



Michigan Network for  
**CHILDREN'S**  
**Environmental**  
**HEALTH**

# Toxic Times

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

News Highlights from November 4, 2009 – November 17, 2009

## MICHIGAN NEWS

### **Legislators host toy safety event**

*Associated Online*, Thursday, November 5, 2009

Two state representatives hosted a town hall meeting on toxic toys for parents and grandparents to help them learn how to protect children from chemicals. Prolonged exposure to toxins such as mercury, arsenic, and lead can cause health and developmental problems in children. Representatives from the Ecology Center performed free testing on products to measure their chemical concentrations.

<http://www.journalgroup.com/Canton/10336/legislators-host-toy-safety-event>

### **Clean Water Action announces Great Lakes awards to Pruss, others**

*The Mudpuppy*, Wednesday, November 4, 2009

Clean Water Action, the state's largest environmental organization, announced this year's Great Lakes Awards recipients. There are eight Michiganders on the list and winners were chosen based on their commitment to renewing Michigan's economy, protecting natural resources, and reducing people's exposure to toxic chemicals.

[http://www.mlive.com/mudpuppy/index.ssf/2009/11/clean\\_water\\_action\\_announces\\_g.html](http://www.mlive.com/mudpuppy/index.ssf/2009/11/clean_water_action_announces_g.html)

### **Landlords decry ordinance forcing them to clean up lead paint**

*The Detroit News*, Thursday, October 22, 2009

A new ordinance adopted by the Detroit City Council requires the clean up of lead paint inside rental properties before they can receive annual certificates of compliance.

<http://www.detnews.com/article/20091022/METRO/910220488/Landlords-decry-ordinance-forcing-them-to-clean-up-lead-paint#at>

### **EPA settles with Detroit Co. over hazardous waste**

*The Associated Press*, Friday, October 30, 2009

Detroit based Usher Enterprises, Inc. has been ordered to spend \$700,000 by the EPA to upgrade two oil recycling facilities. The company allegedly violated hazardous waste regulations. It will also pay \$19,700 in fines.

<http://www.wlns.com/Global/story.asp?S=11414133#at>

## NATIONAL NEWS

**"Environmental protection is public health protection," —EPA chief Lisa Jackson**

*Philadelphia Environmental News Examiner*, Tuesday, November 10, 2009

At a speech in front of over 10,000 people during the opening of the annual American Public Health Association (APHA) conference in Philadelphia, EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson reviewed the history of the environmental movement in the U.S. She talked about how it began, not as a movement to protect wildlife, but as a movement to protect the public health of the citizens of the United States.

<http://www.examiner.com/x-29629-Philadelphia-Environmental-News-Examiner~y2009m11d10-EPA-chief-Lisa-Jackson-opens-American-Public-Health-Association-annual-meeting-in-Philadelphia>

### **Target, Kmart and Toys R Us agree to settle lead claims**

*Los Angeles Times*, Friday, November 6, 2009

Major retailers have agreed to pay nearly half a million dollars to settle a suit arising from their sale of toys containing high levels of lead. The products violated federal and state toy safety standards and lead recalls.

<http://www.latimes.com/business/la-fi-toys-settlement6-2009nov06,0,6735481.story>

### **Are disinfectants making you sick?**

*Philadelphia Inquirer*, Wednesday, November 11, 2009

A report released by Women's Voices for the Earth contends that disinfectants cause chronic illnesses like asthma, hormonal imbalance, and immune system problems.

Different chemicals reviewed in the report include chlorine bleach, ammonia, triclosan, as well as several others.

[http://www.philly.com/philly/blogs/greenliving/Are\\_disinfectants\\_making\\_you\\_sick\\_.html?posted=n](http://www.philly.com/philly/blogs/greenliving/Are_disinfectants_making_you_sick_.html?posted=n)

### **With dental fillings, it's a question of mercury amalgam vs. composite**

*Kennebec Journal*, Sunday, November 15, 2009

A 65-year-old woman was diagnosed with high mercury elevation from exposure through eating fish, occupation, and a mouthful of amalgam fillings, which are about half mercury. Dentists have begun to substitute composite fillings for amalgam and some states have introduced regulations to help the process along. The U.S. FDA, however, doesn't see it the same way.

