



Learning and Developmental Disabilities Initiative

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



Biweekly Bulletin May 5, 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

LDDI Highlights

New LDDI Coordinator

The Collaborative on Health and the Environment's Learning and Developmental Disabilities Initiative (LDDI) is pleased to announce that Erika Hagensen, MSW, MPHc, will become LDDI's new half-time national coordinator as of May 10, 2010. For more information, please see [LDDI's website](#). To contact Laura Abulafia, please use her AAIDD email (laura@aaidd.org) and delete her 'healthandenvironment.org' email address from your files. To contact Erika Hagensen, please use her new LDDI email address: ehagensen@healthandenvironment.org

Autism Society Funding Opportunity

Every month, Pepsi awards grants through the Refresh Project for ideas that will have a positive impact. In May, The Autism Society is eligible for a \$250K grant to expand their free nationwide support line to offer confidential, one-to-one contact with a live information and referral specialist 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Go to [Pepsi's website](#) today to show this project.

AAIDD Annual Meeting June 9 - 11th

The American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AAIDD) will host its [annual meeting](#) in Providence, Rhode Island. Two sessions on environmental health are on the agenda, including one session focused on the [Mind, Disrupted biomonitoring project](#) in which a number of colleagues in LDDI participated over the past year. Two people who were biomonitoring and featured in the *Mind, Disrupted* report - Laura Abulafia with AAIDD and Rob Fletcher with the National Association for the Dually Diagnosed (NADD) - will speak about their experiences and why this kind of study underscores the need for chemical policy reform.

Autism Society of America Meeting July 7-10th

The Autism Society (ASA) will have its [41st annual national meeting](#) at the Hyatt Regency in Dallas, Texas. LDDI is cosponsoring a day-long symposium on July 8th just before ASA's official conference starts. Speakers for the symposium will present on environmental health, developmental disabilities, biomonitoring, and public health policy. Please stay tuned in for more information on this important meeting or contact Donna Ferullo from ASA: dferullo@autism-society.org.

New Members

The Learning and Developmental Disabilities Initiative welcomes these new members:

- Maralyn Chase, MA, Shoreline, Washington
- Stacey Funt, MD, Huntington, New York

Dorothy Lee, Athens, Greece

- Rosa Rodriguez, Miami, Florida
- Yael Stein, MD, Jerusalem, Israel
- Irene Thomopoulos, Old Westbury, New York

Announcements

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

[New report: Assessment of EM Exposure of Energy-Saving Bulbs & Possible Mitigation Strategies](#)

The Swiss government has released a new report on compact fluorescent lamps (CFLs). At the international level, safety guidelines for EM exposure of workers/general public and controlled/uncontrolled environments have been issued by the International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection.

[EPA launches new web tools to inform the public about clean water enforcement.](#)

The new web page provides interactive information from EPA's 2008 Annual Noncompliance Report, which pertains to about 40,000 permitted Clean Water Act dischargers across the country.

[EPA launches online map tracking enforcement actions in Chesapeake Bay watershed.](#)

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has launched an online map that shows the locations of federal air and water enforcement actions in the Chesapeake Bay watershed. The map is part of EPA's increased focus on enforcement of federal pollution laws in the Chesapeake Bay region.

[EPA opens access to chemical information.](#)

EPA is releasing a database, called ToxRefDB, which allows scientists and the interested public to search and download thousands of toxicity testing results on hundreds of chemicals.

[Call for comments: EPA to cut mercury, other toxic emissions from boilers, solid waste incinerators.](#)

EPA will hold a public hearing on these rules soon after they are published in the Federal Register and will take comment on these proposed rules for 45 days after publication.

[EPA seeks public comment on aircraft lead emissions data.](#)

The advanced notice of proposed rulemaking being announced today describes the data that are currently available and being collected that would help evaluate health impacts from piston-engine aircraft emissions. This action describes considerations regarding emission engine standards and requests comment on approaches for transitioning the piston-engine fleet to unleaded gas.

