

HECANET November 2005

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF ARTICLES

There was media coverage of the International Conference on Environmental Threats to the Health of Children held in Argentina this month. The Conference urged the broader dissemination of available tools to improve children's environmental health, and covered different strategies underway in the region, such as degree programmes in environmental health for paediatricians and the creation of environmental paediatric units in children's hospitals. There was also news regarding the grants awarded by US/EPA, collectively worth more than \$1 million, aimed at increasing the number of health-care professionals around the world who can address the broad spectrum of children's environmental health issues. In a related matter, responding to mounting data that primary care providers need more environmental health training to prevent, recognize and treat diseases caused by environmental exposures, new guidelines for the environmental management of pediatric asthma were issued in the US, designed to provide clinicians with user-friendly tools.

Asthma was the subject of a number of other articles ranging from an air quality study in the South Bronx, New York, which highlighted that 17% of school-age children have asthma - a rate twice the city average and three times the national average; to an article on rising asthma cases due to bad air in Malaysia and more generally in developing countries. Other articles dealt more broadly with air pollution in mega-cities of the developing world and the resultant effects on health, for example in Beijing (where the pollution index hit its highest measurement level), Hong Kong and Accra. One article highlight a large study of children in Taiwan which found those exposed to heaviest traffic pollution were 16% more likely to suffer from allergic rhinitis (hayfever, house dust allergy and the like). Meanwhile a study in California suggested that babies born to women exposed to high ozone levels during pregnancy are at risk for being underweight. A number of articles covered the health hazards for children caused by secondhand smoke (which contains more than 4,000 chemicals, including over 60 carcinogens), smoking during pregnancy and youth/teen smoking (in Yemen, Kenya and the US).

As in previous months, the majority of articles dealt with the effects of various toxics on children. One opinion piece pointed out that with potentially harmful pollutants infiltrating even a mother's womb, there appear to be few places where children can run and hide from threats to their health. Meanwhile, a scientific committee considered five new candidates to add to the initial 12 POPs targeted for reduction/elimination under the Stockholm Convention. POPs can kill people, damage nervous and immune systems, cause cancer and reproductive disorders and interfere with normal infant and child development. A number of articles covered the European Parliament legislation (REACH) which will lead to the safety testing of thousands of chemicals used in everyday products and the implications for both health and business. Other articles spotlighted toxic contamination in countries including Argentina/Uruguay, Iraq, India, US, Canada, UK and of course China – in the wake of the industrial benzene spill in the Songhua River which has subsequently spread to Russia. Numerous articles related to the costs for the environment and health of China's breakneck speed of economic development appeared as a result. One piece

concluded that China's rapid economic development has produced a life-threatening environmental crisis and that children are particularly susceptible, noting that 30,000 die annually from diarrhea due to unclean water. The Chinese Ministry of Health's Women's Health Division has linked environmental pollution to a 25% increase in birth defects recorded from 2001-2003. Other articles dealt with specific contaminants: plastics, phthalates, PCBs, PBDEs (Taiwan), asbestos (Japan and Turkey), arsenic, perchlorate, and Teflon.

There were a huge amount of articles dealing with lead – mainly from the US and dealing with lead paint and associated initiatives and legislation. A few articles addressed the phasing-out, at the end of the year, on leaded gasoline in Kenya and South Africa, with one piece noting that experts say lead reduces the intelligence of children by 4.25 points. In Africa, research has revealed that the majority of the urban population is silently suffering health problems associated with lead pollution. Another article covered the plight of Roma children that suffer lead poisoning due to the derelict mines near their camps. Meanwhile, in Australia, the serious hazard to the health of children in Port Pirie - home of the world's largest lead smelter were addressed. There were also articles on lead in water, jewelry and lunchboxes.

With regard to pesticides, the media covered the move by the WHO Roll Back Malaria Programme which unveiled a new malaria control strategy clearly endorsing the DDT use to control mosquitoes. The Stockholm POPs Convention bans agricultural use of DDT due to its harmful effects on the environment, it grants exemptions for public health purposes. Meanwhile, a study concluded that girls in a Mexican town imbedded in an agricultural zone with pesticide use have different patterns of breast development than those living nearby but with much less pesticide exposure. The media also drew attention to rules being considered in Washington State that would require pesticide applicators to notify in writing, 48 hours in advance, places like day-care centers and schools before spraying highly toxic chemicals within a half-mile and contiguous to the non-farm property. There was also coverage of the continuing use of methyl bromide for certain crops in the US, even though America has signed an international treaty banning all but the most critical uses by 2005. A teacher whose classroom borders a farm, fears her students could inhale a dangerous whiff of the fumigant as it drifts from the adjacent strawberry field.

A large number of articles continued to address the debate in the US with regard to cutting mercury emissions from coal-fired power plants. State and local air regulators unhappy with the Bush administration's approach to mercury offered a plan that would require power plants to cut mercury emissions more deeply and quickly, pointing to a study published by the NIH which found that each year, 300,000-600,000 children are born with diminished IQs due to mercury. There were also articles on mercury in vaccines and fish.

Water and sanitation covered: the squalor of makeshift camps in the earthquake ravaged parts of Pakistan, where surrounded by sewage, and without clean water, people crammed into ramshackle tents are falling prey to disease. Infants crawl on dirt floors and through puddles. But for children younger than 5, respiratory infections are the No. 1 concern; the industrial pollution threatening the Chinese city of Harbin, which cast a spotlight on the huge challenge China faces improving its water system; a cholera outbreak in West Africa; water quality in El Salvador; efforts to improve integrated water management in South America and the Caribbean; and the degradation of the world's lakes and the subsequent effects on poverty, particularly in Africa.

There were a host of articles dealing with the links between climate change and human health – particularly with the release of an [important study spearheaded by Harvard Medical School](#), Swiss Re, and UNDP, which looked at the relationship between climatic changes and the rise in malaria and asthma rates, and a University of Wisconsin-WHO study which used WHO data to review how global warming is no longer an environmental problem, but also a threat to public health. WHO estimates that climate change contributes to over 150,000 deaths and 5 million illnesses per year, a toll that could double by 2030. A study in Peru found that when El Nino boosted temperatures, hospital admissions of children with diarrhea increased exponentially.

Summaries of articles grouped under the following themes appear below, with links to their full texts:

(1) AIR POLLUTION: (a) Indoor air pollution, (b) Outdoor air pollution (c) Asthma (d) Environmental Tobacco Smoke/Smoking

(2) CHEMICALS: (a) General, (b) Lead, (c) Pesticides, (d) Mercury

(3) WATER AND SANITATION

(4) MISCELLANEOUS (a) Climate Change (b) Africa (c) Americas (d) Asia

Healthy Environments for Children Alliance (HECA) is a world-wide alliance to reduce environmental risks to children's health that arise from the settings where they live, learn, play, and sometimes work, by providing knowledge, increasing political will, mobilizing resources, and catalysing intense and urgent action.

HECANET is an international mailing list dedicated to promoting healthy environments for children. The list provides updates on the activities of the Healthy Environments for Children Alliance (HECA) and its members, as well as an overview of media coverage of children's environmental health issues and relevant meetings, research findings and information and advocacy resources.

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EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

(1) HECA Developments

The Healthy Environments for Children Alliance Secretariat and the WHO Regional Office for Africa organized an inter-regional consultation on "Improving Children's Environmental Health in Settings - Experiences and lessons for policies and action" in Entebbe, Uganda from 29 November to 2 December 2005. The purpose of the meeting was to identify and capitalize on the strengths of settings-based action to address environmental risks to children's health and to emphasize the importance of monitoring and the use of indicators for the evaluation of the effectiveness of interventions. Participants in the consultation represented Healthy Environments for Children's projects and other initiatives, such as the Global Initiative on Children's Environmental Health Indicators (CEHI) and the International Network to Promote Household Water Treatment and Safe Storage to address children's environmental health issues, from five regions of WHO. From the discussions, presentations, working group sessions, interactive workshops and site visits, participants came up with conclusions and recommendations in the following theme areas: 1) effectiveness of settings-based action in addressing environmental risks to children's health; 2) building the evidence base on effective interventions for children's environmental health; 3) good practices in addressing environmental risks to children's health in settings; 4) identifying and capitalizing on the strengths of settings-based action to address CEH; 5) building capacity and strength through linkages. The outcome will be used to move forward with HECA and other similar projects and programmes aimed at improving children's environmental health and using this to replicate and/or scale up.

For more info:

Healthy Environments for Children Alliance: <http://www.who.int/heca/en/>

International Network to Promote Household Water Treatment and Safe Storage: http://www.who.int/household_water/en/

The Global Initiative on Children's Environmental Health Indicators: <http://www.who.int/ceh/indicators/en/>

(2) Second International Conference on Children's Environmental Health: Healthy Environments Healthy Children: Increasing Knowledge and Taking Action

The Government of Argentina, the World Health Organization (WHO), the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), and the Argentine Pediatric Society (SAP) held [the Second International Conference on Children's Environmental Health \(CEH\): Healthy Environments Healthy Children: Increasing Knowledge and Taking Action](#) in Buenos Aires, Argentina from 14 to 16 November 2005, with financial support from NIEHS and USEPA. The Conference brought together experts and partners from all over the world (388 participants) including Her Royal Highness Princess Chulabhorn from Thailand. The objectives were to: (a) strengthen collaborative research; (b) increase awareness of CEH issues; (c) facilitate the sharing of experiences and (d) instigate actions to improve the environment of children in the Americas and around the world. The conference focused on science-oriented issues, research needs and capacity-building while addressing the concrete needs for action and policies at the community, country, regional and international levels. (Speakers at the conference were experts from Argentina and 15 other

countries, NGOs WHO, PAHO and UNEP.) The main outcome of the Conference was the Buenos Aires Commitment which will be finalized by the end of December 2005 and will be available on: www.who.int/ceh (The full report is under preparation).

