



# Toxic Times

A weekly recap of the top stories on toxics in Michigan and beyond.

News Highlights from December 22, 2008 – January 4, 2009

## MICHIGAN NEWS

### **Dow Chemical in talks for Michigan dioxin cleanup**

*The Chicago Tribune*, Thursday, January 1, 2009

Dow Chemical has agreed to once more talk with federal regulators about the clean up of dioxin contamination in Michigan. While the closed-door talks are encouraging for some, others feel the meeting will only result in further delays.

[http://www.chicagotribune.com/features/lifestyle/health/chi-dow-dioxin-01-jan01\\_0,7193136.story](http://www.chicagotribune.com/features/lifestyle/health/chi-dow-dioxin-01-jan01_0,7193136.story)

### **Granholm expected to sign phosphorus limits law**

*The Bay City Times*, Wednesday, December 31, 2008

Governor Jennifer Granholm is expected to sign into law legislation that would limit the amount of phosphorus in dishwasher and laundry detergents. The phosphorus, which eventually reaches waterways, is believed to be a major contributor in accelerating algal growth, which can then result in deoxygenated 'dead zones.'

<http://www.mlive.com/news/bctimes/index.ssf?/base/news-13/1230740120112240.xml&coll=4>

## NATIONAL NEWS

### **Pollution at home often lurks unrecognized**

*Reuters via MSNBC*, Friday, December 26, 2008

Many people tend to be surprised by the number and types of chemicals detected in their bodies and in their homes, according a small research project. The findings imply that consumers need to be more aware of what is in the products they can choose from.

<http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/28390793/>

### **Young students often most vulnerable to toxic air**

*USA Today*, Monday, December 22, 2008

Young children are still developing and, as such, their bodies are more susceptible to toxic chemicals. The question is how dangerous is the air around schools, especially when the schools are in relatively close proximity to processing plants and other chemical-releasing factories.

[http://www.usatoday.com/news/nation/environment/2008-12-21-youngkids\\_N.htm](http://www.usatoday.com/news/nation/environment/2008-12-21-youngkids_N.htm)

### **Lead and violent crime**

*Living on Earth*, Friday, January 2, 2009

Lead is known to have effects on the developing brain. A new study from the University of Cincinnati suggests that even a small amount of lead may lead to an increased risk for violent crime later in life.

<http://www.loe.org/shows/segments.htm?programID=09-P13-00001&segmentID=4>

### **After Tennessee ash spill, cleanup and worry**

*The Los Angeles Times*, Thursday, January 1, 2009

After a coal-burning power plant in east Tennessee sent more than a billion gallons of ash into the surrounding waterways and private property, residents are concerned about air and water contamination, property values, and the nature-based culture of the eastern Tennessee area.

[http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/nation/la-na-tennessee-ash-spill1-2009jan01\\_0\\_2977941.story](http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/nation/la-na-tennessee-ash-spill1-2009jan01_0_2977941.story)

### **FDA to reconsider plastic bottle risk**

*The New York Times*, Tuesday, December 23, 2008

Weeks after the FDA's own advisory board accused the agency of failing to consider scientific evidence suggesting the potential dangers of bisphenol-A—a chemical found in baby bottles, plastic food containers, and the liners of metal cans—the agency has agreed to reconsider its ruling.

[http://www.nytimes.com/2008/12/24/dining/24chem.html?\\_r=1](http://www.nytimes.com/2008/12/24/dining/24chem.html?_r=1)

### **Phthalate ban in children's products now in force in California**

*The Contra Costa Times*, Wednesday, December 31, 2008

Despite disagreements between state and federal legislators about the validity of California's phthalate ban in light of the new Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act (set to take effect on February 10), California is adopting its legislation for 2009. The California ban is the strongest in the nation and does not allow the sale of products made prior to the ban.

[http://www.contracostatimes.com/search/ci\\_11347577?IADID=Search-www.contracostatimes.com-www.contracostatimes.com](http://www.contracostatimes.com/search/ci_11347577?IADID=Search-www.contracostatimes.com-www.contracostatimes.com)

### **City shuts field over lead concern**

*The New York Times*, Wednesday, December 24, 2008

New York City officials closed a playground in Harlem after unusually high levels of lead were detected in the rubber used in artificial turf, reviving a debate about the safety of artificial turf with regard to children.

<http://cityroom.blogs.nytimes.com/2008/12/24/city-shuts-playground-over-lead-concern/>

## **INTERNATIONAL NEWS**

### **Concerns remain over water safety**

*The China Daily*, Thursday, December 25, 2008

According to Chinese Environmental Protection Minister Zhou Shengxian, about a quarter of Chinese centralized drinking water resources are contaminated to the point

where they may pose potential health risks. While many of the contaminants can be detected and purified by waterworks stations, only about a quarter of China's cities are capable of performing the testing that would be required.

[http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2008-12/25/content\\_7339421.htm](http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2008-12/25/content_7339421.htm)

### **The start of something big**

*Environmental Science and Technology*, Wednesday, December 24, 2008

The European Union's REACH legislation, designed to limit the use of chemicals of concern as well as inform consumers what products contain such chemicals, is finally beginning to take form as the European Chemical Agency produced a candidate list of 15 chemicals of particular concern.

<http://pubs.acs.org/doi/full/10.1021/es803484p>

### **January 31 deadline for removing Bhopal waste unlikely to be met**

*Indo-Asian News Service*, Tuesday, December 30, 2008

The worst man-made disaster, the Bhopal gas incident, has had lasting effects, leaving behind a complex full of the pesticide sevin, its byproducts, and raw materials. Despite the potential health risks as these contaminants leach into the water supply, the court-ordered clean up date of January 31, 2009, seems unlikely to be met.

<http://news.smashits.com/332822/Jan-31-deadline-to-remove-Bhopal-gas-waste-unlikely-to-be-met.htm>

### **More than 200 NI rivers polluted**

*BBC*, Wednesday, December 24, 2008

Three-quarters of North Ireland's rivers are polluted beyond acceptable levels, according to information released by SDLP assembly member Thomas Burns. The Environment Agency claims that the figures are being used to mislead the public and denies allegations that they are not doing enough to prevent the pollution.

[http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk\\_news/northern\\_ireland/7798536.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/northern_ireland/7798536.stm)

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