[Call for proposals: Urban Watershed Capacity-Building Grant.](#)

EPA is soliciting proposals from eligible applicants that address the following two project components: (1) establish and manage a competitive urban watershed subaward program to support urban watershed capacity-building projects for activities that lead to environmental, public health, and related socioeconomic benefits to the surrounding communities and their residents; and (2) provide urban watershed technical services. Proposals are due May 19th.

[Job opening: Atlanta, Georgia.](#)

CDC's National Center for Environmental Health (NCEH), Division of Laboratory Sciences (DLS), Office of the Director, is seeking exceptional candidates for the position of Director, Division of Laboratory Sciences who will be responsible for developing, planning, organizing, managing, and directing complex, comprehensive and successful laboratory science programs. Applications are due by Thursday May 13, 2010.

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

Environmental Defense Fund is looking to hire a full-time Scientist to work on high-priority environmental issues that affect human health. The position requires a graduate degree, preferably at the doctoral level, in chemistry, toxicology, epidemiology, risk assessment, or similar environmental health field.

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) California Green Chemistry Workshop: Indicators of Ecotoxicity Hazards and Exposure Potential

Monday and Tuesday, May 10 - 11, 2010

Berkeley, California

at UC Berkeley, David Brower Center, Richard and Rhoda Goldman Theatre, 2151 Allston Way

Sponsor: The Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment, UCLA Law and Environmental Health Sustainable Technology Policy Program, UC's Berkeley Center for Green Chemistry, UC Center for Occupational and Environmental Health, UC Toxic Substances Research and Teaching Program

Green chemistry is the design of chemical products and processes that reduce or eliminate the use or generation of hazardous substances. A key component is product reformulation to replace hazardous chemicals with less hazardous ones. A major obstacle is the lack of data on exposure, environmental effects and human toxicity in determining the safety of a chemical. A 2009 Green Chemistry law (Senate Bill 509) requires Cal/EPA's Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment to evaluate and specify the hazard traits, toxicological endpoints and other relevant data to be included in California's Toxics Information Clearinghouse. The Clearinghouse will be constructed by the Cal/EPA's Department of Toxic Substances Control. Hazard traits for ecotoxicity and exposure potential will be included. This workshop explores indicators of ecotoxicity and exposure potential for use when evaluating chemicals. A March 2010 workshop explored indicators of human health hazard.

Price: free, but preregistration is required

[Visit the website](#)

Contact: elina.nasser@ucla.edu

2) Joining the National Conversation on Public Health and Chemical Exposure

Wednesday May 12, 2010

3:00 p.m. Eastern / 2:00 p.m. Central / noon Pacific time

Sponsor: Great Lakes Green Chemistry Network

The speaker will be Ben Gerhardtstein, MPH, public health analyst and presidential management fellow at the National Center for Environmental Health/Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR).

Price: free

[Visit the website](#)

Contact: Rachel Heckl, 716-951-0971 or rheckl@glu.org

3) Parental Pesticide Exposure and Child Development in the Fresh-cut Flower Industry in Ecuador

Thursday May 13, 2010

12:30 - 1:20 p.m.

Seattle, Washington
at the University of Washington School of Public Health, room HSB D-209

Sponsor: University of Washington Department of Environmental and Occupational Health Sciences

The speaker will be Jose Ricardo Suarez, MPH, MD, PhD(c), from the Division of Epidemiology at the University of Minnesota.

Price: free

[Visit the website](#)

4) World Autism Congress Asia 2010

Saturday and Sunday, May 15 - 16, 2010

Hong Kong, Hong Kong

at the Hong Kong Academy of Medicine, 99 Wong Chuk Hang Road

Sponsor: World Autism Organisation, Autism Children Foundation, Autism Recovery Network

This conference brings together a distinguished group of renowned experts from the United States, Europe and Australia to offer two broad streams of information exchange on biomedical and educational development in autism. The theme of WACA 2010 is "A Roadmap to Recovery" and aims to raise awareness, educate and empower those in the autism community including individuals and families with autism spectrum disorder, health professionals, caregivers and educators.

