



# Toxic Times

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

News Highlights from November 17 – November 23, 2008

## MICHIGAN NEWS

### **Legislature should push bills making kids' products safer**

*The Macomb Daily*, Wednesday, November 19, 2008

Amid all the hoopla over our recent federal, state and local elections one consumer advocacy group feels somewhat forgotten. "Many in the media have neglected to address the mounting number of toy and children's products that still contain toxic chemicals," says a recent press advisory from Healthy Michigan, Healthy Kids.

<http://www.macombdaily.com/articles/2008/11/19/opinion/srv0000004069010.txt>

### **Flint-area households kicking the chemicals; medical experts mixed on effectiveness**

*The Flint Journal*, Saturday, November 22, 2008

Many Flint-area households are foregoing products with chemical additives in favor of traditional or natural remedies. A consensus has yet to be reached among health experts about where the boundary is between the risks and benefits for such remedies.

[http://www.mlive.com/flintjournal/index.ssf/2008/11/flintarea\\_households\\_kicking\\_t.html](http://www.mlive.com/flintjournal/index.ssf/2008/11/flintarea_households_kicking_t.html)

### **Company to pay \$1.7M for abandoning toxic equipment**

*The Bay City Times*, Wednesday, November 17, 2008

The defunct Hoskins Manufacturing Co, now known as HSKM, Inc., has been sentenced to pay a \$1.7 million fine for abandoning a transformer containing PCBs at its Hamburg facility.

<http://www.mlive.com/news/bctimes/index.ssf?/base/news-12/122711132462280.xml&coll=4>

## NATIONAL NEWS

### **Some toys with banned plastics will stay on the market**

*The Washington Post*, Wednesday, November 19, 2008

Congressional legislation passed in August that bans toys and children's products containing certain phthalates will not retroactively affect inventory already produced. The decision, made by the United States Consumer Product Safety Commission, has led to contention between the commission and consumer advocacy groups, as well as House staffers who claim that the law is being misinterpreted.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/11/18/AR2008111803206.html>

### **Vendors urge relaxed lead-safety rule**

*The Wall Street Journal*, Tuesday, November 18, 2008

Manufacturers and retailers of children's products are asking Congress to relax strict new requirements on the allowable lead content in their products. Many smaller retailers claim that they cannot afford to pay for the testing new legislation would require and fear that the February 2009 deadline will devastate sales, inventory, and credit.

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB122696993087535701.html>

### **Indiana lands on group's Top 50 list of mercury emitters**

*The Indianapolis Star*, Friday, November 21, 2008

According to the nonprofit Environmental Integrity Project, three Indiana power plants are among the top fifty facilities in releasing poisonous mercury into the air and water. The three stations also placed Indiana among the top twelve states with the greatest number of facilities on the list.

<http://www.indystar.com/article/20081121/LOCAL/811210433>

### **Chromium polluting wastewater plant**

*The Helena Independent Record*, Saturday, November 22, 2008

The Helena Wastewater Plant in Helena, MT, has been experiencing spikes of chromium-laden waste in its water input, killing nitrogen-eating bacteria and increasing the plant's ammonia output. Federal and state investigators are searching for the cause and suspect illegal industrial waste.

[http://www.helenair.com/articles/2008/11/22/local/55lo\\_081122\\_chromium.txt](http://www.helenair.com/articles/2008/11/22/local/55lo_081122_chromium.txt)

## **INTERNATIONAL NEWS**

### **The cursed children of Bhopal**

*The London Independent*, Wednesday, November 19, 2008

The children born to parents who experienced the Union Carbide Bhopal accident suffer from ailments as wide-ranged as diabetes and loss of hearing. Despite this, the site remains and toxic chemicals continue to pollute the area as debate about who is to blame goes unresolved.

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/asia/the-cursed-children-of-bhopal-1024600.html>

### **Proof in the blood**

*Comunicaciones Aliadas*, Wednesday, November 19, 2008

The Health Ministry shut down the Baterias de El Salvador SA battery factory for environmental pollution. However, the residents of Sito del Niño, the community surrounding the factory, are now faced with increased blood lead levels.

<http://www.latinamericapress.org/articles.asp?art=5752>