<http://morningsentinel.maintoday.com/news/local/6944168.html>

### **New fears of 3M chemicals**

*Minneapolis-St. Paul Star Tribune*, Saturday, November 14, 2009

Three new studies have shown a link between 3M chemicals in human blood and high cholesterol. The studies were conducted in response to mounting evidence of health effects from Scotchgard-type chemicals that have been found in groundwater around the Twin Cities. The EPA is taking a closer look at the chemicals.

[http://www.startribune.com/local/70118237.html?elr=KArks:DCiUHc3E7\\_V\\_nDaycUiD3aPc:\\_Yyc:aUU](http://www.startribune.com/local/70118237.html?elr=KArks:DCiUHc3E7_V_nDaycUiD3aPc:_Yyc:aUU)

### **Chicago canal to be poisoned to stop Asian carp**

*The Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, Friday, November 13, 2009

Early in December more than 200 people from state and federal fisheries will poison six miles of Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal to keep Asian carp from penetrating a fish-

shocking barrier that will be temporarily shut down for maintenance. Asian carp are invasive and have been reported less than a mile from the barrier.

<http://www.jsonline.com/news/wisconsin/70000317.html>

## INTERNATIONAL NEWS

### **Plastic chemicals ‘feminize boys’**

*BBC*, Monday, November 16, 2009

A team of researchers at the University of Rochester found that males exposed to high doses of phthalates, commonly found in vinyl flooring and PVC products, while in the womb went on to be less likely to play with boys’ toys or join in on rough games.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/health/8361863.stm>

### **BPA Linked to Male Sexual Dysfunction**

*Chemical and Engineering News*, Wednesday, November 11, 2009

A study released on November 10 shows that males in China exposed to high levels of the chemical bisphenol A (BPA) had a consistently higher risk of sexual dysfunction than unexposed males. This is some of the first evidence of human health effects from BPA after animal studies suggested that BPA is an endocrine disruptor.

<http://pubs.acs.org/cen/news/87/i46/8746news6.html>

### **Cocaine, Spices, Hormones Found in Drinking Water**

*National Geographic News*, Thursday, November 12, 2009

Scientists are finding trace amounts of everything from sugar and spices, to heroine and birth control, in water bodies around the world. These chemicals could have consequences for humans and wildlife.

<http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2009/11/091112-drinking-water-cocaine.html>

### **Ponds caused Bangladesh arsenic**

*BBC*, Sunday, November 15, 2009

Researchers have finally discovered the source for the arsenic contamination found in drinking water in Bangladesh after nearly three decades of investigation. An estimated 2 million people in the country suffer from arsenic poisoning. It seems that the exposure is coming from man made ponds originally created to protect villagers from unclean water.

[http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south\\_asia/8361660.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/8361660.stm)

### **Province to ban ornamental use of pesticides**

*The Guardian*, Friday, November 13, 2009

Introduced legislation in the Canadian province of Prince Edward Island will ban a number of pesticides used on lawns and will restrict others so that they can only be used by trained operators und specific conditions. This legislation will ban 2,4-D, the most widely used herbicide in the world.

<http://www.theguardian.pe.ca/index.cfm?sid=302671&sc=98>

\*\*\*\*\*

Subscribe to the e-list of the Michigan Network for Children's Environmental Health:  
<http://www.mnceh.org/join.join.php>

Unsubscribe from Toxic Times: <http://www.mnceh.org/take.unsubscribe.toxicetimes.php>

Download Toxic Times as a pdf or view archives by visiting:  
<http://www.mnceh.org/toxicetimes/news.php>

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