Price: \$200 through April 9th or \$215 after

[Visit the website](#)

Contact: see the [Contact page](#)

5) Public Meeting: EPA's reassessment of PCB Use Authorizations

May 18th (Chicago), May 25th (Atlanta) and May 27th (Washington, DC)

1:00 - 5:00 p.m.

Sponsor: US Environmental Protection Agency

In addition to the requests for information and comments issued online, EPA intends to involve stakeholders through a series of public meetings taking place in locations across the country. The purpose of these meetings is to receive stakeholder comments on the issue of EPA's reassessment of PCB use authorizations, including the questions described in Unit XIV of the online document. Comments must be received on or before July 6, 2010.

Price: free

[Visit the website](#)

6) Exposures Assessment and the Importance of Compound-Compound Interactions in Mixtures

Thursday May 20, 2010

12:30 - 1:20 p.m.

Seattle, Washington

at the University of Washington School of Public Health, room HSB D-209

Sponsor: University of Washington Department of Environmental and Occupational Health Sciences, Center for Ecogenetics and Environmental Health

The speaker will be Gunnar Boysen, PhD, assistant professor in the Department of Environmental and Occupational Health at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences.

Price: free

[Visit the website](#)

7) First Annual National Safe and Healthy Housing Coalition Meeting

Monday and Tuesday, May 24 - 25, 2010
3:00 p.m. on May 24th - 5:00 p.m. on the 25th
Washington, DC

Sponsor: National Safe and Healthy Housing Coalition

The meeting is open to all coalition members, and there is no fee to join. The meeting will include speakers, Hill visits, and Congressional briefings. The agenda is available on the website.

Price: free, but preregistraion is required

[Visit the website](#)

8) Spring 2010 TRI Webinar: Using the Toxics Release Inventory (TRI) to Support Environmental Justice

Tuesday May 25, 2010
10:00 a.m. Pacific / 1:00 p.m. Eastern time

Sponsor: Environmental Council of the States (ECOS) and the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

Using TRI to Support Environmental Justice. The purpose of the Webinar is to share experiences and lessons learned using TRI to address environmental justice concerns and expand TRI use among current and potential users who work on environmental justice issues. Speakers will include representatives from EPA headquarters and regions, nonprofit organizations and academia. All are welcome to participate.

Price: free

[Visit the website](#)

Contact: Jennifer Major, jennifer.major@ross-assoc.com

9) Introduction to Managing Environmental Data with Microsoft Access 2007

Tuesday and Wednesday, May 25 - 26, 2010
8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Greenwood Village, Colorado
at Wingate by Wyndham, Denver Tech Center, 8000 E Peakview Avenue

Sponsor: EOS Alliance

Participants will gain basic to intermediate skills in using Microsoft Access 2007 to build relational databases for managing and mining their environmental data. This comprehensive class uses extensive hands-on exercises for in-depth use of tables, queries, forms, reports and macro objects in Access 2007. These Access database subjects use real-world environmental examples with actual field data. This class is recommended for anyone desiring concentrated exposure to Access training.

Price: \$495 or \$395 for Native American Tribes; nonprofits; government agencies; students; and NAEP, NEBC, CAEP members

[Visit the website](#)

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

10) National Environmental Partnership Summit

Tuesday through Thursday, May 25 - 27, 2010

Orlando, Florida
at the DoubleTree Resort Orlando

Sponsor: National Pollution Prevention Roundtable, US Environmental Protection Agency

The summit will include a plenary session by Elizabeth Grossman and sessions on human health such as on the National Conversation on Public Health and Chemical Exposures.

Price: see the [Registration page](#)

[Visit the website](#)

News and Journal Articles

[Locals work for healing and awareness of poisoning.](#)

Tuesday, May 04, 2010

Mercury contamination is not restricted just to fish. It is used in numerous products, including dental amalgams, electronics, fluorescent light bulbs, certain vaccines and thermometers. Longmont Daily Times-Call, Colorado.

