



Toxic Times

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

News Highlights from December 8 – December 19, 2008

Note: The Toxic Times will take a holiday break, starting again in early January. Happy Holidays to everyone!

MICHIGAN NEWS

Group: Dow dioxin clean-up plans lack transparency

Detroit Free Press, Wednesday, December 19, 2008

A decision to start closed-door negotiations between state and federal environmental regulators and Dow Chemical Co. over how to clean up the largest dioxin-contaminated site in the nation is a mistake, environmental groups said.

<http://www.freep.com/article/20081219/BUSINESS06/81219054/1002/rss02>

Both sides blow smoke in ban issue

The Detroit News, Friday, December 16, 2008

A state smoking ban for restaurants and bars is a potent idea, applauded by most.

<http://www.detnews.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20081216/OPINION03/812160368/1409/METRO>

Cox Announces Settlement with Mattel for Toys Recalled for Excessive Lead Paint

MI Newswire, Friday, December 16, 2008

Michigan Attorney General Mike Cox today announced that his office reached a settlement with Mattel, Inc. and its subsidiary, Fisher-Price, Inc. after an investigation into allegations that some of their toys contained excessive amounts of lead.

<http://www.michigan.gov/minewswire/0,1607,7-136-3452-205278--,00.html>

Sierra Club sues BPW, city over power plant

Holland Sentinel, Monday, December 15, 2008

The Sierra Club Monday, Dec. 15, filed a lawsuit against the city of Holland and the Holland Board of Public Works alleging that the James De Young Power Plant underwent expansions without proper regulatory supervision and without required permits.

<http://www.hollandsentinel.com/news/x1720695866/Sierra-Club-sues-BPW-city-over-power-plant>

Traces of tritium found at Palisades

The Kalamazoo Gazette, Thursday, December 11, 2008

Radioactive tritium may be leaking from the Palisades nuclear reactor, as monitoring has indicated detectable levels in one test well.

<http://www.mlive.com/news/kzgazette/index.ssf?/base/news-31/1229010657159490.xml&coll=7>

Toxic toy scare prompts parents to look for organic, Earth-friendly toys when holiday shopping

The Flint Journal, Wednesday, December 10, 2008

Many holiday shoppers this season are searching for safe child products. For some, that means looking for organic toys, such as wood cars and natural cotton stuffed animals.

http://www.mlive.com/flintjournal/index.ssf/2008/12/toxic_toy_scare_prompts_parent.html

NATIONAL NEWS

Jewelry in major stores flunks state lead test

The San Francisco Chronicle, Wednesday, December 10, 2008

Research by an Oakland-based group found that 20 to 30 percent of tested jewelry from major retailers—from WalMart to Banana Republic—exceeded the state's lead limit.

<http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/c/a/2008/12/10/BUKT14KQ9N.DTL>

A widely-used, understudied chemical alters inflammation

Environmental Health News, Friday, December 12, 2008

Dibutyltin (DBT), a key component in the production of PVC plastics, has been found to affect the inflammation and immune responses in human and nonhuman cells. The study may help explain why asthma and allergy rates continue to rise in humans.

<http://www.environmentalhealthnews.org/ehs/newscience/a-widely-used-understudied-chemical-alters-inflammation/>

FDA draft report urges consumption of fish, despite mercury contamination

The Washington Post, Friday, December 12, 2008

The FDA is urging women and children to eat more fish, claiming that the benefits of seafood outweigh the risk of mercury that the fish present. New recommendations suggest that the benefits would be maximized by consuming more than 12 oz of fish per week, the agency's current limit for pregnant women and young children.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/12/11/AR2008121103394.html>

Pollutants in the womb can trigger adult cancers

Science News, Tuesday, December 9, 2008

Recent research has shown in an animal model that pollutants in the womb of late-term animals can cause the progeny to develop cancer as adults.

http://www.sciencenews.org/view/generic/id/39227/title/Pollutants_in_the_womb_can_trigger_adult_cancers

Officials vow air near schools to be tested for toxins

USA Today, Wednesday, December 10, 2008

Acting in response to reports indicating elevated air levels of multiple toxic chemicals outside schools across the nation, the chairman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee pledged to 'do what I have to do' in order to ensure government monitoring of school air quality.

http://www.usatoday.com/news/nation/environment/2008-12-09-toxic_N.htm

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Pig feed toxins 'were off the scale'

The London Times, Saturday, December 13, 2008

As millions of euros worth of Irish pork is recalled due to dioxin contamination, British researchers find contamination levels in excess of 5,000 times the European Union limit.

<http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/world/ireland/article5338195.ece>