



# Toxic Times

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

News Highlights from October 19 – October 26, 2008

## MICHIGAN NEWS

### **Lead-poisoning rates high among kids in Kalamazoo Co.**

*Kalamazoo Gazette*, Thursday, October 23, 2008

Lead poisoning, which can result from paint dust stirred up by renovation or remodeling projects, can impair a child's development and at high levels may cause death.

Kalamazoo is one of 13 communities identified by the Michigan Department of Community Health as having high rates of childhood lead poisoning.

<http://www.mlive.com/news/kzgazette/index.ssf?/base/news-31/1224773437100800.xml&coll=7>

### **Food allergies climb in American kids, study says**

*Detroit Free Press*, Thursday, October 22, 2008

Food allergies in American children seem to be on the rise, now affecting about 3 million kids, according to the first federal study of the problem. But experts said that might be because parents are more aware and quicker to have their kids checked out by a doctor.

<http://www.freep.com/article/20081022/NEWS07/81022020>

### **Residents take up fight over cancer**

*The Detroit News*, Wednesday, October 22, 2008

State asked for health study of industrial area believed to have elevated number of cases. Not more than 10 inches tall, three wooden crosses spray-painted white jut out of the front yard of Martha Allain's 11th Street home.

<http://www.detnews.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20081022/LIFESTYLE03/810220378/1409/METRO>

### **TEXAS TOWNSHIP CHEMICAL BARRELS Cleanup could finish in December**

*Kalamazoo Gazette*, Wednesday, October 22, 2008

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency should finish cleanup of dangerous chemicals from property at 10135 West O Ave. in early to mid-December, officials said at a public meeting Tuesday.

<http://www.mlive.com/news/kzgazette/index.ssf?/base/news-31/1224687013152080.xml&coll=7>

## NATIONAL NEWS

### **EPA weakens new lead rule after White House objects**

*Detroit Free Press*, Thursday, October 23, 2008

After the White House intervened, the Environmental Protection Agency last week weakened a rule on airborne lead standards at the last minute so that fewer known polluters would have their emissions monitored. The White House Office of Management and Budget objected to the way the EPA would have some facilities, such as lead-emitting battery recycling plants, monitored.

<http://www.freep.com/article/20081023/NEWS07/81023109>

### **Toys containing banned plastics still on market**

*Wall Street Journal*, Thursday, October 23, 2008

Starting February 10, 2009, children's toys and childcare products containing three types of phthalates will be banned and those containing a different three phthalates will be placed on a temporary ban. Manufacturers of such products are attempting to liquidate their stock before the ban takes effect, and consumer advocacy groups are complaining that the law has effectively offered a grace period to sell the products rather than requiring their disposal.

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB122472242723860917.html>

### **Fire retardant costumes pose Halloween danger**

*NBC*, Friday, October 24, 2008

The fire safety label, which was once viewed as a safety seal of approval on Halloween costumes, is now triggering concern as parents weigh the benefits against the potential health risks caused by PBDE used on the costumes.

<http://www.wcsh6.com/news/health/story.aspx?storyid=94800&catid=8>

### **Dentists back sealants, despite concerns**

*New York Times*, Monday, October 20, 2008

The chemical is bisphenol-A, or BPA, which is widely used in the making of the hard, clear plastic called polycarbonate, and is also found in the linings of food and soft-drink cans. Most human exposure to the chemical clearly comes from the food supply. But traces have also been found in dental sealants. Despite the concerns, the American Dental Association remains strongly in favor of the sealants.

[http://www.nytimes.com/2008/10/21/health/21well.html?\\_r=1&oref=slogin](http://www.nytimes.com/2008/10/21/health/21well.html?_r=1&oref=slogin)

### **Critics slam chemical report**

*Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, Friday, October 24, 2008

Scientists, lawmakers, and advocacy groups criticized a government report stating that bisphenol-A is safe. Scientists have noted serious flaws in the study, and lawmakers have requested a ban on bisphenol-A. Much of the criticism intensified when it was discovered that the plastics industry was responsible for much of the FDA report.

<http://www2.jsonline.com/story/index.aspx?id=809667>

### **Lead, smoke exposure in kids linked to ADHD**

*Cincinnati Enquirer*, Monday, October 20, 2008

Eliminating childhood exposure to lead and tobacco smoke could cut the incidence of ADHD in the U.S. by more than a third, according to new research from Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center. Individually, each substance increases a child's risk of developing attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder, but children exposed to both environmental toxins are more than eight times more likely to develop ADHD than children who weren't exposed to either substance, the study found.

<http://news.cincinnati.com/article/20081020/NEWS01/810200302>

## **INTERNATIONAL NEWS**

### **U.S. company challenges Quebec pesticide ban**

*Toronto Star*, Wednesday, October 22, 2008

Opponents are charging that a U.S. company's challenge of a ban on the weed killer 2,4-D in Quebec is undemocratic and based on misconceptions of its safety. Dow Chemical, who produces the herbicide, has filed a \$2 million dollar suit against the federal government because of the ban.

<http://www.thestar.com/article/522707>

### **Toxic toys, jewelry recalled**

*Toronto Star*, Friday, October 24, 2008

Health Canada has ordered thousands of toys and children's costume jewelry items off store shelves after a *Star* investigation found they contained dangerously high levels of lead.

<http://www.parentcentral.ca/parent/article/523696>