[Studies find remarkably high levels of flame retardants in California's children.](#)

Monday, May 03, 2010

Two new studies show remarkably high levels of PBDE flame retardants in the bodies of California children. Environmental Health News.

[See a related podcast: [Human Exposure to PBDEs, with Heather Stapleton](#)]

[10 worst man-made environmental disasters.](#)

Monday, May 03, 2010

As environmental calamity for the Gulf Coast appears imminent, GlobalPost looks at 10 other man-made environmental disasters -- both forgotten and infamous -- that could have been prevented. GlobalPost.

[E-waste processing poisons health, environment.](#)

Monday, May 03, 2010

Migrant workers come from across China to burn, smash and strip old television sets, computers, mobile phones and copy machines for their valuable metals and computer chips for one dollar an hour, 10 hours a day. The price they may pay is their health, say Chinese researchers. Inter Press Service.

[See related articles: [India's wastelands endanger 5 million poor](#) and [Imported scrap metal raises health worries](#)]

[Study: Pregnant women should get more vitamin D](#)

Sunday, May 02, 2010

Pregnant women could -- and probably should -- consume 10 times more vitamin D than experts currently recommend, according to a new study. Health.com.

[To sludge or not to sludge?](#)

Sunday, May 02, 2010

Farmers, governments and environmentalists have different takes on using sewage byproducts as fertilizer Burlington Times-News, North Carolina.

[Lessons in toxic overload.](#)

Sunday, May 02, 2010

Buildings being constructed under the federal government's schools stimulus program are riddled with safety hazards, from slippery tiles and toxic carpets to poisonous fumes from unflued heaters. Sydney Morning Herald, Australia.

[DNA referees.](#)

Sunday, May 02, 2010

Scientists are just beginning to understand the effect lifestyle choices and other environmental factors have on altering gene behavior, a rapidly emerging field called epigenetics. Los Angeles Times, California.

[See a related article: [Can you master your own epigenetics?](#)]

[In the green of health: Just 5 minutes of 'green exercise' optimal for good mental health.](#)

Saturday, May 01, 2010

Just five minutes of exercise in a park, working in a backyard garden, on a nature trail, or other green space will benefit mental health. Science News.

[Deepwater Horizon oil spill could affect health.](#)

Saturday, May 01, 2010

According to NOAA, there may be risks for people working as oil spill responders, observers, and in wildlife rehabilitation due to inhalation of fumes. Oysters, shrimp, and crab do not readily clear PAHs and are more likely to accumulate these potentially toxic substances after oil exposure, NOAA states.

[See a related announcement: [EPA establishes web site on BP oil spill / EPA launches site to inform the public about health, environmental impacts of spill](#), an opposing article: [Oil spill has little impact on human health](#) and other articles about sites contaminated by industry: [A small town's battle with dioxin pollution](#); [Ponds near wells were used as disposal sites for heavy metals from solar manufacturing](#); [EPA to consider cleanup options for Iron King Mine and smelter sites soon](#); [Polluted water spraying is safe](#); [Employees launched health complaints](#) and [China's famed Pearl River under denim threat](#); [Challenges in reducing pollution from ships](#)]

[Wal-Mart to limit toxic cadmium in kids' products.](#)

Friday, April 30, 2010

The world's largest retailer revealed Monday that it has started to crack down on the use of the toxic metal cadmium in children's jewelry and other kids' products. Associated Press.

[No going to school in 'pollution' protest.](#)

Friday, April 30, 2010

The Voluntary Committee for the Environment has reaffirmed its plan to hold a strike under the slogan "No Education Without Health", by boycotting classes in Ali Sabah Al-Salem (Umm Al-Haiman) from May 2-3 in protest against the worsening environmental condition in the area. Arab Times, Kuwait.

