunity to publicly exhibit creativity with environmental justice stories, and connect with others working to raise awareness of the movement.

**[New policy statement: American Chemical Society on endocrine disruptors.](#)**

The American Chemical Society strongly endorses expanded endocrine disruptor education and research and the development of more effective science-based decision-making tools and methods for reducing and eliminating exposures of humans and the environment.

**[EPA accepting comments on ArcelorMittal requests for hazardous waste injection well permits.](#)**

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Region 5 will accept public comments until April 7th on ArcelorMittal's requests to continue injecting hazardous waste deep underground at its facility in Burns Harbor, Indiana.

**[US EPA partners with Indonesia to improve public health in Jakarta.](#)**

The program aims to better understand Jakarta's air pollution problems and to develop cost-effective strategies for improvement. EPA and its partners will provide technical assistance and training for developing air quality monitoring and emissions inventories.

**[Call for proposals: Pesticide Safety Program for Agricultural Workers and Farmworker Children.](#)**

The Office of Pesticide Programs (OPP) is soliciting applications from eligible parties for an EPA cooperative agreement to provide financial assistance to an eligible organization for an education and training pesticide safety program aimed at reducing exposure to pesticides for agricultural workers, their families and the agricultural community. Applications are due April 5th.

**[Call for proposals: Smart Growth Program.](#)**

The Development, Community, and Environment Division (DCED), known as the Smart Growth Program, in EPA's Office of Policy, Economics, and Innovation is seeking letters of interest from states, regions, and communities that want to develop in ways that reflect the principles of smart growth and meet environmental and other goals. EPA will provide technical assistance to successful applicants. Letters of interest are due April 9th.

**[Job opening: Portland, Oregon.](#)**

Josiah Hill III Clinic is currently hiring an executive director. Review of applications will begin March 15th.

**[Job opening: Portland, Oregon.](#)**

Josiah Hill III Clinic is currently hiring an AmeriCorps communications specialist to assist with spreading the word about Josiah Hill III Clinic's services and the variety of opportunities for community members to become involved with the organization.

**[Job opening: Providence, Rhode Island.](#)**

Brown University has an opening for a postdoctoral research position at in environmental health with a focus on research ethics. Please send a cover letter, CV and names of three references to Phil Brown, Professor of Sociology and Environmental Studies, Brown University, Box 1916, Providence RI 02912 by March 15, 2010.

## Upcoming Events

**Online Calendar.** These and more upcoming events are listed in a searchable calendar: <http://www.healthandenvironment.org/cgi-bin/searchevents.cgi> The calendar now lists deadlines for funding proposals and conference abstracts.

**1) A Conversation with Linda Birnbaum, Director of the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences**

Monday March 15, 2010

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

Sponsor: Collaborative on Health and the Environment

We will hear from Birnbaum on the priorities and challenges facing the NIEHS in the coming years as well as discuss other pressing environmental health concerns.

Price: free

[Visit the website](#)

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

## **2) California's Toxics Information Clearinghouse: Scientific Approaches to Implementation**

Monday and Tuesday, March 15 - 16, 2010

Sacramento, California

at the Cal/EPA building, 1001 I Street

Sponsor: UCLA Law and Environmental Health Sustainable Technology Policy Program, the UC Berkeley Center for Green Chemistry, and the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA), with primary funding from the UC Toxic Substances Research and Teaching Program

The first of two workshops, this will focus on indicators for human health hazards in three sessions: 1) state of the science on identifying chemical hazards; 2) human health hazard indicators for cancer, developmental neurotoxicity and endocrine disruption; and 3) moving forward with human health hazard indicators. The second workshop will be May 10 - 11th in Berkeley.

Price: unknown

[Visit the website](#)

Contact: Sara Hoover of OEHHA, [shoover@oehha.ca.gov](mailto:shoover@oehha.ca.gov)

## **3) Distinguished Lecture - "Organophosphate Pesticide Exposure and the Development of Children Living in an Agricultural Community: Results of the CHAMACOS Study"**

Tuesday March 16, 2010

11:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Research Triangle Park, North Carolina

at the NIEHS campus, Rall Building Rodbell ABC

Sponsor: National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences

The speaker will be Brenda Eskenazi, PhD, professor in the School of Public Health at the University of California, Berkeley. This lecture is open to the public.