(3) Workshop on Advances in the Use of Biomarkers in Children

The World Health Organization (WHO), the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) and the International Programme on Chemical Safety (IPCS) jointly hosted the [Workshop on Advances in the Use of Biomarkers in Children](#). This 1½ day workshop was held on November 17-18 following the global conference, Healthy Environments, Healthy Children: Increasing Knowledge and Taking Action, in Buenos Aires, Argentina. The workshop convened experts from around the world to present and discuss the scientific advances made during the past decade in the availability and improvement of biomarkers in children. It covered topics such as: The availability of biomarkers during the various development stages; Biomarkers of exposure to environmental chemicals; Discussion of biomarkers of susceptibility and effects; new technologies and their contribution to the development of new biomarkers in children; and How to incorporate biomarker data into risk assessment paradigms and risk communication. The agenda included presentations on biological tissues, major classes of chemicals and biomarkers of susceptibility and effect. It discussed the incorporation of biomarker data into risk assessment and risk communication and presented the role of new technologies in the development of biomarkers in children.

The workshop was opened by Drs. T. Damstra (WHO/PCS) and B. Sonawane (USEPA). The keynote lecture on "Exposure of Children to Benzene and PAH" was delivered by Prof. Dr. HRH, Thailand. There were 191 participants from different countries. It was very interactive, especially during the final panel discussion on promotion of collaborative research networks. The Poster Session and Reception took place on 17 November, hosted by WHO and SAP (the 27 posters accepted were discussed). (The full report is under preparation).

(4) Training Workshop on CEH for Health Care Providers

The two-day Training Workshop (12-13 November) took place at the Conference Centre of the Argentinean Pediatric Society (SAP), organized by the SAP with the International Society of Doctors for the Environment (ISDE), the International Network of Children's Health, Environment and Safety (INCHES) and two local NGOs: Asociacion Argentina de Medicos por el Medio Ambiente (AAMMA) and Sociedad Argentina de Enfermeria, with partial support of the Regione Toscana, Italy. WHO provided the training materials and technical support (a preparatory meeting took place on 11 November). The Workshop had 129 participants, including 48 from the 24 Argentinean Provinces (financed by Ministry of Health and Environment) and professionals from Argentina, Bolivia, Mexico, Sweden, Uruguay and Paraguay, with different backgrounds (paediatricians, toxicologists, family doctors, nurses, engineers, media). The following WHO modules were translated into Spanish: Why children? Children are not little adults, Lead, Mercury, Water, Indoor Air Pollution, Outdoor Air Pollution, Children and Chemicals, Pesticides, Paediatric Environmental History (and the 1st draft of Fetal Origin of Diseases). The speakers were experts from Argentina, Uruguay, Mexico and Italy.

(5) International Network on Children's Health, Environment and Safety (INCHES)

The INCHES website has moved to www.inchesnetwork.net. INCHES is currently co-ordinating the EU funded project CHEST, Children's Health, Environment and Safety Training. In this project INCHES works in close co-operation with WHO. In the project training modules are being prepared on several topics related to children's environmental health, such as air pollution, allergies, lead exposure, and consumer products. The training modules are written to be used to train medical professionals, public health professionals, but also policy makers. In addition to the preparation of these modules, the CHEST project is also making an inventory of environmental health priorities in the different countries in Europe, and the project is trying to list the institutes and organisations that are giving training on issues related to children's environmental health. A number of INCHES members are involved in writing of the modules. For all other members of INCHES and other people knowledgeable in environmental health and children INCHES requests the following: indication of what topics are most relevant for training in your country; indication of what professions are most relevant to train on environmental health in your country; and the names and addresses of the institutes you know that are currently giving training on environmental health, or fields close to environmental health. INCHES would like to cooperate with them to set up training sessions in the near future. INCHES has a form that will help its members contribute the necessary information, so please contact: INCHES, P.O. Box 163, 6950 AD Dieren, the Netherlands, or email to Peter van den Hazel.

(6) US/EPA 2006 Children's Environmental Health Excellence Awards

The Office of Children's Health Protection at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is accepting applications for the 2006 Children's Environmental Health Excellence Awards. The awards are designed to increase awareness, stimulate activity, and recognize efforts that protect children from environmental health risks at the local, regional, national, and international level. The Children's Environmental Health Excellence Award is divided into five categories. Applications may be submitted in only one category. These include: Government, Non-Governmental Organizations, Corporate, Individual, and K-12 and Higher Education. EPA will be looking for projects that significantly impact children's environmental health issues through research; indicators; capacity building; regulatory and policy innovations; education and outreach; and interventions. Applications are due December 15, 2005, and an awards ceremony will be held for the winners in Washington, D.C., in spring 2006. To download an application go to:

<http://yosemite.epa.gov/ochp/ochpweb.nsf/content/news2.htm#cehwards> For further information or to receive a hard copy of the application, call 1-202-564-2188.

(7) University of Kansas Medical Center - Mid-America Pediatric Environmental Health Specialty Unit

The University of Kansas Medical Center is the home of the EPA Region 7 PEHSU, the Mid-America Pediatric Environmental Health Specialty Unit. The PEHSU is hosting a Pediatric Environmental Hazards Conference on December 9, 2005 in Kansas City, Missouri. The conference will offer instruction in taking a pediatric environmental health history, discuss why children are particularly vulnerable to environmental hazards and where exposures take place, provide information regarding local hazardous waste sites, and explore some of the major environmental hazards to which children in our region are exposed. The keynote speaker will be Mark Miller MD, MPH, from University of California at San Francisco (one of Region 9 PEHSU sites), who has worked with Physicians for Social Responsibility to develop a Pediatric Environmental Toolkit for office physicians. To register and further information: <http://www.kuce.org/kumc/mapeh/> Phone: 1-877-404-5823

(8) Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) 8th Sustainable Development Conference (SDC - 2005)

Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) will hold its 8th Sustainable Development Conference (SDC - 2005) from 7-9 December 2005 in Islambabd. Pakistan. Technical sessions will be held on children's health and environment. SDC 2005 details are available at the [Eighth SDC](http://www.sdpi.org) web-site (www.sdpi.org).

Three pillars of the sustainable development are society, economy and environment; the "Heart" of the sustainable development is the future generation. Children represent the future of our societies, and therefore it is essential to protect the health of children and ensure that children live in safe environment, allowing them to reach their full potential. However, children happen to be the most vulnerable group to adverse health consequences of environmental factors such as polluted air, contaminated and polluted water, food and soil, radiation risks, chemicals, unhealthy housing, environmental noise, risks related to transport, and the consequences of armed conflict and environmental disasters and poverty. According to the WHO (2003) report, approximately 3 million children under the age of five years die every year due to environmental hazards. In South Asia, the average infant mortality rate (IMR) is about 70 per 1000 live childbirths (UNICEF 2000). The governments and stakeholders have a responsibility to take action to reduce the sources of chemical and other risks and prevent childhood exposure.

The Eighth SDC will look at the ways in which governments cooperate and exercise power over natural resource management (NRM) in their respective countries and in the region. The participants of the Conference will share their experiences and discuss national and regional environmental and health issues with a focus on the children's health. These, among others, include monitoring and situation evaluation of children of different age groups and toxic chemicals, preventive and educational activities for promoting safe use of chemicals and national environmental and health policies.

(9) Preventing Harm to Growing Brains: US Regional Meeting

Register now for: 'Environmental Contributors to Learning & Developmental Disabilities in Children' - January 21, 2006 - 8:00 am - 4:30 pm

Sponsored by the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy & The Learning and Developmental Disabilities Initiative of the Collaborative on Health and the Environment

A Learning and Developmental Disabilities Initiative Regional Meeting for: educators, parents, children's advocates,

researchers, policymakers, health professionals and others.

Hubert H Humphrey Institute, University of Minnesota, Cowles Auditorium, 301 19th Avenue South, Minneapolis

Keynote speakers:

- Leonardo Trasande, MD, MPP is Assistant Professor, Community & Preventive Medicine and Pediatrics at Mt. Sinai Medical Center in New York City and Assistant Director for The Mount Sinai Center for Children's Health and the Environment. He recently authored Public health and economic consequences of methyl mercury toxicity to the developing brain (EHP May, 2005).

- Ted Schettler, MD, MPH is Science Director of the Science and Environmental Health Network. Dr. Schettler is co-author of Generations at Risk: Reproductive Health and the Environment and co-author of In Harm's Way: Toxic Threats to Child Development. Dr. Schettler leads the science work group for the Collaborative on Health and Environment, CHE.

Cost & Registration: Registration fee is \$30, but scholarships are available for students and others. To register and also to request a scholarship, go to www.iatp.org/foodandhealth click on Preventing Harm to Growing Brains. Continuing Ed: Available for Nurses, Teachers. For more information: Contact Kathleen Schuler, 612-870-3468 or kschuler@iatp.org

ARTICLES

(1) AIR POLLUTION: (a) Indoor air pollution

[School buses may be unsafe for kids](#) School buses could be bad for students' health. Diesel emissions seeping into the vehicles could be overtaxing young lungs. Research has shown clear associations between diesel fumes and asthma aggravation, respiratory infections, allergies, school absences and emergency room visits. Heather Ennis. Brampton Guardian, Canada. 25 November 2005.

[Breathing easy](#) The Harford County School District learned its lesson about addressing air quality issues in its buildings after the fact. It's a message the EPA began shouting in earnest a decade ago with the release of its Indoor Air Quality Tools for Schools initiative. Christian Toto. Washington Times, District of Columbia. 14 November 2005.

