



Collaborative on Health and the Environment

eNewsletter -- November 2009



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Dear CHE Partners:

The American Medical Association ([AMA](#)) took an unprecedented action yesterday: It unanimously passed a resolution calling for new policies to decrease public exposure to endocrine disrupting chemicals (EDCs) [[read more](#)] based on the Endocrine Society's seminal scientific statement on EDCs published last summer [[read the statement](#)]. Both The Endocrine Society Statement and the AMA's resolution mark an historical turning point for mainstream medical associations. For the first time, tens of thousands of prestigious health professionals are saying in no uncertain terms:

Exposures to many industrial chemicals are contributing to the epidemic of chronic diseases and disabilities, including diabetes, obesity, learning and developmental disorders, infertility and other reproductive health problems.

- We have enough science to undertake proactive health measures.
- The risk to public health is too great to wait any longer.
- We need to act now to implement health protective policies and regulations.

Many CHE partners were involved in catalyzing this remarkable action. We now would like to encourage other health-related professional societies to adopt similar resolutions to signal to national leaders and policymakers that fundamental chemical policy reform can no longer be side-lined. In fact, chemical policy reform is not only integral to health care reform, as I suggested in last month's CHE e-newsletter, but to climate change as well. EPA Administrator Jackson made this point on Monday in her remarks at the American Public Health Association conference. She announced greenhouse gas emission standards for automobiles, a first for the EPA, saying the limits would mean "less harmful pollution that sends people to the hospital with asthma, heart disease, and any number of other conditions."

In this context, what if we prioritized these same health-focused principles in climate change decisions across the board? That is, in essence, what CHE organizational partners, the Health and Environmental Alliance ([HEAL](#)) and Health Care Without Harm ([HCWH](#)), are calling for in a new campaign entitled "[Prescription for a Healthy Planet](#)". To date, protecting public health has been essentially left out of the conversation in international talks on climate change. At the upcoming Copenhagen summit in December, however, we have an opportunity to ensure that children's health and that of other vulnerable populations are prioritized. As stated in the "Prescription", "a fair and binding international agreement in Copenhagen means: less global warming, less illness, lower healthcare costs, better health for the world population and a healthier planet." This sounds promising. But right now very

for the home population and a healthier planet. This course promises to highlight many, but little research and discussion has focused on climate change and health.

What we do know is that children will be the most impacted by climate change. Nine percent of American children already suffer from asthma and those attacks will become more numerous and severe with increased air pollution and ozone levels--and of course, the number of children affected in developing countries, where there may be even less regulation on pollutants, will likely be far higher. In addition, we will be faced with increased exposures to industrial chemicals as recently outlined by the World Health Organization. For example, with more extreme storms and floods, there will be greater runoff of chemicals used in urban and agricultural areas into surface and ground waters. With increased drought, non-volatile chemicals and toxic metals will concentrate and rapidly enter groundwater supplies through parched soil when rain finally comes. In addition, global warming will release chemicals currently trapped in glacial ice, and changing weather patterns will move persistent chemicals through water and air streams in ways previously unanticipated. And this doesn't even begin to describe other concerns about increased infectious diseases and the challenges of whole populations migrating elsewhere because of rising sea water and less fertile land.

All of this is to say that the AMA and myriad other health professional societies in the US and abroad are essential to figuring out solutions to this thorny nexus of pressing public health issues, namely: chemical policy reform, health care reform and the impact of climate change on human health. Through ongoing efforts to translate the best available science for lay audiences and to incubate strategic health-focused initiatives, I have no doubt CHE partners can continue to change the landscape in which these major decisions--decisions affecting all of us and future generations--are made.

Elise Miller, MEd
Director

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Collaborative on Health and the Environment

CHE Partnership Calls

Please join CHE for the upcoming December Partnership call:

To Ban or Not to Ban: A Review of Atrazine from Both Sides of the Atlantic

Tuesday, December 8, 2009 at 10 AM Pacific / 1 PM Eastern

If the same science is available on both sides of the Atlantic, why would Europe choose to ban the use of atrazine while the US has not? Join CHE as we explore this question and other pesticides issues with speakers from both Europe and the US. We will discuss the findings of the Agricultural Health Study recently conducted by NIH and the EPA, look closer at the scientific literature addressing atrazine and the implications for human health and conclude with a conversation with colleagues from the Health and Environment Alliance (HEAL) in Europe about pesticides, including their choice to ban atrazine.