Price: free

[Visit the website](#)

## **4) Environmental Speaker Series - Dr. Linda Birnbaum, NIEHS**

Tuesday March 23, 2010

6:00 p.m. reception, 7:00 p.m. lecture

Chapel Hill, North Carolina

at the University of North Carolina Sonja Haynes Stone Center Theater

Sponsor: University of North Carolina Institute for the Environment

The IE Environmental Speaker Series is a seminar series that brings an important environmental researcher to the UNC campus once per semester. This event is open to the public.

Price: free

[Visit the website](#)

Contact: Josh Meyer, [josh\\_meyer@unc.edu](mailto:josh_meyer@unc.edu)

#### **5) EPA Grants Award Process Webinar**

Thursday April 1, 2010

2:00 p.m. Eastern time

Sponsor: US Environmental Protection Agency

EPA's Office of Grants and Debarment is hosting a webinar for the EPA grants community. If you are interested in applying for EPA grants or are currently managing an EPA grant, please consider attending this one hour webinar. The webinar will cover grants topics, including how to find and apply for grant opportunities, an update on the status of Grants.gov, and preparing a proper budget detail.

Price: free

[Visit the website](#)

Contact: Elizabeth January, 617-918-1315 or [january.elizabeth@epa.gov](mailto:january.elizabeth@epa.gov)

#### **6) Slow Death By Rubber Duck Webinar**

Tuesday April 6, 2010

5:00 p.m. Pacific time / 8:00 p.m. Eastern time

Sponsor: Campaign for Safe Cosmetics

Studies show that harmful toxic chemicals are common in household items, including rubber ducks and bubble bath, and that many of these chemicals are also found inside of our bodies. Over a four-day period, *Slow Death By Rubber Duck* authors Rick Smith and Bruce Lourie used everyday household products suspected of causing harm to our ecosystem and to human health. By revealing the pollution load in their bodies before and after the experiment, Rick and Bruce tell a unique inside story of common toxins and body burden. On the April 6 Webinar, author and Executive Director of Environmental Defence Canada Rick Smith will read from *Slow Death By Rubber Duck*, and we'll discuss toxic chemicals found in products as common as hand soap and what you can do to protect your family and the planet. Preregistration is required. The recorded webinar will be available on the Safe Cosmetics website after the event.

Price: free

[Visit the website](#)

#### **7) Public Relations Training for Environmental Professionals - Perfecting Environmental Communication with the Public, Press, and Industry**

Tuesday and Wednesday, April 6 - 7, 2010

Seattle, Washington

at EOS Alliance (NWETC) Headquarters, 650 South Orcas Street, Suite 220

Sponsor: EOS Alliance

A well-designed public relations program can supercharge your organization's image, reputation and success. During this intensive two-day course, you will obtain a fundamental background on the key issues, concepts and practice of effective communications and media relations, with the focus on environmental projects. The course is designed to provide participants with an insight on fundamentals and practicalities behind public-relations practice in the context of protocol functions and communications planning.

Price: \$495/\*\$395 for Native American tribes; government employees; nonprofits;

students; and AFS, NAEP, NEBC, NWAEP members; a \$50 early-bird savings applies to registrations received by March 5, 2010

[Visit the website](#)

Contact: Northwest Environmental Training Center, 206-762-1976

## News and Journal Articles

### [Dry cleaning usually uses a toxic chemical, but the safety picture is unclear.](#)

*Tuesday, March 09, 2010*

Because a company says it's green, that doesn't make it so. Sneaky "greenwashing" cleaners are claiming to be "organic" because they use carbon-based solvents. Under that definition, even perchloroethylene is organic. Washington Post.

[See a related article: [Vienna battles toxins in drinking water](#)]

### ['Eating for two' may harm baby.](#)

*Tuesday, March 09, 2010*

A study in pregnant mice found that diets which were high in fat or carbohydrates had an effect on almost 2,000 genes in the developing offspring, including those involved in kidney function and smell. London Times, United Kingdom.

