



Toxic Times

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

News Highlights from April 30, 2009 – May 6, 2009

MICHIGAN NEWS

Dioxin study near Michigan Dow plant draws scrutiny

The Associated Press, via mlive.com, Sunday, May 3, 2009

A University of Michigan study measuring dioxin exposure in the Saginaw Bay watershed has drawn criticism from Michigan regulators trying to negotiate remediation of the chemicals. Dow Chemical Co. has admitted to contaminating the watershed with dioxins, but claims the contested report demonstrates there is less risk than many believe.

<http://www.mlive.com/newsflash/michigan/index.ssf?/base/business-5/1241365882249880.xml&storylist=newsmichigan&thispage=1>

Bills would help spot harmful 'toxic toys'

The Oakland Press, Thursday, April 30, 2009

Editorial: Proposed legislation in Michigan would require manufacturers to disclose the composition of their toys. Given the presence of toxic chemicals in toys made from across the globe, the author believes this regulation is a necessary step.

<http://www.theoaklandpress.com/articles/2009/04/30/opinion/doc49f96f8ed6f27789212399.txt>

NATIONAL NEWS

Tests show how toxic substances turn up in Americans' blood

ABC 7 – Los Angeles, Friday, May 1, 2009

Five leading minority women environmentalists from across the country volunteered blood samples for testing to show how many foreign chemicals are in their bodies. The results are meant to demonstrate the pervasive nature of chemical contaminants throughout the nation.

<http://www.greenrightnow.com/kabc/2009/05/01/tests-of-five-women-environmental-leaders-show-how-toxic-chemicals-turn-up-in-americans-blood/>

For old drugs, new tricks

The Washington Post, Tuesday, May 5, 2009

For years, the advice given for prescription disposal was to flush pharmaceuticals down the toilet or throw them in the trash. Now, with concentrations being found in drinking water supplies, the government is avoiding this advice, but offers no recourse.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/05/01/AR2009050103243.html>

EPA moves to regulate contaminated runoff from power plants

The Washington Post, Sunday, May 3, 2009

A growing body of evidence is implicating power plants of dumping the waste collected from scrubbers into water supplies. Given this new information, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is seeking to regulate the quantity of the pollutants it will allow the plants to discharge.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/05/02/AR2009050200703.html>

Doctor sounds alarm ahead of tobacco vote

The New York Times, Tuesday, May 5, 2009

Dr. David M. Burns, a pulmonologist and retired medical school professor, has released an abstract of findings that he claims demonstrates the increase in the hazard posed by cigarettes since they first received a surgeon general's warning in 1962. The abstract, which has not yet been peer-reviewed, was released prior to what may be the first congressional regulation of tobacco.

http://www.nytimes.com/2009/05/06/health/06smoke.html?_r=1

Saving face: How safe are cosmetics and body care products?

Scientific American, Tuesday, May 5, 2009

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration oversees the multi-billion dollar cosmetic industry, but lacks the ability to regulate compounds before they reach consumers. The term 'safe' is not even conventionally defined by the agency, leaving it to the discretion of the manufacturers.

<http://www.scientificamerican.com/article.cfm?id=how-safe-are-cosmetics>

Consumer Product Safety Commission: Obama names new leadership to beleaguered regulatory agency

The Chicago Tribune, Wednesday, May 6, 2009

President Obama nominated South Carolina superintendent of education Inez Moore Tenenbaum to the head of the Consumer Product Safety Commission. The agency—which oversees the safety of consumer goods including children's toys—has faced budget cuts, downsizing, and restrictions in its ability to regulate.

http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/nationworld/chi-product-safety_06may06,0,4397021.story

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Stockholm Convention meets over new ban on organic pollutants

Lagos Guardian, Monday, May 4, 2009

The Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants plans to meet to consider the banning of nine new organic chemicals, many still used in commerce.

http://www.ngrguardiannews.com/homes_property/article02/indexn2_html?pdate=040509&ptitle=Stockholm%20Convention%20meets%20over%20new%20ban%20on%20organic%20pollutants

Toxic hotspots affect 600 million in developing world

Reuters, Tuesday, May 5, 2009

Industrial waste exposure will result in the early deaths of up to 600 million people, most in the developing world, according to Richard Fuller, president of the Blacksmith Institute. The organization works to clean up polluted sites around the world, and believes that complete remediation is possible in the coming decades.

<http://www.alertnet.org/thenews/newsdesk/T132342.htm>

Amazon crude

CBS News – 60 Minutes, Sunday, May 3, 2009

Chevron is being sued as the parent company of Texaco, which Ecuadorians have claimed contaminated water in the Amazon with waste from oil drilling operations. The lawsuit, totaling \$27 billion, is the largest environmental case in terms of compensation in history.

<http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2009/05/01/60minutes/main4983549.shtml>

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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. Please visit: www.mnceh.org.