["Old-world" energy in vogue](#) "We have this vision of heating with wood as being romantic," Fowler said. "There's nothing romantic about a neighborhood of densely populated homes being filled with wood smoke. There's nothing romantic about cancer. There's nothing romantic about a child having an asthma attack." Emily Heffter. Seattle Times, Washington. 27 November 2005.

(b) Outdoor air pollution

[Pollutants cause fetal growth retardation](#) A [study](#) suggests babies born to women exposed to high ozone levels during pregnancy are at risk for being underweight. "Fetal growth and birth weight are strongly linked to morbidity and mortality during childhood and adulthood," Gilliland said, "so it's clear that air quality is important to everyone's healthy development." United Press International. 17 November 2005.

[Smog Levels Raise Risk of Underweight Births](#) Environment News Service. 17 November 2005.

[Ozone level poses risk to women](#). Los Angeles Daily News, California. 22 November 2005.

[Out of breath](#) Growing ozone pollution is threatening people's health in the Pikes Peak region. A study in California found that children who grow up in areas with high concentrations of nitrogen oxide -- one of the two main components of ozone -- wind up with decreased lung function, making them more susceptible to respiratory disease. Terje Langeland. Colorado Springs Independent. 10 November 2005.

[Health Warning As Beijing Pollution Hits Worst Level](#) Beijing's pollution index hit its highest measurement level. "The effects of heavy pollution on the health are big, citizens should spend as little time doing outdoor activities as possible,

especially children, elderly or those with heart and respiratory diseases," the bureau warned. [Agence France Presse](#). 4 November 2005.

[HK air pollution keeping British businesses away](#) The British business community's main concern about setting up offices in Hong Kong is air pollution. "They would think that they themselves might be able to tolerate the air pollution in Hong Kong if they had to move to the SAR for business. But they don't want their children to suffer." Wendy Leung. [Standard](#), Hong Kong. 9 November 2005.

[Minister calls for measures to prevent air pollution](#) The Minister of Environment and Science said children and the elderly in society are among the most vulnerable to the health effects of air pollution. "In Ghana, statistics shows that the incidence of respiratory ailments ranks second among the top ten diseases in the country". Zita Ackah Nyanzu. [Abuja Daily Trust](#), Nigeria. 9 November 2005.

[Decline of Ambient Air Pollution Levels and Improved Respiratory Health in Swiss Children](#) Findings show that the reduction of air pollution exposures contributes to improved respiratory health in children. Current pollution levels still exceed limit values of the Swiss Clean Air Act; children's health can be improved further. Lucy Bayer-Oglesby et al. [Environmental Health Perspectives](#). November 2005.

[Will they never stand up to the carmakers and save our lungs?](#) A study of children in Munich showed those who lived within 50m. of busy roads were twice as likely to suffer from asthma, coughing, wheezing and allergies. A study in Taiwan of children found those exposed to heaviest traffic pollution were 16% more likely to suffer from allergic rhinitis. George Monbiot. [London Guardian](#). 1 November 2005.

[The Thinkers: Pollution expert calls for proactive approach](#) It may seem a cruel irony that one of the nation's leading experts on air pollution and health would come down with a respiratory condition, but it didn't surprise Dr. Davis, given where she grew up. "People are not accepting that the price of business as usual is more asthma for your children". Mark Roth. [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#). 28 November 2005.

[Help keep air clean this winter](#) Airborne particulate matter can enter the lungs when inhaled through the mouth, and contribute to respiratory illness. Children are particularly affected by poor air quality because they are more likely to breathe through their mouths, preventing the cilia in their noses from filtering particulates. Julie Burk. [Helena Independent Record](#), Montana. 29 November 2005.

[Breathing easier](#) It's welcome news that Gov. Ehrlich has proposed toughening regulations on Maryland's aging power plants, which are the state's largest industrial source of air pollution. This witches' brew not only damages the environment but human health as well, particularly in children and the elderly and those with asthma or heart disease. Editorial. [Baltimore Sun](#), Maryland. 22 November 2005.

[Schools, groups try to clear air for students](#) Environmental groups in North Carolina Wednesday tested the effectiveness of pollution filters installed on some of the school system's buses. It's part of a national campaign to retrofit diesel-fueled buses with emission controls. [Registration Required]. Bruce Henderson. [Charlotte Observer](#), North Carolina. 3 November 2005.

[Clean brakes for bus fleet](#) Diesel exhaust emissions from Vineland's school bus fleet will be a little cleaner following the completion of a retrofit program funded by the U.S. EPA. Diesel emissions are proven to harm air quality and often lead to increased asthma rates and respiratory problems, particularly for children, according to the EPA. [Cherry Hill Courier-Post](#), New Jersey. 6 November 2005.

[Pollution test at school](#) Teachers' complaints about bus exhaust fumes and excess carbon monoxide helped trigger an air pollution study at Central Bay Continuation School. Analysts with the pollution control district are conducting the latest study because of high particle levels previously found on campus. Clarissa Aljentera. [Monterey County Herald](#), California. 5 November 2005.

[Parents fear truck stop would put kids at risk](#) Some townspeople want to keep a proposed truck stop from going up near the elementary school. Hopp also worries that the children's health would suffer due to exposure to diesel fumes. Samantha Sieber. Bristol Herald Courier, Tennessee. 23 November 2005.

[Study implicates Fallon metal firm in cancer cluster](#) Scientific research indicates that a Fallon heavy metals firm is the source of the high concentrations of tungsten and cobalt in Fallon's air, which is linked to a leukemia cluster that has killed three of 17 children. Frank X. Mullen. Reno Gazette-Journal, Nevada. 18 November 2005.

(c) Asthma

[New Guidelines To Fill A Gap In Medical And Nursing Education And Training](#) Responding to mounting data that primary care providers need more environmental health training to prevent, recognize and treat diseases caused by environmental exposures, NEETF released [Environmental Management of Pediatric Asthma: Guidelines for Health Care Providers](#). News Release. NEETF. 3 November 2005.

[Studies target asthma impacts](#) Federal environmental officials have awarded an \$8 million grant to a Southern California research team that will try to determine how microscopic particles in air pollution can cause asthma, heart disease, low birth weight and other health problems. Kerry Cavanaugh. Whittier Daily News, California. 25 November 2005.

[S. Bronx air pollution, asthma linked - study](#) A study of air quality in the South Bronx has confirmed that the large number of highways and industrial facilities there exposes residents to more pollution than other New Yorkers. In the South Bronx, 17% of school-age children have asthma, a rate twice the city average and three times the national average. Bill Egbert. New York Daily News. 11 November 2005.

[Asthma cases up due to bad air](#) Developing nations record a low rate of asthma but a high fatality rate compared with developed countries. Health Ministry deputy director-general (public health) Datuk Dr Shafie Ooyub said 44% of asthma patients could not perform recreational or sports activities while 52% of asthmatic children could not attend school. The Star, Malaysia. 14 November 2005.

(d) Environmental Tobacco Smoke/Smoking

[EPA explains the dangers of second hand smoke on children](#) Secondhand smoke is a health hazard that contains more than 4,000 chemicals, including over 60 carcinogens. Children are particularly susceptible to secondhand smoke. Norwell Mariner, Massachusetts. 17 November 2005.

[Tobacco, Yemen's Silent Killer](#) Smoking is the second cause of death in today's world and accounts for most of the cases of cancer in Yemen. She fears that many women with cancer could have been affected by the smoking of their parents. Women needed to be well aware that smoking during pregnancy can cause miscarriage and deformity. Ameen Abduljalil. Yemen Observer. 18 November 2005.

[1.1m children addicted to smoking, says minister](#) Health minister Charity Ngilu yesterday warned that the number of smokers was increasing despite the associated health risks. The minister said the number of young people taking up smoking was worrying. Francis Openda. East African Standard, Kenya. 10 November 2005.

[New miscarriage warning over smoking](#) Women whose partners smoke heavily are at a greater risk of having a miscarriage, scientists have warned. The dangers for a woman of smoking while pregnant are well known, but previous research into how male nicotine habits affect the pregnancy have been inconclusive. Daily Mail, UK. 24 November 2005.

[Activists: Tobacco Targets Hispanic Kids](#) Anti-smoking activists are accusing the tobacco industry of increasing efforts to sell cigarettes to Hispanics, especially Hispanic youths with print ads featuring sexy young musicians. Laura Wides-Munoz.

Associated Press. 18 November 2005.

[A link between teen smoking and movies?](#) Pressure is mounting to douse the cigarettes and cigars in movies directly marketed to children. For the first time, antismoking activists can point to a national study that links on-screen smoking to tobacco use among teens. Randy Dotinga. Christian Science Monitor. 22 November 2005.

[Anti-Smoking Messages Sought in Film DVDs](#) [Registration Required]. Bloomberg News. Los Angeles Times. 17 November 2005.

[Movies inspire children to smoke](#) Liz Szabo. USA Today. 7 November 2005.

(2) CHEMICALS: (a) General

[Ped Med: keeping toxins away from kids](#) With potentially harmful pollutants infiltrating even a mother's womb, there appear to be few places where children can run and hide from threats to their health. Scientists are investigating the effects on an infant of a pregnant woman's exposure to chemicals, such as phthalates. Lidia Wasowicz. United Press International. 2 November 2005.

[New chemicals for control under POPs Convention](#) A committee will consider whether 5 candidates can join the list of 12 POPs targeted for reduction/elimination under the Stockholm Convention. POPs can kill people, damage nervous and immune systems, cause cancer and reproductive disorders and interfere with normal infant and child development. News Release. UNEP. 2 November 2005.

[China to further control persistent organic pollutants](#) China will make stronger efforts to implement the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) to protect human health. POPs are highly toxic, which may cause an array of adverse effects including death, disease and birth defects, among humans and animals. Xinhua News Agency, China. 10 November 2005.