### [Court to decide if vaccine makers can be sued.](#)

*Tuesday, March 09, 2010*

The Supreme Court said on Monday that it would decide whether a federal law protects vaccine manufacturers from lawsuits in state court seeking damages for alleged design defects. The case involves a lawsuit by the parents of a child who suffered seizures after her third dose of a DTP vaccine. Reuters Health.

[See a related article: [1 in 4 parents buys unproven vaccine-autism link](#)]

### [Are fire retardants putting us at risk?](#)

*Tuesday, March 09, 2010*

You have flame retardant chemicals in your body. They're toxic. Americans have the highest levels of anyone in the world. The chemicals are in the dust in our homes and offices and schools. And they're showing up in our food. Environment Report.

### [Yale study details how and why of BPA's dangers.](#)

*Tuesday, March 09, 2010*

Exposing a female fetus to a chemical found in plastics causes permanent changes in a daughter's uterus that might result in cancer -- and a research team led by a Yale doctor has figured out why. New Haven Register, Connecticut.

[See related articles: [U.S. examining possible effects of bisphenol A](#), [Md. among states seeking to limit BPA](#), [Keeping harmful chemicals out of water](#), [Decision to ban BPA in baby bottles was controversial: Documents](#), [BPA update](#), [Doyle signs bill limiting BPA use](#), [Boys and girls differ in genetic response to what mom eats](#) and [For pregnant mice, eating matters more for their sons](#)]

### [Health Canada offers environmental health resource.](#)

*Monday, March 08, 2010*

The site includes links for information about the Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS), which is Canada's national hazard communication standard, as well as information about drinking water, indoor air quality, chemical substances, and the National Dosimetry Services, an agency that since 1951 has provided medical surveillance services to Canadian workers exposed to ionizing radiation. Environmental Protection.

### [Burn plants seem cleaner, but facts debated.](#)

*Sunday, March 07, 2010*

Every year, Dutchess County's trash-burning incinerator in the Town of Poughkeepsie releases 3,777 tons of global-warming carbon dioxide, along with 333 tons of soot, sulfur compounds and various other pollutants, according to environmental reports.

Poughkeepsie Journal, New York.

**[Studies show danger of even small amounts of lead in children's blood.](#)**

*Sunday, March 07, 2010*

High doses of lead have for some time been linked to chronic kidney damage. But a recent study out of Johns Hopkins Children's Center found that even small levels of lead exposure may be damaging to children's kidneys. Los Angeles Times, California.

[See related articles: [Lead abatement effort gets \\$5.2 million shot in arm](#), [Clashing lead laws may derail progress](#) and [The awful cost of a rural lead-smelting miracle](#)]

**[Martin County Health Department seeking women for mercury study.](#)**

*Saturday, March 06, 2010*

With a snip of hair and a survey, the Martin County Health Department hopes to test mercury levels in the county's childbearing-aged women, and create awareness about the risks of high mercury levels on children. TC Palm, Florida.

**[Dust bunnies tainted with toxins?](#)**

*Friday, March 05, 2010*

Around 60 percent of floor dust comes from soil stuck on shoes. And if someone lives near a contaminated Superfund site or industrial plant, that dirt could be loaded with toxins. Discovery News.

**[Feds targeting three pollutants.](#)**

*Friday, March 05, 2010*

Delaware has made strides in improving its air quality, but a "national solution" is necessary to curb emissions from out-of-state power plants, the state's top environmental official told lawmakers Thursday. Wilmington News Journal, Delaware.

**[EPA drastically underestimates coal waste pollution's threat to human and environmental health.](#)**

*Thursday, March 04, 2010*

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has severely underreported the severity of coal ash waste pollution and its threat to human and environmental health throughout the United States, a new independent study released February 24 by the Environmental Integrity Project (EIP) and Earthjustice says. AlterNet.

[See related articles: [Group: NC power plants have tainted water](#) and [Disposal of spilled coal ash a long, winding trip](#)]

**[EPA adds 10 sites to the Superfund list.](#)**

*Thursday, March 04, 2010*

After years of languishing as the neglected stepchild of environmental enforcement, there are signs that the Environmental Protection Agency's Superfund program is beginning a big shift in priorities for cleaning up federal toxic waste sites, advocates say. Christian Science Monitor.

