



Learning and Developmental Disabilities Initiative

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



Biweekly Bulletin July 15, 2009

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:

<http://www.iceh.org/LDDIbulletins.html>

LDDI Highlights

ASA Conference

The Autism Society of America (ASA) will hold its annual conference July 22-25th in St. Charles, Illinois. Environmental health sessions will be included. For more information, see event #1 below or contact Donna Ferullo: dferullo@autism-society.org

Mental Health Working Group

LDDI's Mental Health working group next conference is scheduled for Thursday August 27th, hosted by the National Association for the Dually Diagnosed (NADD). For more information, please contact Ed Seliger: eseliger@thenadd.org

Upcoming Events

Online Calendar. These and more upcoming events are listed in a searchable calendar: <http://www.healthandenvironment.org/cgi-bin/searchevents.cgi>

1) 2009 Autism Society National Conference

Wednesday through Saturday, July 22- 25, 2009
St. Charles, Illinois
at Pheasant Run Resort and Spa, 4051 East Main Street

Sponsor: Autism Society of America

Conference topics and themes include behavior, communication, legal issues, interventions, and much more, including some environmental health sessions.

Price: see the [registration page](#)

[Visit the website](#)

Contact: Sarah Mitchell, 301-657-0881, ext. 110 or conference@autism-society.org

2) Precaution's Reach: A Principle in Action

Tuesday July 28, 2009
10:00 a.m. Pacific / 1:00 p.m. Eastern time

Sponsor: Collaborative on Health and the Environment

This call will explore a cornerstone of CHE's original consensus statement, the precautionary principle. Please join us to 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

Agenda," 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. Featured speakers will be Patrice Sutton, MPH; Tom Zoeller, PhD; and Carolyn Raffensperger.

Price: free

[Visit the website](#)

3) Sources of Pollution & Safe School Siting Overview

Wednesday July 29, 2009

noon Eastern time

Sponsor: Center for Health, Environment & Justice

This is the first of a three-part conference call series on community impacts of the lack of laws preventing the building of schools on or near sources of pollution. Objectives include 1) identifying the possible sources of pollution and potential health impacts, 2) understanding the type of school-siting policies in place, and 3) learning where to find more information about what potential sources of pollution are near your own schools.

Price: free

[Visit the website](#)

Contact: see the [contact page](#)

4) Workshop on PCBs in the Lower Columbia and Willamette Rivers

Thursday July 30, 2009

8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Portland, Oregon

at the Port of Portland, 121 NW Everett

Sponsor: US Environmental Protection Agency Region 10

The workshop has four purposes: exchange information on PCB characterization, exchange information on current and new monitoring methods, exchange information on future and proposed PCB reduction efforts, and follow up on focus on PCBs in the State of the River Report.

Price: free, but preregistration is requested

[Visit the website](#)

Contact: see the [contact page](#)

5) Model School Siting Guidelines

Wednesday August 5, 2009

noon Eastern time

Sponsor: Center for Health, Environment & Justice

This is the second of a three-part conference call series on community impacts of the lack of laws preventing the building of schools on or near sources of pollution. Objectives include 1) identifying key components of safe school-siting policies, 2) understanding the type of school-siting policies your own state has passed, and 3) understanding the process that goes into choosing a safe site.

Price: free

[Visit the website](#)

Contact: see the [contact page](#)

Announcements & Articles

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

Children's Environmental Health Forum: Registration Is Open.

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. Registration is now open through the [Forum's web page](#), and a draft program and information about accommodations are also posted. Confirmed speakers include these:

- Ted Schettler, MD, MPH, Science & Environmental Health Network
- Bruce Lanphear, MD, MPH, Simon Frazier University
- Michael Skinner, PhD, Washington State University
- Shanna Swan, PhD, University of Rochester
- plus many regional experts

Children's Environmental Health Forum: Call for Poster Abstracts.

We invite all researchers, technical staff, students, and practitioners from educational institutions, government and tribal agencies, nonprofit groups, and the private sector to submit abstracts to the Forum's poster session. More information and a submission form are available on the [Forum web page](#). Poster abstracts must be submitted by September 4th for consideration.