[Euro-MPs back major chemicals law](#) The European Parliament has approved far-reaching legislation which will lead to the safety testing of thousands of chemicals used in everyday products. REACH in its original form would have led to about 30,000 substances, found in everything from cars to computers to children's toys, being tested for impacts on health and the environment. BBC. 17 November 2005.

[All about the EU chemicals reform bill REACH](#) Reuters. 17 November 2005.

[Regulating chemicals: No thanks, we're European](#) The Economist. 24 November 2005.

[E.U. chemicals deal out of REACH](#) Oxford Analytica. Forbes. 29 November 2005.

[EU Hopes To Reach Deal on Landmark Chemicals Bill Next Month](#) Associated Press. 25 November 2005.

[EU lawmakers reach compromise on chemicals bill](#) Jeff Mason. Reuters. 10 November 2005.

[The toxic child](#) Mollie Clements was dubbed the Toxic Kid after experts found 35 dangerous chemicals in her blood, but 11-year-old Mollie's case may help bring major changes in EU environment laws. Most of the chemicals are in everyday household products. They are linked to cancer, birth defects and fertility problems. Geoffrey Lakeman. London Daily Mirror, England. 19 November 2005.

[European doctors call for strict EU chemicals legislation to stem diseases](#) Europe's leading medical associations called for a strict EU legal framework for chemicals. "We are in a serious situation. Some 75 per cent of cancers are due to mutations induced by environmental factors, mainly chemicals". Associated Press. Canadian Press. 8 November 2005.

[An Economic Boon In Uruguay Becomes A Bane to Argentina](#) Argentine officials are working to block the project, arguing that the pulp factories will pollute their land with toxic runoff. "I'm worried about my son, and his children and grandchildren. The possibility that one child dies or contracts ecological illness is too much." [Registration Required]. Monte Reel.

Washington Post. 13 November 2005.

[Toxic Sites in Iraq to be Made Safe](#) Several tonnes of the acutely toxic compound, which is lethal at a dose of less than one gramme, are believed to be at the site. There is concern that children entering the Al Qadissiya Metal-plating Facility site could be exposed via the skin or by accidental ingestion. Press Release. United Nations Environment Programme. 10 November 2005.

[Iraq's Five Most Toxic Sites to Be Decontaminated](#) A polluted industrial site south of Baghdad is the first of five areas selected for cleanup by the Iraqi Ministry of Environment and UNEP following a study of Iraq's environmental hot spots. At Al Qadissiya there is concern that children entering the site could be exposed via the skin or by accidental ingestion. Environment News Service. 14 November 2005.

[U.N. Says Thousands of Contaminated Industrial and Military Sites in Iraq Need Clean Up](#) Uta Harni Schfeger, Associated Press. 11 November 2005.

[Iraq faces massive clean-up of lethal pollution](#) Agence France Presse. 10 November 2005.

[Tests reveal Mumbai's poisoned coastline](#) Tests reveal that much of Mumbai's seafront is so toxic that it is almost like the waters are poisoned. One can just about imagine the impact of this on slum children, who driven by desperation, dive for coins or anything of value thrown into the water. Yogesh Pawar. New Delhi NDTV, India. 2 November 2005.

[New Orleans' Toxic Soup Is Served Up All Over America](#) News of the 'toxic soup' in the floodwaters of New Orleans has made headlines, but this is served up daily throughout the US. Chemicals are in our air, water, fruits, vegetables, meats, fish and poultry. They're in everyday products. And now they're showing up in newborn babies. Dr. James Martin. Environment News Network. 3 November 2005.

[Study raises health questions](#) Miami children's hair tested for heavy metals. In tests of verbal learning skills, children who had been exposed both to arsenic and manganese performed poorly. The intent of the study was to see whether there was an impact on children from exposure to multiple heavy metals, other than lead. Wally Kennedy. Joplin Globe, Missouri. 18 November 2005.

[Pollution, progress doomed town](#) Eagle Mine operated for more than a century. What's left reveals the best and worst of man's marriage to nature in the Rockies. In winter, miners' kids rode toboggans down the snow-covered "mine dump," a makeshift ski run created by a pile of waste rock. They never worried if the rocks were contaminated. Jim Spencer. Denver Post. 16 November 2005.

[Activists say too many common items are hazardous](#) A flame-retardent chemical has been linked to birth defects and brain damage. Young children are at the highest risk of being harmed by dangerous chemicals because of their propensity to put things in their mouths and their weaker immune systems. Nick Reisman. Rochester Democrat and Chronicle, New York. 4 November 2005.

[Modern products may affect boys' hormones](#) Chemicals found in products ranging from plastics to cosmetics may subtly reduce testosterone production in newborn boys, a new study finds. Evidence from animal experiments suggests the toxic chemicals called phthalates are endocrine disrupting chemicals that can harm the male reproductive system. Anna Salleh. ABC News, Australia. 23 November 2005.

[In Utero Exposure to Dioxins and Polychlorinated Biphenyls and Its Relations to Thyroid Function and Growth Hormone in Newborns](#) Considering the vast existence of dioxins and PCBs and the resultant body burden in modern society, we suggest routine screening of both thyroid hormone levels and thyroid function in newborns. Shu-Li Wang et al. Environmental Health Perspectives. November 2005.

[What's in your blood?](#) Canadians are being contaminated on an ongoing basis by an array of toxic chemicals such as

pesticides, heavy metals and flame retardants, [according to a study](#). Mercury and its more potent cousin, methyl mercury, concentrates in large fish and shellfish. Mercury can cause brain damage in young children and the foetus. Joan Delaney. Epoch Times. 17 November 2005.

[Lab Tests Find 60 Toxic Chemicals in Canadians' Blood](#) Environment News Service. 15 November 2005.

['I am Canadian and I am polluted'](#) Robert Bateman. Toronto Star, Ontario. Opinion, 15 November 2005.

[Natives face other toxic dangers](#) Canadians, whether First Nation or others, should not have to live with substandard water, housing and the toxic legacy of abandoned military or industrial sites. We read the news and shake our heads over sick children, water intakes installed downstream from sewage lagoons, and an unresponsive federal government. Beatrice Olivastri. Toronto Star. 1 November 2005.

[Pollution debate born of Chemical Valley's girl-baby boom](#) Areas around Sarnia, Ont., that are heavily exposed to air pollution from chemical plants are having an unusual baby boom: unexpectedly high numbers of girls. Martin Mittelstaedt. Toronto Globe and Mail, Ontario. 15 November 2005.

[Student power](#) An environmental organization in British Columbia is calling for a student's 'Environmental Bill of Rights', to give students and parents the right to find out what toxic materials are being used in their school. Three toxic targets on the hit list: carcinogens, reproductive toxins, and endocrine disrupters. Erica Johnson. Georgia Straight, British Columbia. 12 November 2005.

[B.C. environmental group wants ban on toxic school products to protect kids](#) Canadian Press. 11 November 2005.

[Inform parents about chemical use, group says](#) [Purchase Required]. Colin Freeze. Toronto Globe and Mail, Ontario. 11 November 2005.

[Parents of 30 children sue over birth defects they blame on clean-up of toxic waste dumps](#) Mothers of 30 children born with webbed hands or webbed feet have won the right to bring a multimillion-pound legal action to try to prove a link between the mismanagement of toxic waste dumps and the birth defects. [Purchase Required]. Robert Verkaik. London Independent, England. 28 November 2005.

[Cancer risks spelled out](#) Researchers have identified nine behavioural and environmental risk factors that cause a third of cancer deaths worldwide, including urban air pollution, and indoor smoke from household use of coal. Sharon Lem. Edmonton Sun, Alberta. 28 November 2005.

[Is plastic killing us? It's a chemical controversy](#) Over a hundred studies suggest that the plastic molecule bisphenol A--used to make polycarbonate water bottles-- is linked to a staggering number of health problems, including attention deficit and hyperactivity disorder, brain damage, immune suppression, and early puberty. [Purchase Required]. Zoe Cormier. Toronto Globe and Mail. 5 November 2005.

[Panel ranks risks of common phthalate](#) The safety of DEHP has been under a cloud for a decade, and the latest analysis of health effects studies expresses some serious concerns about how the compound is used. Because of these serious concerns, the European Union has banned DEHP and a number of other phthalates in children's toys. Bette Hileman. Chemical & Engineering News. 16 November 2005.

[Cutting out phthalates](#) Alexander H. Tulo. Chemical & Engineering News. 16 November 2005.

[Early tests won't look for PCBs](#) Parents and teachers at Allendale Elementary School have been calling on state and local officials for weeks to test their school for PCBs, worried that a massive toxic dump next to the school yard could be polluting the building and its grounds. Jack Dew. Pittsfield Berkshire Eagle, Massachusetts. 17 November 2005.

[Yorktown man fights school PCBs, prompts state rules](#) A Yorktown man's crusade against PCBs in his son's school and beyond has prompted new state rules requiring public schools to test for the toxins before renovating certain buildings. Alison Bert. White Plains Journal News, New York. 27 November 2005.

[Watchdog group tells how to keep kids safe in toy season](#) Its 20th annual hazardous toy survey included playthings that are too small, too toxic or too loud to be safe for children. The group said some teething products marketed to infants contain potentially hazardous substances used to soften plastics. Angela Delli Santi. Associated Press. 23 November 2005.

[Balloons, plastic rattles top new list of toys that kill children](#) Banks Albach. Knight Ridder. 23 November 2005.

[EPA study shows high levels of toxins in fish](#) A recent study by the Taiwanese EPA has found that fish in Taiwan's rivers generally contain high levels of flame-retardant toxic chemicals. Humans are more likely to ingest more concentrated chemicals, and fat-soluble toxins, which is why there are concerns about the effects of PBDEs in humans - particularly in breast milk. Taiwan News. 8 November 2005.