**[Plasticizers kept from leaching out.](#)**

*Thursday, March 04, 2010*

Scientists working with the widely used plasticizers known as phthalates have locked down these compounds, preventing them from migrating. The research may lead to improved versions of hard plastics that don't leach their ingredients. Science News.

[See related articles: [Hidden dangers of phthalates](#) and [Relationship between environmental phthalate exposure and the intelligence of school-aged children](#)]

**[What's best for kids: Bottled water or fountains?](#)**

*Thursday, March 04, 2010*

Tap water may be better for kids than sugary sodas, but many schools have lead-contaminated water. National Geographic News.

**[Lead in our roadways.](#)**

*Thursday, March 04, 2010*

Many asphalt companies in and around Kansas City use a type of hard rock known as chat, that is ideal for creating super pave, a hard asphalt used for highways and interstates. Unfortunately chat, a byproduct of 1920's lead and zinc mining, is a potential health hazard. Kansas City KCTV5, Kansas, Missouri.



### **[Study points to high cost of polluted air.](#)**

*Wednesday, March 03, 2010*

Foul, filthy air is wafting over California and making people sick to the tune of almost \$200 million a year in hospital expenses, according to a Rand Corp. study released today. San Francisco Chronicle.

[See related articles: [Air pollution: It's not just your lungs that suffer](#), [Clearing the air at American ports](#), [AQMD cracks down on ports](#), [Something in the air in Krakow](#), [Chronic social stress and susceptibility to concentrated ambient fine particles in rats](#), [Black lung lofts](#) and [Settlement reached in pollution complaint](#)]

### **[EPA makes polluters pay less.](#)**

*Wednesday, March 03, 2010*

The Environmental Protection Agency is riling many businesses with proposals to regulate greenhouse gases for the first time, but data suggest it has been slow out of the gate under President Barack Obama in enforcing existing regulations on traditional pollutants. Wall Street Journal.

### **[Panel kills bill barring some beauty products.](#)**

*Tuesday, March 02, 2010*

Fifteen harmful chemicals, including formaldehyde and arsenic, will remain in beauty products in the state after a legislative panel Monday killed a proposal that would have prohibited the sale of toiletries and cosmetics that contain them. Denver Post, Colorado.

### **[PCBs found in fish oil capsules, suit says.](#)**

*Tuesday, March 2, 2010*

Some fish oil capsules sold as health supplements contain trace amounts of PCBs, according to a lawsuit filed Tuesday in California by an environmental group. CBC News.

### **[New Indiana rules would restrict wood-fired boilers.](#)**

*Monday, March 01, 2010*

Wood-fired boilers that send soot and dust from backyard smokestacks could face tougher regulations under rules proposed by Indiana environmental officials to help protect air quality. Columbus Republic, Indiana.

### **[Rulings restrict clean water act, foiling E.P.A.](#)**

*Monday, March 01, 2010*

Thousands of the nation's largest water polluters are outside the Clean Water Act's reach because the Supreme Court has left uncertain which waterways are protected by that law, according to interviews with regulators. As a result, some businesses say that the law no longer applies to them. New York Times.

### **[EPA issues stricter limitations on fish.](#)**

*Monday, March 01, 2010*

The Ohio Environmental Protection Agency on Friday released new, stricter limitations on fish consumption in local waterways. Sandusky Register, Ohio.

### **[Arsenic-contaminated water threat to southern Punjab inhabitants.](#)**

*Monday, March 01, 2010*

Southern Punjab is facing serious threat due to high-level arsenic contamination in the drinking water, which is causing cancer, still births, post-neonatal mortality and other diseases. Lahore Nation, Pakistan.

### **[Toxic toys on sale.](#)**

*Monday, March 01, 2010*

Laboratory tests carried out on a number of imported toys randomly collected from city markets have shown that they contain high levels of toxic metals and chemicals. Karachi Herald, Pakistan.

### **[For frogs, and perhaps humans, there's something strange in the water.](#)**

*Monday, March 01, 2010*

Medications leaking into groundwater are producing strange effects on the frogs of Connecticut, effects that could be a harbinger of safety concerns for humans, too,

researchers say. Greenwich Time, Connecticut.