[See a related article: [Kuwait students shun school to protest oil pollution](#)]

[iPad could cause insomnia, researchers say.](#)

Thursday, April 29, 2010

Any artificial light source at night, whether it be from a television or a bedside lamp, can mess with the body's melatonin production, Yan-Go said, which rises when darkness falls, then tapers off toward morning as part of a natural cycle called the Circadian rhythm. MSNBC.

[Behavior problems associated with exposure to phthalates before birth.](#)

Thursday, April 29, 2010

A new study has found an association between children's potential for developing disruptive behavior disorders and exposure before birth to the types of phthalates found in fragrances, shampoos, lotions and cosmetics. Environmental Health News.

[Report: Most Americans still live in unclean air.](#)

Thursday, April 29, 2010

Six in 10 Americans -- about 175 million people -- are living in places where air pollution often reaches dangerous levels, despite progress in reducing particle pollution, the American Lung Association said in a report released Wednesday. Associated Press.

[See related articles about air quality concerns: [Canadian companies near Great Lakes putting more toxins in air than U.S.: report](#); [Lawmakers give tire burning the environmental green light](#); [Health study](#) and [Agency urges waiting parents to turn off engines](#)]

[AACE: Agent Orange ups some thyroid risks.](#)

Wednesday, April 28, 2010

Vietnam veterans who came in contact with Agent Orange are more likely to develop

Graves' disease than those who avoided exposure, researchers said here. Med Page Today.

[Epidemiologic evidence on the health effects of perfluorooctanoic acid \(PFOA\).](#)

Wednesday, April 28, 2010

Epidemiologic evidence remains limited and to date there are insufficient data to draw firm conclusions regarding the role of PFOA for any of the diseases of concern. Environmental Health Perspectives.

[Qualitative environmental health research: An analysis of the literature 1991-2008.](#)

Tuesday, April 27, 2010

This analysis demonstrates the potential of qualitative data to improve understanding of complex exposure pathways, including the influence of social factors on environmental health, and health outcomes. Environmental Health Perspectives.

[New Yorkers given the skinny on animal fat.](#)

Tuesday, April 27, 2010

The presence of persistent organic pollutants, according to Cancer Action NY Director Donald Hassig, is yet another reason to avoid eating animal fat. Albany Legislative Gazette, New York.

[See related articles about food concerns: [California free to ban downer cows in food supply -- for now](#), [The University of Michigan Dioxin Exposure Study: A follow-up investigation of a case with high serum concentration of 2,3,4,7,8-pentachlorodibenzofuran](#); [Are genetically modified foods harmful?](#), [No silver lining in restaurant sushi's mercury levels](#), [EFSA sees risks to children from lead in food](#), [Lingering legacies for Earth Day 2010: U.S. food still tainted with old chemicals](#), [State budget cuts may prevent fish testing](#), [Study on lake sparks debate on eating fish](#), [Regulations issued to tighten supervision of food additives](#) and [Additives: It's time to look on the bright side](#)]

[Vaccinations: A hot debate still burning.](#)

Tuesday, April 27, 2010

There's a delicate question that no scientific study can answer. It involves whether parents' rights to make choices about their children trump the needs of the community. New York Times.

[The use of expert elicitation in environmental health impact assessment: a seven-step procedure.](#)

Monday, April 26, 2010

We present a practical yet flexible seven step procedure towards organising expert elicitation in the context of environmental health impact assessment, based on existing protocols. Environmental Health.

[Study finds pharmaceuticals in wastewater widespread.](#)

Sunday, April 25, 2010

In the most comprehensive study of a variety of chemical compounds coming from municipal sewage plants, the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency confirmed widespread, but low concentrations of water contamination from human medications and antibiotics. Minnesota Public Radio, Minnesota.

[See a related article: [Drugs in the environment: Do pharmaceutical take-back programs make a difference?](#) and other articles about water quality concerns: [Metro storm-water ponds are chemical soups](#) and [Dangerous levels of arsenic found in drinking water](#)]

[EPA reviews arsenic toxicity.](#)

Saturday, April 24, 2010

Federal environmental officials appear on the verge of changing threshold levels at which arsenic, a known carcinogen, is unsafe. Lewes Cape Gazette, Delaware.