[Nearly 500 schools at risk of asbestos exposure](#) According to the education ministry's report, a total of 487 public and private schools, from nursery schools to universities, and 28 areas of hospitals are at risk of exposing students, patients and staff to cancer-causing asbestos particles. Asahi Shimbun, Japan. 29 November 2005.

[Asbestos and Turkish farmers](#) Asbestos is a naturally occurring fibrous mineral - extensively used in most Western countries. It has been used for houses, and thus all living in such houses have had an environmental exposure. In fact, even small children living in such houses inhale asbestos fibres from their birth. European Respiratory Journal. Medical News Today. 1 November 2005.

[Toxic Yards: Children are at risk](#) High levels of arsenic have been found in some Omaha neighborhoods, including some day care centers where dirt tends to end up in the mouths of some children. Omaha WOWT TV, Nebraska. 9 November 2005.

[Investigative Report: Contaminant Found in Utah Milk](#) Perchlorate has seeped into drinking and river water around the country and a study in Utah has found it may be in milk. "In children their bodies are developing, their brains are developing, so there is more of a potential to have permanent long-term effects." Debbie Dujanovic. KSL Radio, Utah. 4 November 2005.

[Baby milk scare widens in Europe](#) Swiss-based food giant Nestle has ordered the recall of baby milk from France, Spain, Portugal and Italy after tests suggested chemical contamination. The alarm was raised after traces of a chemical involved in the printing process were found in samples in Italy. BBC, UK. 22 November 2005.

[Papers: Dupont hid chemical risk studies](#) DuPont hid studies showing the risks of a Teflon-related chemical used to line hundreds of food containers. Evers hoped to influence the outcome of an EPA hearing on whether DuPont had withheld from EPA the study on PFOA and possible birth defects. John Heilprin. Associated Press. 17 November 2005.

[Ex-Employee Calls DuPont Negligent](#) Juliet Eilperin. Washington Post. 17 November 2005.

(b) Lead

[Lead phase out crunch](#) Kenyan Energy minister ordered that leaded petrol will be phased out at the close of the month. Health experts say lead reduces the intelligence of children by 4.25 points. In Africa, research has revealed that the majority of the urban population is silently suffering health problems associated with lead pollution. Noel Wandera. East African Standard, Kenya. 15 November 2005.

[It is Not Easy to Go Lead-Free in Africa](#) James Momanyi. The Nation, Nairobi. 15 November 2005.

[The days of leaded fuel are numbered](#) Africa finally joins the rest of the world in phasing out leaded petrol from January 1.

"Leaded fuel is very damaging to the environment, but more than that, it affects a person's health. It affects malnourished children and can severely damage the brain or cause cancer." Rivonia Naidu. [Durban Daily News](#), South Africa. 26 November 2005.

[Poisoned children](#) Deadly poison comes from the slag heaps that waft clouds of lead-laden dust into the air, water and soil. In three bleak settlements that lack heat or indoor plumbing, Roma children have high levels of lead in their bloodstreams, causing stunted growth, mental retardation and paralysis. [Registration Required]. Olivia Ward. [Toronto Star](#), Ontario. 13 November 2005.

[Poor home buyers blamed over lead](#) The owner of the Port Pirie smelter has been accused of shifting the blame for high levels of lead in children on to poor families buying homes near the 116-year-old plant. Andrew Trounson and Jeremy Roberts. [Sydney Australian](#), Australia. 28 November 2005.

[Expert warned 20 years ago of Port Pirie lead danger](#) Tom Richardson. [Sydney Australian](#), Australia. 2 November 2005.

[Fighting back](#) Faced with the highest lead poisoning rates in the nation, a Peoria doctor wants mandated lead screening for every child in the county. Dr. Brian Bostwick knows the neurological complications with lead poisoning. He is shattering the silence and advocating for radical change in public policy. Clare Howard. [Peoria Journal Star](#), Illinois. 15 November 2005.

[City of danger](#) Clare Howard. [Peoria Journal Star](#), Illinois. 14 November 2005.

[Protective measures](#) Clare Howard. [Peoria Journal Star](#), Illinois. 14 November 2005.

[Why Peoria?](#) [Peoria Journal Star](#), Illinois. 14 November 2005.

[Area plants emit lead](#) Elaine Hopkins. [Peoria Journal Star](#), Illinois. 14 November 2005.

[UR researcher explores lead's insidious effects](#) As local leaders struggle to reduce Rochester children's exposure to lead, local scientists are learning that the pollutant can harm the body in countless subtle ways. Misty Edgecomb. [Rochester Democrat and Chronicle](#), New York. 23 November 2005.

[Lead in the city: Federal and state officials should do more to clean it up](#) Lead paint was outlawed in Europe in the early 1900s. Despite evidence that lead paint causes irreparable brain and organ damage in young children, U.S. leaders waited until 1978 to prohibit its use. Editorial. [Rochester Democrat and Chronicle](#), New York. 22 November 2005.

[Limiting the risk](#) Lead poisoning is far more likely to come from exposure to lead paint than lead in drinking water, but infants and young children are typically more vulnerable to lead than the general population and could experience delays in their physical or mental development if they are exposed to high lead levels. [Boston Globe](#), Massachusetts. 17 November 2005.

[Democrat says he will block EPA nominees](#) Sen. Barack Obama said he will block Bush nominees to key positions in the EPA until it issues long-overdue regulations limiting people's exposure to lead paint from house remodeling. Nearly 5 million households carry the risk of lead exposure. About 1.4 million children under the age of 7 could be affected. John Heilprin. [Associated Press](#). 5 November 2005.

[Sen. Obama takes a stand on lead paint regulations](#) Dori Meinert. [Copley News Service](#). 5 November 2005.

[EPA promises lead-remodeling regulation](#) EPA would propose regulations by the end of the year to limit people's exposures to lead paint during home remodeling. "Too many children have needlessly suffered from lead-paint poisoning, and we've already waited far too long to take action to protect them," Obama said. John Heilprin. [Associated Press](#). 8 November 2005.

[Toxic dangers](#) Susan Thornfeldt knows firsthand what chemical exposure can do to a child, because her baby boy was exposed to lead dust. They unintentionally exposed their baby boy to lead dust when they renovated their home in Portland. She said they didn't use safe practices when they sanded lead-based paint off the interior walls. Mechel Cooper. [Kennebec](#)

Journal, Maine. 2 November 2005.

[Lead Poisoning Dangers](#) A hidden danger may still lurk in your home decades after it was banned. Lead can poison your kids from some very unlikely sources. Lead paint can seep into the soil and chip off window sills. Once kids touch those areas and put their hands in their mouths the contamination begins and it doesn't take much. Erin Leach. Mason City KMIT TV, Iowa. 28 November 2005.

[Tenants win 950G lead paint award](#) A Bronx landlord has agreed to pay \$950,000 to siblings who suffered brain damage and had to be placed in special education classes after being exposed to toxic lead paint in their apartment. Chrisena Coleman. New York Daily News, New York. 23 November 2005.

[Half of state's houses contain lead-based paint, Nolan testifies](#) Former state Health Director Patricia Nolan testified yesterday that she believes about half the houses in Rhode Island -- roughly 230,000 to 250,000 units -- are still coated with lead-based paints that can poison children even when tiny quantities are ingested. Peter B. Lord. Providence Journal, Rhode Island. 15 November 2005.

[Ex-health director testifies in R.I. lead paint case](#) [Registration Required]. Eric Tucker. New London Day, Connecticut. 29 November 2005.

[Nolan questioned on hazards of lead paint](#) [Registration Required]. Brandie Jefferson. Providence Journal, Rhode Island. 29 November 2005.

[Nurse testifies to lead experience](#) [Registration Required]. Brandie Jefferson. Providence Journal, Rhode Island. 11 November 2005.

[Witness testifies that lead paint will deteriorate](#) [Registration Required]. Peter B. Lord. Providence Journal, Rhode Island. 8 November 2005.

[Lead poisoning expert testifies in lead paint lawsuit](#) Eric Tucker. Associated Press. 4 November 2005.

[Paint companies: Lead no longer a 'crisis'](#) [Registration Required]. Brandie Jefferson. Providence Journal, Rhode Island. 3 November 2005.

[Opening statements begin in state's lead paint lawsuit](#) Eric Tucker. Associated Press. 2 November 2005.

[Grant pays for lead paint safety in Hennepin county](#) Hennepin County has received a \$3.8 million grant to protect homes and families from the dangers of lead paint. Catherine Jordan, executive director of the Children, Youth and Family Consortium, encouraged regular hand-washing and house-cleaning to help prevent inhalation of lead. Kevin McCahill. Twin Cities Minnesota Daily. 9 November 2005.

[R.I.'s long-delayed lead-hazard law takes effect today](#) After three years, two postponements, one lawsuit and countless compromises, the lead-hazard mitigation law goes into effect today. In June 2002, the General Assembly passed the law intended to reduce the number of children poisoned by lead paint. [Registration Required]. Brandie Jefferson. Providence Journal, Rhode Island. 1 November 2005.

[Progress On Lead Rules?](#) In 1978, the U.S. banned lead-based paint because kids exposed to it developed learning disabilities, but lead paint remains in some older homes, and rules to deal with it have been in limbo for thirteen years. Shawn Allee. Great Lakes Radio Consortium. 14 November 2005.

[New state campaign highlights concerns over lead poisoning](#) More than 50% of houses in New Jersey were built before lead-based residential paint was federally banned in 1978. The Lead Safe NJ campaign aims to eliminate childhood lead poisoning in New Jersey by 2010. Hilary Parker. Princeton Packet, New Jersey. 25 November 2005.

[State sees lead paint as a solvable problem](#) Tom Hester. Newark Star-Ledger, New Jersey. 23 November 2005.