[Video Presentation.](#)

The Mount Sinai Children's Environmental Health center has posted Bobby Kennedy, Jr. and Dr. Philip Landrigan's May 13, 2009, lecture about everyday chemical exposures and their link to chronic childhood diseases.

[Cleaning for Healthy Schools Toolkit.](#)

The Cleaning for Healthy Schools Toolkit is a training tool you can use to build awareness, knowledge, and commitment to adopting best practices for green cleaning in schools and child care centers. Easy-to-use learning modules can be customized to introduce all audiences to green cleaning and Cleaning for Healthy Schools.

[EPA seeks public comment on proposal to ban boat sewage in South Shore Estuary Reserve.](#)

EPA has given its preliminary approval to the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation's (DEC) proposal to prohibit vessel waste discharges in the South Shore Estuary Reserve. EPA is asking the public to comment on the plan. US Environmental Protection Agency.

[EWG launches interactive news and commentary site on toxic chemicals policy reform.](#)

Environmental Working Group (EWG) has launched an interactive online site featuring news and commentary, as well as a forum for a thought-provoking exchange of ideas on reforming the nation's federal toxic chemicals policies.

[Call for proposals: Healthy Homes Technical Studies Program.](#)

The purpose of the program is to fund technical studies to improve existing methods for detecting and controlling housing-related health and safety hazards, to develop new methods to detect and control these hazards, and to improve our knowledge of housing-related health and safety hazards. Applications are due August 18, 2009.

[The C8 Health Project: Design, methods, and participants.](#)

Tuesday, July 14, 2009

This largest known population study of community perfluorocarbon exposure permits new evaluations of associations between PFOA, in particular, and a range of health parameters. Environmental Health Perspectives.

[Basis of the Massachusetts Reference Dose and Drinking Water Standard for](#)

[Perchlorate.](#)

Tuesday, July 14, 2009

Current data indicates that perchlorate exposures to sensitive life-stages attributable to drinking water should be minimized and supports the MA DEP perchlorate RfD and DWS. Environmental Health Perspectives.

[Toxic truth: Read the story.](#)

Tuesday, July 14, 2009

The Smalley-Piper Industries property in Collierville has been locked and abandoned for years. But it's the contamination you can't see -- unfazed by fences or padlocks -- that make this old factory one of the nation's most dangerous and contaminated Superfund sites. Memphis WREG TV, Tennessee.

[When haste makes toxic waste.](#)

Tuesday, July 14, 2009

The same week that US Representative Edward Markey of Massachusetts hailed House passage of the most sweeping environmental legislation since the 1970s, the Commonwealth cut one of the most effective state environmental laws in the country by virtually eliminating the Toxics Use Reduction Institute at UMass-Lowell. Boston Globe, Massachusetts.

[Illnesses afflict homes with a criminal past.](#)

Tuesday, July 14, 2009

The number of clandestine meth labs discovered in the US rose by 14 percent last year, to 6,783, in part because of a crackdown on meth manufacturers in Mexico and in part because of the spread of a new meth-making method called "shake and bake." New York Times.

[DDT breakdown chemical alters thyroid hormone function in pregnant women.](#)

Tuesday, July 14, 2009

Researchers report that women with higher DDE blood concentrations were 2.5 times more likely to have high thyroid-stimulating hormone (TSH). Environmental Health News.

[Kiwis rethink on folic acid in bread.](#)

Tuesday, July 14, 2009

Australia could go it alone in adding folic acid to bread after its food standards partner New Zealand began reconsidering the new standard, which aims to reduce birth defects by making compulsory the inclusion of folic acid in wheat flour for bread making. Sydney Australian, Australia.

[New database tracks pollution.](#)

Monday, July 13, 2009

For years, researchers have linked high levels of certain toxins to particular health problems, and a new database launched by the state Department of Health and Human Services and the Department of Environmental Services is seeking to compile that information in one place. Laconia Citizen, New Hampshire.

[Tiny particles pose threat: Scientists.](#)

Monday, July 13, 2009

Tiny particles [nanoparticles] in consumer products sold in New Zealand and around the world pose health and environmental risks and need to be tracked, scientists say. Manawatu Standard, New Zealand.

