



Toxic Times

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

News Highlights from February 11, 2009 – February 17, 2009

MICHIGAN NEWS

Cancer questions grow around Fermi nuclear plant

The Michigan Messenger, Tuesday, February 17, 2009

Cancer rates among people under 25 increased at a faster rate in Monroe County—home of the Fermi II nuclear power plant—than in the rest of the state. This finding has led some to question whether radiation from the plant could be the cause of the higher rates.

<http://michiganmessenger.com/12965/cancer-questions-grow-around-fermi-nuclear-plant>

Ex-EPA official worried about Michigan dioxin cleanup

The Associated Press, Wednesday, February 11, 2009

Dow Chemical Co. released dioxins, highly toxic pollutants and likely carcinogens, into the Tittabawassee and Saginaw rivers—among other areas—for much of the 20th century. While federal and state officials are hoping a thorough cleanup process will finally begin with changes in regulation, other parties are less optimistic.

<http://www.mlive.com/newsflash/michigan/index.ssf?/base/business-20/1234382041243640.xml&storylist=michigannews&thispage=1>

Romulus toxic waste site may reopen

The Detroit Free Press, Sunday, February 15, 2009

A pair of toxic waste wells in Romulus, closed in late 2006 for leaks and mismanagement, may reopen. Neighbors to the site feel the wells are unnecessary.

<http://www.freep.com/article/20090215/NEWS05/902150393/1007>

NATIONAL NEWS

Flame retardants travel hand to mouth on dust

Environmental Health News, Friday, February 13, 2009

New research shows that a certain class of flame retardants (PBDEs) can stick to human skin via dust particles. The study, which focused on hands, also found that children have nearly 10 times the concentration of PBDEs on their hands as adults.

<http://www.environmentalhealthnews.org/ehs/newscience/pbdes-travel-hand-to-mouth/>

School board assailed for decision to bar video “The Story of Stuff”

The Missoulian, Wednesday, February 11, 2009

The Missoula County Public Schools board of trustees has been severely criticized since their decision that a high school teacher violated school policy by showing “The Story of Stuff,” a video discussing the true costs of overconsumption and pollution.

<http://www.missoulian.com/articles/2009/02/11/news/local/news03.txt>

Low levels of BPA raise breast cancer risk in rat offspring

Environmental Health News, Monday, February 16, 2009

A new study has shown that low levels of bisphenol A (BPA) in the milk of rats can increase the risk for breast cancer in their offspring. The study used levels considered by the EPA to be safe, reviving the debate about how much BPA is necessary to cause adverse effects.

<http://www.environmentalhealthnews.org/ehs/newscience/low-bpa-raises-breast-cancer-in-adult-rats-nursed/>

Toxic pet toys?

The Suncoast News, Saturday, February 14, 2009

Concerns are still high about toxic materials in products for children, but little thought is often given to products for pets. With no federal regulation on pet products, veterinarians warn to ‘use caution.’

<http://suncoastpasco.tbo.com/content/2009/feb/14/pi-toxic-pet-toys/>

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

U.S. calls for treaty on mercury reduction

The Associated Press via Forbes.com, Monday, February 16, 2009

The U.S. government has asked for an internationally binding treaty on mercury reduction. The request, a polar opposite to the views of the previous American administration, was announced at a global gathering of environmental leaders in Nairobi, Kenya.

<http://www.forbes.com/feeds/ap/2009/02/16/ap6056815.html>

Pollution link to asthma in womb

BBC, Sunday, February 15, 2009

New research suggests that a common group of pollutants in traffic may alter the expression of genes in the womb, increasing the likelihood of asthma.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/health/7888735.stm>

Secondhand smoke linked to dementia

Forbes, Wednesday, February 11, 2009

People exposed to high levels of secondhand smoke are 44 per cent more likely to develop dementia, according to a new study released in the *British Medical Journal*.

<http://www.forbes.com/feeds/hscout/2009/02/12/hscout624060.html>

Families take council to High Court claiming toxic waste led to children's deformities

The London Daily Mail, Tuesday, February 17, 2009

A group of 18 young people—ages 9-22—are suing over birth defects they claim are the results of their mothers being exposed to toxic chemicals while pregnant.

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1146762/Families-council-High-Court-claiming-toxic-waste-led-childrens-deformities.html>

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The Michigan Network for Children's Environmental Health is a coalition of health professionals, health-affected groups, environmental organizations, and others dedicated to a safe and less toxic world for Michigan's children. Through education, outreach, and advocacy, we seek to protect Michigan's children from adverse impacts caused by exposure to widespread hazardous chemicals. Visit: www.mnceh.org.