['A cause for concern' professionals worry about lead's affect on kids](#) More often than not, weekly tests for lead in children in

the north end of Bellows Falls, VT come back positive. Howard Weiss-Tisman. [Brattleboro Reformer](#), Vermont. 5 November 2005.

[No teeth in state's lead abatement law](#) Howard Weiss-Tisman. [Brattleboro Reformer](#), Vermont. 5 November 2005.

[Guilford County Passes Tight Rules On Lead Poisoning](#) Doctors in Guilford County will be required to test all children under the age of 6 for lead poisoning and children enrolling in child-care facilities will need to show proof they have been tested under strict regulations passed by the county this week. [Associated Press](#). 24 November 2005.

[County acts strongly to protect children](#) Editorial. [Greensboro News & Record](#), North Carolina. 23 November 2005.

[Lead tests required for all kids in Guilford](#) Elyse Ashburn. [Greensboro News & Record](#), North Carolina. 22 November 2005.

[Getting the lead out](#) The Utah Department of Health reports that in 2004, about 50 children out of more than 3,800 who had their blood tested had elevated levels of lead in their bloodstreams. Tyler Peterson. [Salt Lake Tribune](#), Utah. 29 November 2005.

[Lead-poisoning tests offered for more children in the city](#) New Jersey Health Commissioner Fred M. Jacobs agreed last night to perform additional lead testing on Camden's school-age children if parents request it. [Registration Required]. Dwight Ott. [Philadelphia Inquirer](#), Pennsylvania. 30 November 2005.

[Lead Poisoning Prevention Coalition focused on goals](#) The Vigo County Lead Poisoning Prevention Coalition remains focused on its goals, its co-founder says. There are ongoing efforts on such matters as determining the magnitude of the problem through testing, and building a statewide database of children's exposure. Peter Ciancone. [Terre Haute Tribune Star](#), Indiana. 1 November 2005.

[Get the lead out of A-B's water](#) A-B and the rest of Boston have some of the most dangerous levels of lead in the water of any city in the United States. Our reporter did a great job this week finding a mom whose 19-month-old sign is fighting the first signs of lead poisoning. Editorial. [Burlington Union](#), Massachusetts. 25 November 2005.

[Concerns raised on lead levels](#) Tap water in 4,500 Boston properties flows through aging lead pipes that could be exposing city residents to higher lead levels than is allowed by federal law. Children are particularly sensitive to the effects of lead, which can reduce IQ and cause a host of other developmental problems. Beth Daley. [Boston Globe](#), Massachusetts. 17 November 2005.

[It's good to see DHEC come clean about Franklin Park](#) The Department of Health and Environmental Control has finally admitted it could have done more to alert a Lower Richland community about lead in some homes' drinking water. Lead can be deadly: It can cause brain damage in young children. Editorial. [Fort Wayne News-Sentinel](#). 2 November 2005.

[Kids Lunchboxes Test Positive For Lead](#) Debate Rages About Dangers. Your child may be consuming lead for lunch, according to recent tests that found high levels of lead in children's lunchboxes. Lisa Drayer. [CBS 2](#), New York. 28 November 2005.

[Lunchboxes may pack peril](#) Misty Edgecomb. [Rochester Democrat and Chronicle](#), New York. 30 November 2005.

[Lunch box maker strikes deal with N.Y.](#) Michael Gormley. [Associated Press](#). 30 November 2005.

[Spitzer takes on lead in lunchboxes](#) Nick Reisman. [Gannett News Service](#). 30 November 2005.

[Peanut butter, chips, juice -- and lead?](#) Amy Hsuan. [Portland Oregonian](#), Oregon. 27 November 2005.

[Testing Lunch Boxes For Lead](#) [Lubbock KCBT TV](#), Texas. 22 November 2005.

[Lunch-box concerns](#) Candace Murphy. [Oakland Tribune](#), California. 1 November 2005.

[Kids' jewelry recalled for lead risk](#) About 6 million children's metal necklaces and zipper pulls are being recalled for safety

reasons, the government said Wednesday. Stravina Operating Co. of Chatsworth, Calif., is recalling the products, which pose a serious risk of lead poisoning to young children, the Consumer Product Safety Commission said in a statement. [CNN](#). 30 November 2005.

(c) Pesticides

[WHO to push DDT use in new malaria fight](#) WHO Roll Back Malaria Programme will unveil a new malaria control strategy clearly endorsing the DDT use to control mosquitoes. The Stockholm POPs Convention bans agricultural use of DDT due to its harmful effects on the environment, it grants exemptions for public health purposes. Tamar Kahn. [Business Day](#), South Africa. 8 November 2005.

[How DDT can stop millions of malaria deaths](#) One of the best ways of controlling malaria is to use DDT. Every year, over half-a-billion people suffer agonising pains and fevers because of malaria. In Africa, someone - normally a child - dies every 30 seconds from this disease, causing grief, suffering and economic stagnation. Richard Tren/Philip Coticelli. [Johannesburg Mail & Guardian](#). 9 November 2005.

[Let DDT take care of malaria scourge](#) Philip Coticelli & Richard Tren. [Business Day](#), South Africa. 8 November 2005.

[Altered Breast Development in Young Girls from an Agricultural Environment](#) Girls in a Mexican town imbedded in an agricultural zone with pesticide use have different patterns of breast development than those living nearby but with much less pesticide exposure. Elizabeth Guillette, et. al. [Environmental Health Perspectives](#). 10 November 2005.

[Biologic Monitoring to Characterize Organophosphorus Pesticide Exposure among Children and Workers](#): An Analysis of Recent Studies in Washington State. Metabolite levels of children living in agricultural communities were elevated during periods of crop spraying. Richard Fenske et. al. [Environmental Health Perspectives](#). November 2005.

[Human Experimentation: EPA's Flawed Proposal](#) More resources should be dedicated to biomonitoring of the existing pesticide body burdens of workers who are exposed to pesticides in their jobs; pregnant women, children, and elders; and persons with potentially suppressed immune systems. PANUPS. [Pesticide Action Network North America](#). 29 November 2005.

[Cultivating our Youth's Environmental Awareness](#) Reseource Pointer – such as: The Little Green Schoolhouse: Thinking Big about Ecological Sustainability, Children's Environmental Health and K-12 Education in the USA, 2005. PANUPS. [Pesticide Action Network North America](#). 8 November 2005.

[Hot on Parkinson's trail](#) Scientists have amassed evidence that long-term exposure to toxic agents, especially pesticides, can unleash the disease in some people. Over 1 billion pounds of herbicides, insecticides and other pest-killing chemicals are used in the US. Nearly all adults and children tested have traces of multiple pesticides in their bodies. Marla Cone. [Los Angeles Times](#). 27 November 2005.

[A poisonous price for harvests](#) The U.S. keeps permitting the use of methyl bromide for certain crops, even though it has signed an international treaty banning all but the most critical uses by 2005. A teacher whose classroom borders a farm, fears her students could inhale a dangerous whiff of the fumigant as it drifts from the adjacent strawberry field. Rita Beamish. [Associated Press](#). 28 November 2005.

[State should forge compromise to reflect growers' concerns](#) The rule would require pesticide applicators to notify in writing, 48 hours in advance, places like day-care centers and schools before spraying highly toxic chemicals within a half-mile and contiguous to the nonfarm property. Child day-care centers also would have to be notified. [Yakima Herald Republic](#), Washington. Editorial, 22 November 2005.

[Proposal designed to halt pesticide drift](#) Leah Beth Ward. [Yakima Herald Republic](#), Washington. 5 November 2005.

[Pesticide debate heats up](#) Leah Beth Ward. Yakima Herald Republic, Washington. 8 November 2005.

[Pesticide application warning proposed](#) Shannon Dininny. Associated Press. 7 November 2005.

[Plaintiffs Win Damages in Pesticide Suit](#) Residents near Arvin who sued after being poisoned by a soil fumigant 3 years ago will share \$775,000. Serna, the mother of an 8-year-old son, also expressed concern about possible negative effects to her reproductive system. She said she had miscarried two babies within the past two years. Ann Simmons. Los Angeles Times, California. 25 November 2005.

[Spray ban hailed by leaders](#) Pesticide bylaw proponents gathered at City Hall to throw their weight behind a proposed bylaw to ban cosmetic use of pesticides everywhere in the city. Former Hudson mayor Michael Elliott said his municipality adopted the ban after several children complained of rashes and breathing problems. [Purchase Required]. Derek Puddicombe. Ottawa Sun. 9 November 2005.

[Families of Consumers and Farmworkers Benefit from Organic](#) CDC data indicates that we carry an average of 13 pesticides in our bodies, some can cause cancer, disrupt hormones, decrease fertility, cause birth defects, and weaken our immune systems. Concentrations of these pesticides often exceed levels considered safe. PANUPS. Pesticide Action Network North America. 22 November 2005.

[Organic food on parents' grocery lists](#) An increasing number of parents buy organic food to keep their children's diets free of food grown with pesticides, hormones, antibiotics or genetic engineering. Julie Davidow and Libby Quaid. Seattle Post-Intelligencer, Washington. 24 November 2005.

[An Organic Cash Cow Milk](#) [Purchase Required]. Kim Severson. New York Times. 9 November 2005.

[Parents with pesticide fears turn to organic baby food](#) Associated Press. USA Today. 3 November 2005.

(d) Mercury

[Regulators Push for Mercury Pollution Cuts](#) State and local air regulators unhappy with the Bush administration's approach to mercury offered a plan that would require power plants to cut mercury emissions more deeply and quickly. Mercury poses the greatest risk of nerve damage to pregnant women, women of childbearing age and young children. John Heilprin. Associated Press. 15 November 2005.

[State, Local Air Officials Urge Rapid Mercury Emissions Cuts](#) Environment News Service. 15 November 2005.