[Shanxi has top birth-defect rate.](#)

Monday, July 13, 2009

Shanxi Province, containing about one-third of China's known coal deposits, has the highest rate of birth defects in mainland China, which could be linked to environmental pollution, poor diet and vitamin deficiency, China Central Television reported. Shanghai Daily, China.

[U.S. power plant emissions fall.](#)

Sunday, July 12, 2009

U.S. power plant emissions of sulfur dioxide dropped sharply in the first half of the year as the electricity industry prepared for tighter regulation in 2010, Genscape said Monday. Environmental News Network.

[Poisoned legacy.](#)

Sunday, July 12, 2009

Bhopal, the Hiroshima of the chemical industry, is still claiming victims -- babies born 25 years later with serious birth defects. Glasgow Sunday Herald, Scotland.

[Local engineer develops low-cost filtration system using cattails to treat arsenic-contaminated drinking water that poisons millions.](#)

Saturday, July 11, 2009

Jeremiah Jackson, a San Diego environmental engineer, has developed an inexpensive arsenic filtration system using aquatic plants to improve the lives of millions affected by arsenic-contaminated drinking water in more than 20 nations. Rancho Santa Fe Review, California.

[Nine companies penalized for selling children's products that violated the federal lead paint ban.](#)

Saturday, July 11, 2009

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) announced today that nine children's product manufacturers, importers and sellers have agreed to pay more than \$500,000 in civil penalties for violating the federal lead paint ban. US Consumer Product Safety Commission.

[More grim news about the bay.](#)

Thursday, July 09, 2009

Just how much trouble the Chesapeake Bay might be in was made clearer with Tuesday's release of a new report by the Chesapeake Bay Foundation that outlines four serious threats to human health stemming from pollution. Salisbury Daily Times, Maryland.

[See a related article: [Chesapeake Bay is a threat to humans, too](#) and another about improving water quality in Orange County, California: [How is the water? Getting better](#)]

[Alzheimer's, Parkinson's and Diabetes linked directly to environment.](#)

Thursday, July 09, 2009

A new study by researchers at Rhode Island Hospital found a substantial link between increased death rate from certain age-related diseases and increased exposure to nitrates, nitrites and nitrosamines in processed foods and in the environment. Ivanhoe Broadcast News.

[See a related article: [Parkinson's linked to high levels of pesticide in the body](#)]

[Micro plastic, major problem.](#)

Thursday, July 09, 2009

A local nonprofit is collecting data for a landmark study on the extent to which our waters are choked with plastic, and what it means for the overall health of the oceans. The project points to growing concerns over how much of a threat plastic is to public health. Honolulu Weekly, Hawaii.

[Smoking cessation harder for women than men.](#)

Wednesday, July 08, 2009

Women appear to have a tougher time quitting smoking than men, according to researchers at Women's Health Research at Yale. Hartford Courant, Connecticut.

[Study of babies reveals clues to potential adult diseases.](#)

Wednesday, July 08, 2009

The Univ. of Iowa Children's Hospital has assembled a program focusing on the connection between early life events and the development of disease later on. Babies that are born small have earlier onset of cardiovascular disease as adults. Des Moines Register, Iowa.

[See a related article: [Aging well starts in womb, as mom's choices affect whole life](#)]

[Report: 'Electrosmog' is an emerging public health issue.](#)

Tuesday, July 07, 2009

A report documenting health hazards linked to wireless radiation, called "electrosmog," is landing on desks in Congress this week, issued by the National Institute for Science, Law and Public Policy (NISLAPP). Salem-News.com.

[CDC launches tracking network for environmental conditions, public health.](#)

Tuesday, July 07, 2009

Today the CDC announced a new web-based environmental and public health tracking system aims to help scientists, health care providers and the public to monitor environmental and health information in one location. Cardiology Today.