[Parkinson's protection without caffeine or nicotine.](#)

Saturday, April 24, 2010

Decaf coffee and nicotine-free tobacco aren't just for the health-conscious. Giving them

to flies with a form of Parkinson's disease has revealed that although coffee and cigarettes protect the brain, caffeine and nicotine aren't responsible for the benefit. New Scientist.

[Autism debate focuses on question of epidemic.](#)

Saturday, April 24, 2010

In the politically-tinted scientific world, there is what might be called a spectrum of causality, a sweep of beliefs about autism yielding two opposing viewpoints - those who believe the globe is engulfed in an autism pandemic constituting a major public health crisis, and those scientists who say it is all a myth. Minocqua Lakeland Times, Wisconsin.

[Strong associations between low-dose organochlorine pesticides and type 2 diabetes in Korea.](#)

Friday, April 23, 2010

In this exploratory study with small sample, low-dose background exposure to OC pesticides was strongly associated with prevalent type 2 diabetes in Koreans even though absolute concentrations of OC pesticides were no higher than in other populations. Environment International.

[See a related article: [Organochlorine pesticides are called 'persistent' for a reason and others about potential approval for methyl iodide in California: Controversial fumigant advances](#)]

[New EPA rule could curb lead poisoning in children.](#)

Friday, April 23, 2010

A new Environmental Protection Agency rule could cut down the number of lead poisoning cases in Baltimore's children. Annapolis WJZ TV, Maryland.

[El Toxic Hell Toro Part Two: A death sentence for marines and school kids?](#)

Friday, April 23, 2010

A number of Marines are now sick and dying from their contact with toxins at MCAS El Toro, such as TCE (trichloroethylene) a chemical used to clean jet fighters; but Marines aren't the only victims. School children, whose small bodies are less resistant to contamination with deadly pollutants, may have even less of a chance of weathering this storm in otherwise sunny Orange County. Salem News, Oregon.

[Too costly to enforce PCB laws, so EPA may change them.](#)

Friday, April 23, 2010

The Environmental Protection Agency might scrap a 30-year-old safety standard because it's likely too expensive to enforce in schools, the News has learned. New York Daily News, New York.

[Toxicology: The big test for bisphenol A.](#)

Thursday, April 22, 2010

After years of wrangling over BPA's chemical's toxicity, researchers are charting a new way forwards. Nature investigates how the debate has reshaped environmental-health studies. Nature.

[See related articles: [Bisphenol A remains off toxic list as Ottawa reviews mystery complainant's objection](#) and [Food safety bill's ban on BPA resisted](#)]

[Smokers show lower risk of pregnancy complication.](#)

Thursday, April 22, 2010

A new study adds to evidence that women who smoke during pregnancy have a lower risk of a complication called preeclampsia -- in findings that may help shed light on how the condition arises. Reuters Health.

[See other articles about tobacco use: [Effects of smokeless tobacco products overblown: Businesses, patrons happy to say goodbye to smoking](#) and [Indonesia: Efforts to rein in rampant smoking](#)]

[Legislature tackles new laws to reduce toxic materials.](#)

Wednesday, April 21, 2010

For the Washington Legislature this session, taking care of business included asking business to take care of the environment. Seattle Times.

[See a related article from New York: [NY Senate bans applying pesticides to school playing fields](#)]

Demasculinisation and other side effects.

Wednesday, April 21, 2010

Concrete jungles are not the only part of our environment that is man made. There are also thousands of man-made chemicals and this chemical environment is a vast, unchecked experiment on human health. Cosmos Magazine, Australia.

[See related articles: [Chemicals regulator dysfunctional: WWF](#) and [Petition urges Congress to regulate hormone-disrupting chemical](#)]

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
- 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

[Join Our Mailing List!](#)