[Groups Propose Alternative to E.P.A. Rules on Mercury](#) [Purchase Required]. Michael Janofsky. New York Times. 14 November 2005.

[The battle over mercury](#) Congress, the Bush administration and industry are content with taking a leisurely approach to cutting mercury emissions from coal-fired power plants. But local and state air-pollution agencies aren't. A study published by the NIH found, each year, 300,000-600,000 children born with diminished IQs due to mercury. Editorial. Sarasota Herald-Tribune, Florida. 16 November 2005.

[Exposing dangers of mercury](#) If anything, news in recent years has generated even more worries about the dangers posed by mercury, particularly to children and pregnant women. Tighter mercury standards will arm citizens with the knowledge they need to protect themselves and their children. [Registration Required]. Editorial. Birmingham News, Alabama. 18 November 2005.

[Mercury rules not easy to set](#) Mercury is dangerous stuff; on that there is little dispute. But there is far less unanimity on how best to assess its impact in Alabama, set proper standards and regulate it. Mercury presents neurological health risks and can contribute to birth defects as well as damage to the brain, kidney and lungs. Editorial. Montgomery Advertiser, Alabama. 15 November 2005.

[Reins on mercury may tighten](#) Katherine Bouma. Birmingham News, Alabama. 14 November 2005.

[Officials base mercury plan on N.J.'s stricter standards](#) Calling the Bush administration's pollution plan "woefully inadequate," state and local clean air officials proposed their own way to cut mercury emissions that endanger children around the country. Alex Nussbaum. Bergen County Record, New Jersey. 15 November 2005.

[N.H. mercury](#) New Hampshire has a mercury problem. In human beings, mercury can cause nerve damage. It affects cardiovascular and immune systems. It can cause permanent memory and language problems in children. It has been linked to autism. Editorial. Keene Sentinel, New Hampshire. 27 November 2005.

[Mercury reduction deal isn't good enough](#) Any reduction in pollution, particularly with a toxin like mercury, is a plus. EPA found 1 in 6 American women of childbearing age had enough mercury in her blood to put her babies at risk of neurological problems, developmental delays and learning disabilities. That has a social and financial cost. Editorial. Concord Monitor, New Hampshire. 14 November 2005.

[Nevada tightens mercury controls](#) Requiring compliance: Move aims to reduce pollution that seeps into Utah and other states. Methyl mercury builds up in the food chain. In high concentrations, it can cause neurological damage. Officials suggest limiting consumption of certain fish, especially by women of child-bearing age, babies and young children. Judy Fahys. Salt Lake Tribune, Utah. 23 November 2005.

[Mercury rising?](#) Mercury is a pollutant that causes neurological damage in humans and poses an elevated threat to pregnant women and infants. Idaho has no major sources of mercury emissions -- a fact that has raised a lot of questions among the state agencies and environmentalists even though mercury can occur naturally in soil. Michelle Dunlop. Twin Falls Times-News, Idaho. 6 November 2005.

[Group urges PPG to stop mercury use](#) An environmental group is asking PPG Industries and others use mercury to switch to technologies that do not use the neurotoxin, which causes developmental problems in children. A mercury level of 5.8 parts per billion in umbilical cord blood is enough to lower a child's IQ, according to studies. Allison Heinrichs. Pittsburgh Tribune-Review. 23 November 2005.

[Newberry mercury rising](#) Florida Rock Industries' proposed expansion would eventually earn it the dubious distinction of being Alachua County's biggest source of mercury pollution. Mercury can accumulate in fish and has been linked to health problems such as learning disabilities in children. Nathan Crabbe and Amy Reinink. Gainesville Sun, Florida. 13 November 2005.

[The Age of Autism: Flu shot flashpoint](#) It's flu shot season, and that simple fact is sharply focusing the debate over a possible link between vaccines and autism. The reason: Most flu shots contain thimerosal, the mercury-based preservative that some suspect caused a huge rise in autism cases beginning in the 1990s. Dan Olmsted. United Press International. 20 November 2005.

[Feuding Over Vaccines](#) Many pediatricians are troubled by persistent myths on the Internet, e.g., that mercury used as a preservative in childhood vaccines causes autism, and that there is a conspiracy by drug companies, doctors and vaccine makers. [Registration Required]. Sandra G. Boodman. Washington Post. 8 November 2005.

[Consumers Can Test for Mercury in Fish](#) Charles Santerre, a food toxicologist at Purdue University, analyzed over 250 cans of tuna, salmon, and mackerel for mercury. According to reports from the U.S. government and environmental groups, certain fish contain high levels of mercury, a toxic element that can cause brain damage, especially to fetuses. Paige Kollock. Voice of America. 30 November 2005.

[Contaminación con mercurio](#) La humanidad usa el mercurio desde hace 2000 años. Ya es bastante conocido que el contacto con la piel y su ingestión ocasiona afecciones leves y graves a la salud humana, al ambiente, a la fauna acuática. El timerosal

es un conservante potencialmente tóxico, especialmente durante los primeros 6 meses de vida. Julio Alexander. [Argentina Indymedia](#). 7 November 2005.

(3) WATER AND SANITATION

[China's murky waters](#) An alert about industrial pollution threatening the Chinese city of Harbin has cast the spotlight on the huge challenge China faces improving its water system. The Chinese government estimates 360 million people lack access to safe drinking water and 70% of rivers and lakes are polluted, more than 100 cities suffer from extreme water shortages. Nick Mackie. [BBC](#). 23 November 2005.

[Water Plentiful, But Contaminated in El Salvador](#) El Salvador isn't a place where you'd expect to find water problems. After all, it gets nearly six feet of rainfall each year. But clean water is in short supply. Contaminated water kills thousands of Salvadorans every year. Most are children. Jon Hamilton. [National Public Radio](#). 1 November 2005.

[UN launches \\$3.2 million flash appeal to prevent spread of cholera in Africa](#) Faced with an alarming wave of cholera that swept across the West Africa sub-region this summer, the UN launched an appeal to prevent further spread of the debilitating and fatal disease stemming from contaminated water and inadequate sanitation. [UN Integrated Regional Information Networks](#). 7 November 2005.

[Ministers Call for Integrated Management of Water](#) Latin American/Caribbean environment ministers underlined the need for integrated management of water resources to extend water services to millions of families. Special care is needed to prevent exposure to harmful chemicals by vulnerable groups such as children, pregnant women. Humberto Márquez. [Inter Press Service](#). 4 November 2005.

[Experts Say Lakes Ruined By Poverty](#) Degrading lakes has created extreme poverty. This leads poor people to further degradation of the lakes, perpetuating a cycle of poverty and degradation, the 11th World Lakes Conference in Nairobi was told. Lucas Barasa. [The Nation](#), Nairobi. 2 November 2005.

[Tainted Water Spotlights Canada Aboriginal Crisis](#) Six-year-old Kenneth Stephen is so afraid of water that he cried when he had to shower at the community center in this Canadian mining town where scores from his Cree reserve were evacuated to escape tainted water. Sue Thomas. [Reuters](#). 2 November 2005.

[Pollution in Periyar creating health hazards](#) Those residing on the banks of the polluted Periyar are prone to several fatal diseases, including cancer and genetic disorders. The after effects of uncontrolled fertiliser applications are dangerous diseases like 'blue baby disease,' seen in tots aged below six months. [Registration Required]. [New India Press](#), India. 28 November 2005.

(4) MISCELLANEOUS

[Paediatricians Turn Spotlight on Environmental Risks](#) How many childhood respiratory problems are related to the fuel used in homes for cooking? How many cases of diarrhoea are the result of drinking contaminated water? How can we detect the relationship between potential exposure to lead and learning problems in school? Marcela Valente. [Tierramérica](#). 23 November 2005.

[US Grants Aim to Stop Environment-Related Children's Diseases](#) The U.S. EPA has awarded [seven grants](#), collectively worth more than \$1 million, aimed at increasing the number of health-care professionals around the world who can address the broad spectrum of children's environmental health issues. Eric Green. [Nairobi Nation](#), Kenya. 3 November 2005.

[EPA Gives \\$1 Million in Grants to Improve Children's Environmental Health](#) EPA has awarded [seven grants](#) totaling \$1,042,152 to help increase the number of physicians, nurses and public health workers able to address the broad spectrum of children's environmental health issues. News Release. [US Environmental Protection Agency](#). 2 November 2005.

[Hunger kills '6m children a year'](#) No developing region is on track to meet the international goal of reducing the number of hungry people by half, a UN agency has warned. Nearly six million children die from hunger or malnutrition every year - many deaths result from treatable diseases such as diarrhoea, pneumonia, malaria and measles, FAO says. BBC. 22 November 2005.

[Human health and nature conservation](#) The therapeutic implication of biophilia is ecotherapy: restoring health through contact with nature. Partnerships between healthcare providers and nature organisations to share and exchange expertise could create new policies that recognise the interdependence between healthy people and healthy ecosystems. Editorial. British Medical Journal. 25 November 2005.

(a) Climate Change

[Climate shift tied to 150,000 fatalities](#) Earth's warming climate is estimated to contribute to over 150,000 deaths and 5 million illnesses per year, according to WHO, a toll that could double by 2030. A study in Peru found that when El Nino boosted temperatures, hospital admissions of children with diarrhea increased exponentially. [Registration Required]. Juliet Eilperin. Washington Post. 17 November 2005.

[Global warming harms health in poor countries: study](#) CBC Canada. 18 November 2005.

[Climate change map reveals countries most under threat](#) [Purchase Required]. Steve Connor. London Independent, England. 17 November 2005.

[Climate change will hit least polluting countries hardest](#) Ian Sample. London Guardian, England. 17 November 2005.