[See a related article: [Utah's environmental, health data linked online](#)]

[Lead poisoning an ongoing problem in Richmond's older homes.](#)

Tuesday, July 07, 2009

Richmond City Health District officials are stepping up efforts to reduce lead poisoning, reaching out to parents and physicians with reminders to have children younger than 6 tested, particularly those living in areas identified as high risk. Richmond Times-Dispatch, Virginia.

[See related articles about another program in Virginia: [Effort renewed to rid homes of lead](#), programs in New Jersey: [Vineland tackles lead problem in homes](#) and [Englewood signs 'lead-safe' pact](#) and in Wisconsin: [Getting the lead out](#)]

[Rep. Israel bill wants cleanser ingredients listed.](#)

Tuesday, July 07, 2009

Household cleaners would have to carry labels with a full list of their ingredients - including potentially harmful chemicals like hydrochloric acid - under proposed federal legislation that would revamp what manufacturers must disclose on such everyday products. New York Newsday, New York.

[Food packaging leaks BPA, phthalates.](#)

Tuesday, July 07, 2009

At least 50 chemicals capable of interfering with hormones are permitted in packaging in the United States and the European Union, a recent study says. Toronto Globe and Mail, Ontario.

[See a related article about BPA: [Health Canada detects BPA in jarred baby food](#)]

[How well do you know your milk?](#)

Monday, July 06, 2009

The controversy over hormones in the food supply has been going on for years. Much of the controversy surrounds cows treated with recombinant bovine somatotropin (rBST), sometimes called (rBGH). Springfield News-Leader, Missouri.

[Worried about mercury? It's easy to choose safer fish.](#)

Monday, July 06, 2009

We've been told seafood is good for us because it's low in calories and fat, full of protein and packed with Omega-3s. But we've also been warned about the potentially harmful mercury content in fish. What's with the flip-flop advice? McClatchy Newspapers.

[Blood samples raise questions of privacy.](#)

Monday, July 06, 2009

A challenge to the practice of storing babies' blood samples and allowing researchers to study them without parents' permission comes at a time when there is increasing interest in using millions of these "blood spots" for research into, for example, how genes and environmental factors interact, and whether early exposure to pollutants plays a role in cancer. Washington Post.

[Let there be dark.](#)

Sunday, July 05, 2009

From the earliest camp fires to the Las Vegas strip, people worked to light up the night. Now, however, some are questioning whether cities are safer and individuals healthier in the bright world that technology has created. South Sebring News-Sun, Florida.

[Company to clean up mercury sites.](#)

Sunday, July 05, 2009

EnerVest Operating LLC of Houston, a major operator of natural gas wells in the Monroe Gas Field, has agreed to remove all mercury meters and to clean up mercury-contaminated wetlands and other soils at gas production sites in Ouachita, Morehouse and Union parishes. Monroe News-Star, Louisiana.

[Coping with a toxic world.](#)

Sunday, July 05, 2009

The five-day biennial meeting of the International Neurotoxicology Association (INA) focused on Gene-Environment Interactions in Neurotoxicology. Jerusalem Post, Israel.

[Corrosive, stinking Chinese drywall may be radioactive.](#)

Saturday, July 04, 2009

The final years of the U.S. housing boom and a series of Gulf Coast hurricanes created a golden opportunity for Chinese drywall manufacturers. That imported drywall is now at the center of complaints of foul odors seeping from walls. Los Angeles Times, California.

[Whose side are health advocacy groups on?](#)

Saturday, July 04, 2009

Some of the most influential and vocal health experts belong to advocacy organizations such as the Center for Science in the Public Interest and the American Council on Science and Health. Who are they, and what do they stand for? Los Angeles Times, California.

[Decades on, water fluoridation still controversial.](#)

Friday, July 03, 2009

The debate on whether fluoride in drinking water is poison or panacea started about four decades ago and in the years since, rather than going away, the controversy around the issue has only intensified. Epoch Times.

[Garage sale sellers should know their inventory.](#)

Friday, July 03, 2009

Before putting kids' toys or cribs out for sale at your garage sale, look them over. The federal Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act applies to you. Rochester Democrat and Chronicle, New York.

[Building a better firework.](#)

Friday, July 03, 2009

There is little argument that the chemicals used in fireworks can be hazardous to humans and the environment in large amounts. Experts say that a single Fourth of July fireworks event probably does not have a significant polluting effect on individuals but could harm those exposed to fireworks often. Newsweek.