### **What lies beneath.**

*Sunday, February 28, 2010*

Thousands of tank systems across Pennsylvania have failed and contaminated soil and water exposing neighborhoods to dangerous chemicals. Allentown Morning Call, Pennsylvania.

### **Fertility problems may not affect kids' coordination.**

*Saturday, February 27, 2010*

Despite some concerns to the contrary, parents' fertility problems may have little effect on their children's risk of coordination problems as they reach school age, a new study finds. Reuters Health.

### **Removing lead pipes could backfire.**

*Saturday, February 27, 2010*

A costly program meant to protect Londoners from lead in tap water may instead be placing thousands at risk, a leading expert says. London Free Press, Ontario.

### **Neurobehavioral deficits and increased blood pressure in school-age children prenatally exposed to pesticides.**

*Thursday, February 25, 2010*

These findings support the notion that prenatal exposure to pesticides - at levels not producing adverse health outcomes in the mother - can cause lasting adverse effects on brain development. Environmental Health Perspectives.

[See related articles: ['Pesticide drift' eluding efforts to combat it](#); [Perturbation of lipids and glucose metabolism associated with previous 2,4-D exposure: a cross-sectional study of NHANES III data, 1988-1994](#); [Pesticides pose health risks](#); [Derived from flowers, but not benign: Pyrethroids raise new concerns](#); [Campaign targets lawn weedkillers, pesticides](#); [Perth's pesticide peril](#) and [Loopholes in pesticide regulation](#)]

### **Chemicals: Innocent or guilty?**

*Thursday, February 25, 2010*

CNN's Dr. Sanjay Gupta explains why a 1976 toxic chemical law may be putting Americans at risk. CNN.

[See a related article: [States push EPA, Congress to curb business confidentiality claims for chemicals](#)]

### **FDA creates partnership to boost regulatory science.**

*Thursday, February 25, 2010*

The agency will collaborate with the National Institutes of Health in an effort to more quickly rule on the safety and effectiveness of new products and procedures. Los Angeles Times, California.

### **Poor are agents, victims of environmental damage.**

*Thursday, February 25, 2010*

Growing environmental degradation is going to become one of the major problems even for economic managers, as the vicious combination of increasing population and deteriorating environment is expected to further worsen the state of poverty in Pakistan. Karachi News International, Pakistan.

### **Fish oil is no snake oil.**

*Thursday, February 25, 2010*

Recent reports on the health benefits of fish oil sound almost too good to be true. The omega-3 fatty acids that it contains have been shown to reduce the risk of heart attacks and strokes and slow the formation of plaques in the arteries, and they may also lower blood pressure. Discover.

[See a related article: [PCBs found in fish oil capsules, suit says](#)]

### **What's the source of Mississippi River pollution?**

*Wednesday, February 24, 2010*

The mighty Mississippi has been the lifeblood of the Crescent City for hundreds of years, but some watchdog groups say the river is now badly contaminated, endangering the



livelihood and health of the communities it supports. New Orleans WDSU TV, Louisiana.

**[Bomb plant seepage creating Israel's worst-ever water pollution.](#)**

*Wednesday, February 24, 2010*

Rocket fuel and remains of explosives that seeped into the aquifer from the Israel Military Industries Ramat Hasharon plant are continuing to spread, according to data obtained by Haaretz. It is the worst instance of water pollution in Israel's history. Haaretz, Israel.

**[Marcellus Shale: Spills of drilling chemicals worry experts.](#)**

*Wednesday, February 24, 2010*

Even with no additional chemicals added by gas companies, water that flows back from hydro-fracked wells has enough heavy metals -- and often radioactivity -- to be classified as hazardous waste, said Ron Bishop, a biochemist at SUNY Oneonta. Gannett News Service.

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 general children's environmental health: [http://www.healthandenvironment.org/working\\_groups/childrens\\_health/bulletins](http://www.healthandenvironment.org/working_groups/childrens_health/bulletins)
- 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 LDDI 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 Learning and Developmental Disabilities Initiative Working Group at the bottom of the application.

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

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