[Human toll calculated for climate shift](#) Susanne Rust. Milwaukee Journal Sentinel. 17 November 2005.

[Global warming poses an 'ethical challenge'](#) Patricia Reaney. Cape Argus Independent, South Africa. 17 November 2005.

[UW report highlights global warming deaths](#) David Wahlberg. Madison Wisconsin State Journal, Wisconsin. 17 November 2005.

[Global warming hitting Third world harder than the West](#) Asian News International. 17 November 2005.

[Transitional countries best at reducing greenhouse gases](#) The negative health effects of increased emissions has also been recognised as an important consideration by WHO, which blames up to 150 000 deaths and 5 million illnesses each year on increasing global temperatures and warns that the figure is likely to double by the year 2030. British Medical Journal. 25 November 2005.

[Climate Change Is Hazardous To Your Health](#) Climate change is already having a less conspicuous impact on humans and the natural systems upon which we depend. Particles (and microbes) in dust clouds from Africa settle into the lungs of children in Florida and on Caribbean islands in which asthma rates have risen twentyfold in the past several decades. Paul Epstein/Evan Mills. Forbes. 16 November 2005.

[Ripples of Global Warming Spread Outward](#) Human health and the earth's ecosystems are increasingly threatened by climate change. [Epstein says malaria](#) has become the most dangerous disease following natural disasters, because warming and extreme weather spur the breeding cycles of mosquitoes. Malaria is killing 3,000 African children every day. Barbara Litzlbeck. IPS. 4 November 2005.

[Climate change will significantly hurt human health: study](#) Xinhua. People's Daily, China. 2 November 2005.

[Climate Change Linked to Rise in Malaria, Asthma](#) Timothy Gardner. Reuters. 2 November 2005.

[Climate Change Undeniably Real, Caused By Human Activities](#) On the one hand, promises were made to increase aid and support development in Africa, while on the other hand the lack of agreement on curbing greenhouse gas emissions means that increasing amounts of aid will be spent on tackling the consequences of climate change. Lord Robert May. Environment News Service. 28 November 2005.

[Understanding freaky weather, its effects](#) India, according to the Nature journal, is one of the regions at the highest risk for enduring the health effects of climate change. Global warming hastens the spread of infectious diseases such as malaria and dengue; two of the most common scourge suffered flood-hit areas. Gemmarie Venkataramani. [Chennai News Today](#), India. 28 November 2005.

[Brazil's Amazon region suffering worst drought in 40 years](#) Scientists say the drought is part of a climatic shift that's overturned the lives of millions around the Western Hemisphere this year. Malaria has proliferated as rivers have become stagnant pools. Environmentalists said several children already had died from common diseases aggravated by the drought. Jack Chang. [Knight Ridder](#). 3 November 2005.

[Climate change fires young minds](#) When politicians from around the world meet next week to talk about climate change, young people who will have to live with the consequences of their action or inaction will be nearby, ready to speak out. "The dangers of not acting are becoming increasingly apparent for our health, our environment, our security and our prosperity." Jeff Coelho. [Reuters](#). 25 November 2005.

(b) Africa

[Malaria risk 'depends on house'](#) Living conditions may significantly increase a child's risk of malaria attacks, a study has suggested. Researchers found household differences in a Kenyan village accounted for around a third of the variations in attack rates. Prevention methods such as insecticide treated nets and environmental measures had been shown to protect against malaria infection. [BBC](#). 8 November 2005.

[Drought Magnifies Hunger, Suffering of Children in Malawi](#) A drought across six southern African countries has left 12 million people hungry this year, according to the UN. When the rain comes, there is enough food, but only barely in a country where nearly half of all children suffer from stunted growth. [Registration Required]. Craig Timberg. [Washington Post](#). 4 November 2005.

[Drought Deepens Poverty, Starving More Africans](#) Michael Wines. [New York Times](#) 2 November 2005.

[Lagos Seals Up Rubber Recycling Firm Over Pollution Threat](#) Authorities in Nigeria's economic capital Lagos have sealed up a rubber recycling firm following complaints of environmental pollution by residents, officials said. Public schools and offices were ordered closed on October 12 when mystery fumes enveloped some parts of the city. [Agence France-Presse](#). 2 November 2005.

(c) Americas

[Queens part of landmark study on health and environment](#) Want to know how pesticides in food and chemicals in plastics could affect your child's health? And how might genetics, physical activity and your own exposure to environmental factors influence this? Queens is part of a national study on how the environment affects development. Ron Brownlow. [Queens Chronicle](#), New York. 24 November 2005.

[Childhood diseases cost state](#) Childhood diseases from pollution cost Montana more than \$400 million a year, according to a 2005 report released this week. This year is the first that the report addresses the costs of health care related to environmental factors. Keila Szpaller. [Great Falls Tribune](#), Montana. 4 November 2005.

[Health risks in wake of storm hard to gauge](#) Is it safe yet to live and work in flood-stricken areas? Over 10 weeks after Hurricane Katrina, the answer remains unclear. "Mothers and fathers trying to make a decision: Should we come back with our small children? People are asking life-and-death questions-EPA is hiding from answering it." Matthew Brown. [New Orleans Times-Picayune](#). 11 November 2005.

[Environmental justice and The Big Flush](#) Race has been shown to be an independent predictor distinct from social class, cultural values, environmental attitudes, and other factors regarding exposure to air pollution, lead poisoning in children, and location near municipal landfills, incinerators and abandoned toxic waste dumps. Mike Ellerbrock. [Roanoke Times](#), Virginia. 9 November 2005.

[N.J. officials promise action on pollution](#) 2 NJ officials held a meeting on pollution concerns in Camden. Lula Williams held up her 3-year-old granddaughter Vera McWhite, saying she believes pollution has delayed the child's development. A draft plan outlines measures to address air pollution, contaminated soil and health problems. Jim Walsh. [Cherry Hill Courier-Post](#), New Jersey. 30 November 2005.

[The devastating costs of Appalachian coal](#) Gunnoe described a devastating flood likely caused by the strip-mined land on top of the mountain. However, the coal company refuses to accept any responsibility for the damage. She worried about the health of her children who lived so close to the polluted waters. Joan Kark. [New River Valley Current](#), Virginia. Opinion, 22 November 2005.

[Connecting the dots](#) For the last decade, WVE has sought to add women's voices to the chorus that's speaking out about environmental health concerns. Frame environmental concerns in a different way, and women can see the links between the state of the world and the lives of their families. Jessie McQuillan. [Missoula Independent](#), Montana. 4 November 2005.

[Saving kids from the sun](#) Lawmakers increasingly have been weighing how far government should go toward protecting children against the sun's hot rays, which can be friend or foe, warming up a summer picnic or heightening the risk of skin cancer. Jim Sanders. [Sacramento Bee](#), California. 14 November 2005.

(d) Asia

[Quake Survivors Now Mired in Squalor](#) Surrounded by sewage, without clean water, about 2,000 people crammed into ramshackle tents are falling prey to disease. Infants crawl on dirt floors and through puddles. But for children younger than 5, respiratory infections are the No. 1 concern. [Registration Required]. John Glionna. [Los Angeles Times](#). 16 November 2005.

[WHO official reports diarrhea outbreak among survivors of South Asia quake](#) Matthew Pennington. Associated Press. 9 November 2005.

[Chinese Petrochemical Explosion Spills Toxics in Songhua River](#) The Songhua River, which supplies drinking water to the northeastern Chinese city of Harbin, has been contaminated with toxic chemicals that have toxic and hazardous health effects. Some are carcinogenic, and some have adverse effects on neurological, developmental and reproductive systems. [Environment News Service](#). 25 November 2005.

[Toxic leak threat to Chinese city](#) Major pollution of a river has forced the suspension of water supplies to the northern Chinese city of Harbin, home to 3.4m people, authorities have said. Some schools and businesses have closed and flights out of Harbin are sold out. Benzene is a highly poisonous toxin that is also carcinogenic. [BBC](#). 23 November 2005.

[In China city of 4 million, no water](#) David Lague. [International Herald Tribune](#). 24 November 2005.

[Russians prepare for toxic leak](#) [BBC](#), UK. 28 November 2005.

[UN to aid chemical spill clean-up?](#) Press Association. [Scotsman.com](#). 25 November 2005.

[Long-term risk from China toxic spill](#) Environmental experts warned the slick of cancer-causing benzene moving along China's Songhua river could pose a long-term risk to human health, contaminate the food chain and damage the region's fragile ecosystem. Benzene is a carcinogen that can be lethal to humans, even in small doses. Neil Western. [Mail & Guardian](#), South Africa. 25 November 2005.

[Health fears over China toxin spill](#) [Aljazeera.Net](#). 25 November 2005.

[Spill Taints Beijing Image](#) The release of millions of gallons of toxic liquid into a major city's water supply is a wake-up call for a society that has made huge sacrifices for development. Environmentalists warn that problems could take years to show up, including birth defects and long-term damage to people, plants and animals. [Registration Required]. Mark Magnier. [Los Angeles Times](#). 25 November 2005.

[China's Katrina flows toward Beijing](#). Editorial. [Seattle Times](#), Washington. 28 November 2005.

[The Lessons of Harbin](#) China's rapid economic development has produced a life-threatening environmental crisis. Children are particularly susceptible - over 30,000 die annually from diarrhea due to unclean water. The Ministry of Health's Women's Health Division has linked environmental pollution to a 25% increase in birth defects recorded from 2001-2003. Elizabeth Economy. [Time](#). 28 November 2005.

[Environment: A social issue](#) China's environmental problems are so widespread that they have begun to generate social instability. Choking on vile air, sickened by toxic water, citizens in some corners of this vast nation are rising up to protest the high environmental cost of China's economic boom. Tim Johnson. [Philadelphia Inquirer](#). 25 November 2005.