Featured Speakers:

- **Jane Hoppin**, ScD, National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences, Chronic Disease Epidemiology Group
- **Jason Rohr**, PhD, Assistant Professor, University of South Florida
- **Genon Jensen**, Executive Director, Health and Environment Alliance

[RSVP for this call](#)

This call will be moderated by Steve Heilig, and will be recorded for archival purposes.

Navigating the Scientific Evidence to Ensure Prevention

**CHE hosted this important call on Wednesday, November 11th.
The MP3 recording of the call will be available shortly.**

In August, CHE leaders, scientists, clinicians and community partners participated in the workshop Navigating the Science to Improve Prevention. CHE hosted this follow-up conversation about the efforts being undertaken to translate the emerging science in environmental reproductive health into timely action in clinical and policy arenas.

[More information and listen to the MP3 recording](#)

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:

- October 15, 2009 - [Late Lessons from Early Warnings: the Precautionary Principle 1896-2000: a Conversation with David Gee](#)
- September 30, 2009 - [CHE Cafe call with author Douglas Abrams](#)
- September 22, 2009 - [Food Matters: The Impact of Food Systems on Public Health](#)
- July 28, 2009 - [Precaution's Reach: A Principle in Action](#)

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

CHE Working and Regional Group Updates

Working Group Highlights:

CHE is proud to highlight each month new and exciting working group efforts, which continue to draw the link between health and the environment.

This month:

~ **The Endocrine Society praises both the American Medical Association and the California Medical Association** for passing resolutions, which support greater advocacy and collaboration in decreasing public exposure to endocrine-disrupting chemicals. Several key CHE partners played a leadership role in helping these resolutions to come to fruition. Read more about the AMA and CMA resolutions below.

~ **Endocrine-disrupting chemicals (EDCs): What can a novelist and a pediatrician tell us about them? A special CHE-WA event.**

CHE-WA will host author Doug Abrams (Eye of the Whale) and pediatrician Sheela Sathyanarayana, MD, MPH in Seattle on December 1 for a special two-hour presentation exploring endocrine-disrupting chemicals.

[More information](#)

CHE Fertility

~ **coordinated by Julia Varshavsky, CHE Program Associate,
julia@healthandenvironment.org**

~**Download the MP3 Recording from the Oct. 28 CHE-Fertility Call:** On Oct. 28, CHE-Fertility hosted What Does the Environment Have to do with Medicine? Reporting Back from a Premier Reproductive Society Conference, a discussion that highlighted the role of the Environment and Special Interest Group (ERSIG) at the American Society for Reproductive Medicine (ASRM). ERSIG was established in 2007, and has since then promoted an environmental focus within ASRM. The mission of ERSIG is to enhance understanding of environmental factors on reproductive health through excellence in education, research, and clinical practice.

[Download the MP3 recording](#)

[Link to resources shared on the call](#)

The Endocrine Society Praises the California Medical Association: The Endocrine

~ **The Endocrine Society Praises the California Medical Association:** The Endocrine Society lauded the California Medical Association (CMA) on October 19, 2009 for supporting greater advocacy and collaboration in decreasing public exposure to endocrine-disrupting chemicals. The resolution reflects the findings and recommendations of The Endocrine Society's peer-reviewed Scientific Statement on endocrine-disrupting chemicals released by the Society this past June.

[Read the press release](#)

~ **Toxic Matters:** A new guide that highlights how to prevent exposure to toxic substances at home, in the workplace and in your community. Toxic Matters is a publication of the University of California, San Francisco Program on Reproductive Health and the Environment ([PRHE](#)), From Advancing Science to Ensuring Prevention ([FASTEP](#)). FASTER is a project of PRHE and an alliance of academic, government and non-governmental partners spanning the fields of reproductive, environmental, occupational and pediatric health and toxicology.

