



Toxic Times

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

News Highlights from September 7-13, 2008

MICHIGAN NEWS

Chemical Cleanup Begins in Texas Township

Kalamazoo Gazette, Thursday, September 11, 2008

Investigators from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency are continuing to investigate how 350 to 400 55-gallon drums containing laboratory chemicals ended up near two houses in the 10100 block of West O Avenue and who placed them there, EPA spokesman Mick Hans said. While authorities have not analyzed all of the chemicals, some they have identified include benzene, picric acid and carbon tetrachloride, he said.

http://www.mlive.com/kzgazette/news/index.ssf/2008/09/chemical_cleanup_begins_in_tex.html

NATIONAL NEWS

Tighter Lead Rule for Kids' Items

Washington Post, Saturday, September 13, 2008

All children's products must meet a new, tougher lead standard by Feb. 10, regardless of when they were made, according to a legal opinion expected to be released today by the Consumer Product Safety Commission's general counsel.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/09/14/AR2008091402045.html?referrer=emailarticle>

Products Derived From Natural, Nontoxic Ingredients -- Once Seen as Fringe -- Are Now Mainstream

Los Angeles Times, Sunday, September 14, 2008

Innovations in designing green chemicals are emerging in nearly every U.S. industry, from plastics and pesticides to toys and nail polish.

<http://www.latimes.com/news/local/la-me-greenchem14-2008sep14,0,5897268,full.story>

Fire Retardants in Toddlers and Their Mothers

Environmental Working Group, September 2008 (covered in many media outlets)

In the first investigation of toxic fire retardants in parents and their children, Environmental Working Group (EWG) found that toddlers and preschoolers typically had 3 times as much of these hormone-disrupting chemicals in their blood as their mothers.

<http://www.ewg.org/reports/pbdesintoddlers>

Baby Care Products: Possible Sources of Infant Phthalate Exposure

Pediatrics, September 2008 (summary by Pete Myers, Ph.D.)

Phthalate exposure is widespread in infants and use of baby care products appears to be contributing, according to an analysis of babies' urine. Greater use of lotions, powders and shampoos were associated with higher phthalate levels. The associations were strongest in younger infants.

<http://www.environmentalhealthnews.org/newscience/2008/2008-0204sathyanarayanaetal.html>

High Calcium Levels During Pregnancy Reduces Fetal Exposure to Lead

Newslocale.org, Wednesday, September 10, 2008

Women who consume high levels of daily calcium supplements during pregnancy show a marked reduction in lead levels in their blood, according to a new study, which suggests that calcium could play a critical role in reducing fetal and infant exposure

http://www.newslocale.org/health/hnews/high_calcium_levels_during_pregnancy_reduces_fetal_exposure_to_lead_200809105013.html

Popular Plastics Chemical Poses Further Threat

Sciencenews.org, Saturday, September 13, 2008

A new study examining the effects of bisphenol A in human fat tissue finds that the chemical suppresses a hormone that protects people from heart attacks and type 2 diabetes. Bisphenol A doses examined in the study are typical of what is found in human blood.

http://www.sciencenews.org/view/generic/id/35787/title/Popular_plastics_chemical_poses_further_threat

Cancer Takes Heavy Toll on Seattle Firefighters

Seattle Post-Intelligencer, Friday, September 12, 2008

While certain cancers might be associated with fire fighting, the city of Seattle is beginning to take more precautions toward the risk of cancer from other sources their firefighters are exposed to. "Billows of black smoke from melting computers, televisions, plastic lumber, glues and petroleum in homes create poisons that are only beginning to be understood."

http://seattlepi.nwsource.com/local/378819_firefighters12.html