[New waterways and species added to Utah mercury fish consumption advisory.](#)

Thursday, July 02, 2009

Consumption advisories are being issued after state officials found elevated levels of mercury in new locations and in existing Utah waterways. Cedar City Spectrum, Utah.
[See related articles about contaminated fish in Southern California: [High mercury levels found in SoCal fish](#) and [SoCal Asian communities aim to weed out toxic fish](#), in Texas: [State warns against eating fish from Clear Creek](#), in the Great Lakes: [Anglers warned of toxins found in fish from Great Lakes](#) and in New York: [Fishing for danger: Poor people driven to catch and eat toxin-filled species](#), [No sign of threat: Don't expect gov't to issue warning of dangerous fishing](#) and [New York City to put up 250 toxic-fish warning signs at fishing spots](#)]

[State must conduct review, hold hearings on latest coal-plant proposal.](#)

Thursday, July 02, 2009

The federal EPA has essentially told the state and Sunflower Electric Power Corp. to start over in considering a permit to build a coal-burning power plant in southwest Kansas. Lawrence Journal, Kansas.

[Schizophrenia may be linked to immune system.](#)

Thursday, July 02, 2009

Three new genetic studies are providing some tantalizing hints about what causes schizophrenia. The studies found such changes in stretches of code involved in brain development, memory and the immune system. It raises the question that somehow the tendency to develop schizophrenia may have something to do with infections of mothers during pregnancy. All Things Considered, NPR.

[Russian scientist helps eliminate toxic legacy.](#)

Thursday, July 02, 2009

Russian scientist Olga Speranskaya's research and push to inform the public about the toxic legacy of huge stockpiles of industrial chemicals and pesticides in the former Soviet Union led to the creation of a powerful environmental advocacy network in 11 former Soviet states. Voice of America.

[Problem pregnancy 'autism risk.'](#)

Thursday, July 02, 2009

Complications during pregnancy and giving birth later in life may increase the risk of having a child with autism, a review of dozens of studies suggests. BBC.

[The environmental toll of plastics.](#)

Thursday, July 02, 2009

From cell phones and computers to bicycle helmets and IV bags, plastic has molded society in many ways that make life both easier and safer. But it also has left harmful imprints on the environment and perhaps human health, according to a new compilation of articles by scientists from around the world. Environmental Health News.

[Another reason to avoid lawn pesticides.](#)

Wednesday, July 01, 2009

Not only are the chemicals designed to poison insects, weeds and other pests toxic ... but the other so-called inert ingredients in pesticide mixtures may be as well. Daily Green.

[How hazardous are coal ash waste dams?](#)

Wednesday, July 01, 2009

Just how much of a hazard are the EPA's "high hazardous potential" coal ash waste impoundments to West Virginians? It depends on how close you live to the site. West Virginia Public Broadcasting, West Virginia.

[See a related article: [EPA allows TVA to dump spilled coal ash in Alabama](#)]

[Lead label prompts Target to pull lip gloss.](#)

Wednesday, July 01, 2009

Indiana state health officials reported Tuesday that elevated lead levels have been found in lip gloss products sold at Target stores. Lafayette Journal and Courier, Indiana.

[Schools aim to control pests with less pesticide.](#)

Wednesday, July 01, 2009

The idea is called Integrated Pest Management, and while it has been around for decades, the federal government recently came up with a plan to reduce pesticide use in schools by 2015. St. Louis Post-Dispatch, Missouri.

[The U.S. Food and Drug Administration risk assessment on lead in women's and children's vitamins is based on outdated assumptions.](#)

Wednesday, July 01, 2009

The FDA's conclusion that Pb concentrations in commercial vitamin products pose no hazard to human health is based on outdated assumptions. It fails to consider recent literature on the potentially deleterious effects that low-level chronic Pb exposure may have on vulnerable populations. Environmental Health Perspectives.

*Most of the news articles above come from Environmental Health News,
<http://www.environmentalhealthnews.org/>*

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

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