The recommendations in this brochure are designed for women, men and children, and apply to everyone regardless of whether or not you're pregnant now or are planning to have children in the future.

[Learn more and download a PDF version of Toxic Matters](#)

~ **Free CME Webinars and Materials for Patients and Educators:** From the Association of Reproductive Health Professionals (ARHP).

For health care providers: [Archived Webinars](#) with Tracey Woodruff, PhD, MPH and Ted Schettler, MD, MPH for continuing education credits, and [an Environmental and Reproductive Health Resources for Health Care Providers fact sheet](#).

For educators: Fully-referenced didactic presentations available through [CORE](#), ARHP's open-access slide library.

For patients: [Health Matters fact sheets](#), including Healthy Fish, Healthy Families and The Connection Between Your Health and the Environment.

~ **Website Changes:** [The Fertilty/Reproductive Health website](#) is being expanded, reorganized and updated. You'll see a new navigation box in the left column listing new pages that better organize resources and activities. Look for further revisions in the coming weeks.

CHE LDDI

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

~ **The LDDI biomonitoring project:** The LDDI biomonitoring project is moving very rapidly, with a report release projected for February 2010. All participants have seen their results, and are under way with consultations with the physician designated for the project. Media outreach is our key focus at this time, and LDDI is working with a communications firm, the Raben Group, to reach our goals. For more information, please contact Laura Abulafia, National Coordinator for LDDI, at laura@healthandenvironment.org

~ **The October 2nd forum held in Chicago IL** with collaborating partners including the American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AAIDD), the Learning Disabilities Association of America (LDA), and the Autism Society (ASA), along with Environment Illinois and Illinois PIRG, will be broadcast on Chicago Access Television on November 1st, at 9am Central Time.

CAN TV brings you local, relevant issues from Chicago's neighborhoods and communities. See what's happening around the city in education, the arts, government, cultural events, social services and community activities, by visiting <http://www.cantv.org/>.

~ **Laura Abulafia interviewed for Greener Living:** Laura Abulafia from AAIDD was interviewed for a lifestyle magazine AM radio show in the North East called "Greener Living" on Saturday November 7th. This live phone interview included a discussion on

Living on Saturday November 7th. This live phone interview included a discussion on environmental factors that impact learning and developmental disability and the health of people with LDD.

More info: WTIC 1080 AM radio is a CBS flagship station in southern New England. The show broadcasts every Saturday from 4 to 6PM EST and can be heard from the Berkshires in western Massachusetts to Long Island in New York.

[Greener Living podcasts online](#)

More information about Dr. G can be found on his website: www.GreenerLivingRadio.com

~ **AAIDD is hosting it's monthly teleconference:** This month's teleconference, sponsored by the John Merck Fund, is titled "1 + 1 + 1 = 300: The Effect of Multiple Environmental Toxins on the Developing Brain, Bowel, and Immune System," presented by Cindy Schneider, MD, on Tuesday November 10th. For more information visit www.ehinitiative.org or www.aaidd.org/ehi

~ **The Learning Disabilities Association of America annual meeting:** LDA will hold its annual meeting in February 2010 in Baltimore MD. There will be a symposium on toxic chemicals and brain development at this meeting where leaders from LDDI will be speaking. Additional speakers include policy makers such as Assemblyman James Hubbard from MD who introduced environmental health legislation in MD on BPA and other chemicals, and heads a group of state legislators on TSCA reform.

~ **LDDI now has some web resources** under the Collaborative for Health and the Environment (CHE) website! Nancy Snow at CHE has been working hard to transfer resources from the old LDDI site under ICEH to its new home at CHE. Please stay tuned as this website grows!

CHE Regional Working Groups Updates

CHE HEAL

~ **coordinated by Diana Smith, diana@env-health.org**

~ **HEALTH AND CLIMATE CHANGE:** Last week, at the UNFCCC climate change talks at Barcelona HEAL and Health Care Without Harm launched the Prescription for a Healthy Planet to a global audience. At the same time as an oversized 'Prescription' was handed to a representative of the World Health Organisation, a new website with all the details about the prescription went online (www.climateandhealthcare.org). Signatories include the Standing Committee of European Doctors, Physicians for Social Responsibility, European Respiratory Society, and many more.

