



# Toxic Times

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

News Highlights from March 18, 2009 – March 24, 2009

## MICHIGAN NEWS

### **House votes 88-20 to restrict Rx use of pesticide lindane**

*Michigan Information and Research Service, Tuesday, March 17, 2009*

On an 88-20 vote, the House passed HB 4402, legislation to limit the use of lindane to situations under a physician's supervision in his or her office. Lindane is a chemical used to treat lice infestations in people and animals. Among those speaking out passionately in favor of the bill was Rep. Rick Jones (R-Grand Ledge), who said he has seen first hand the damage lindane can cause. "There is absolutely no reason to use this product on a child," Jones said. "This is an important vote for children's health," said Ken Fletcher, Director of Government Affairs for the Michigan Nurses Association. "We applaud legislators for supporting this measure, and urge the Senate to quickly follow suit to help protect Michigan's children." The Department of Community Health does not recommend lindane use for either head lice or scabies and supports the legislation.

### **EPA official: Quicker pace for dioxin cleanup**

*The Associated Press, Thursday, March 19, 2009*

The EPA is looking for Dow Chemical Co. to increase its pace for the cleanup of a Lower Peninsula watershed that has been contaminated with dioxins since the 1980s.

<http://www.mlive.com/newsflash/michigan/index.ssf?base/business-20/1237479252242140.xml&storylist=newsmichigan>

### **Study links DDT, obesity in women**

*The Muskegon Chronicle, Friday, March 20, 2009*

New research from Michigan State University suggests that women whose mothers consumed Great Lakes fish contaminated with DDT or DDE (a byproduct of DDT decomposition) during pregnancy are at greater risk of being obese.

<http://www.mlive.com/news/chronicle/index.ssf?base/news-16/1237544111171580.xml&coll=8>

## NATIONAL NEWS

### **Flame retardant creates hyperactive mice**

*Environmental Health News, Thursday, March 19, 2009*

New research indicates that early life exposure to deca-BDE, a common flame retardant, causes hyperactivity and adjustment disorders in mice. The mental issues—believed to

be a disruption of the neurotransmitter acetylcholine—were detected at low dosages, worsened at higher doses, and became worse as individuals aged.

<http://www.environmentalhealthnews.org/ehs/newscience/flame-retardant-causes-hyper-mice/>

### **Dioxin alters ability to fight infection, mouse study finds**

*Environmental Health News*, Wednesday, March 18, 2009

According to new research, mouse pups born of mothers who were exposed to small amounts of dioxin had fewer white blood cells that fought flu infections, but had more of a type of white blood cell that caused pulmonary inflammation—a condition that researchers claim actually makes the illness more severe and hinders recovery.

<http://www.environmentalhealthnews.org/ehs/newscience/2007-aryl-hydrocarbon-receptor-during-ontogeny-of-the-immune-system-hogaboam-et-al/>

### **Toxic emissions fell in 2007, EPA says**

*The New York Times*, Thursday, March 19, 2009

According to the Environmental Protection Agency, the amount of toxic chemicals released into the environment or processed for disposal were down over the numbers in 2006.

However, exactly what was produced, the quantities, and the fate of the chemicals yields both good and bad news.

[http://www.nytimes.com/2009/03/20/science/earth/20toxic.html?\\_r=1](http://www.nytimes.com/2009/03/20/science/earth/20toxic.html?_r=1)

### **Book dealers told to get the lead out**

*The Washington Post*, Tuesday, March 24, 2009

Libraries and second-hand book retailers are asking for an exception to the newly enacted Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act. The law makes children's books printed before 1985 illegal contraband due to the possibility of lead in the ink.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/03/23/AR2009032301764.html>

### **Change is coming**

*Chemical and Engineering News*, Monday, March 16, 2009

The Toxic Substances Control Act, a law signed by President Ford in 1976, has remained relatively unaltered since its inception. Now a new political climate and backing from members of both the Senate and the House may cause drastic policy changes.

<http://pubs.acs.org/cen/government/87/8711gov3.html><http://pubs.acs.org/cen/government/87/8711gov3.html>

### **How to tell if you are poisoning yourself with fish**

*Discover*, Wednesday, March 19, 2009

By blending genetics with human environmental toxicology, scientists are looking for genetic differences that may cause some individuals to have more pronounced effects from seemingly lower doses of compounds, such as methylmercury in fish.

<http://discovermagazine.com/2009/apr/19-how-to-tell-if-you-re-poisoning-yourself-with-fish>

**Pacific ocean awash in toxic seas of plastic**

*The Japan Times*, Sunday, March 22, 2009

Plastic refuse from Asia and America is carried on Pacific currents, coalescing into enormous masses in the ocean. New studies suggest that plastics not only release, but also absorb toxins in the ocean, making exposure to these plastics even more dangerous for marine life.

<http://search.japantimes.co.jp/cgi-bin/f120090322x1.html>

**City's air quality back to square one**

*Dhaka Daily Star*, Saturday, March 21, 2009

Dhaka's air pollution had decreased since the phase-out of two-stroke vehicles in 2003. However, an increase in the number of vehicles, brick kilns, and building construction has pushed the concentrations of fine particulate matter back toward more dangerous levels.

<http://www.thedailystar.net/newDesign/news-details.php?nid=80635>

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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](http://www.mnceh.org).*