At the well-attended press conference launching the Prescription, Dr Roberto Bertollini, World Health Organization said: "We want to bring the human face to the climate change talks by bringing in health. Choosing policies that reduce carbon emissions bring positive returns for health, also called co-benefits. For example, developing sustainable public transport policies, which encourage walking and cycling, and eating less red meat, can help mitigate climate change and also improve health." In receiving the Prescription for a Healthy Planet, he said the move represented "a signal of the growing concern about the impact of climate change on health."

CHE Washington

~ **coordinated by Steve Gilbert, sgilbert@innd.org or contact info@healthandenvironment.org**

~ **CHE-WA will host a special event and meeting on December 1, 2009 from 2-4:30 PM Pacific at Antioch University in Seattle, WA:** Join Doug Abrams, author of Eye of the Whale ([read more about Doug and his novel](#)), and Sheela Sathyanarayana, MD, MPH ([read more about Sheela](#)), researcher and assistant professor at University of Washington and Seattle Children's Hospital, to learn more about EDCs and how they can impact the health of wildlife and humans.

Doug, who is flying in from California for this meeting, will offer a dynamic presentation

that weaves together readings from his novel with the research he did to inform his writing. Sheela will then provide some of the latest science on EDCs and what we can do to reduce our exposures to them.

Plus, the last hour of the meeting will focus on next steps for protecting children's environmental health in this region-a follow-up to the incredibly successful NW Children's Environmental Health Forum held in early October.

For more information on this special event or if you cannot make it in person, but wish to dial in via conference call, please contact: info@healthandenvironment.org

~ **CHE-WA coordinator Steve Gilbert and others present Particles on the Wall at Cafe Allegro, Seattle:** Particles on the Wall is an interdisciplinary exhibit featuring visual art, literary art and science exploring major elements of the nuclear age. The exhibit addresses our history related to the Hanford Nuclear Site, as well as broader nuclear and peace issues. Contributing artists include Mike Bristow, Janice Camp, Dianne Dickeman, T. Michael Gardiner, William Witherup and others. The exhibit will run from January 3--January 30, 2010 with an opening night reception on Friday, January 8, 2010 at 7 PM.

For more information, please contact Nancy Dickeman at nancydickeman@gmail.com or 206-354-2170.

Announcements and News Highlights

American Medical Association adopts Endocrine Society resolution for new policies to decrease exposure to endocrine-disrupting chemicals

The American Medical Association's ([AMA](#)) House of Delegates adopted a resolution calling on the AMA to work with the federal government to enact new federal policies to decrease the public's exposure to endocrine-disrupting chemicals (EDCs).

The resolution, introduced by The Endocrine Society, reflects the findings and recommendations of The Endocrine Society's peer-reviewed [Scientific Statement](#) on EDCs released by the Society this past June. Adoption of this resolution means that it is now AMA policy and is wholly supported by the House of Medicine.

[Read more](#)

New Consortium on Climate Change and Population Health Invites Participation
[SeaTrust Institute](#) and [IGI Global](#) invite participation in an online international Consortium on Climate Change and Population Health. This Consortium's primary mission is to support interdisciplinary efforts that imbed sustainability, human health, climate change and public policy perspectives in order to effectively address population health concerns in the context of climate change.

[Read more](#)

Linda Birnbaum speaks to research and public health in *Environmental Health Perspectives* editorial

[Read the editorial](#)

***Chemicals in our Food, and Bodies*, a new article from NYT's Nicholas Kristoff**

Kristoff explores BPA in this editorial published on November 7th.

[Read the editorial](#)

November 2009 issue of Environmental Factor available online

<http://www.niehs.nih.gov/news/newsletter/index.cfm>

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>

Birth Defect Research for Children reviews article on birth defects and the environment

Birth Defect Research for Children's Executive Director was asked to review an article on "Environmental Factors in Birth Defects" that was published in the October edition of [Environmental Health Perspectives](#), the journal of the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences.

[Read the article](#)

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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