



Center for Environmental Health

Unleaded News from CEH

Fall 2004 E-Newsletter

If you have problems viewing this newsletter, click [here](#).
(http://www.cehca.org/newsletter_fall04.htm)

Please Take Our On-Line Survey Today!

We need your help to guide our future - [Click here](#) for more information and to take the survey online.

Help us continue our work - donate online TODAY!



In This Issue:

[Despite Recalls, CEH Finds Lead Jewelry Still Sold to Children](#)

[Apple Protested for Poisonous Products at MacWorld Expo](#)

[Health Care Buyer Offers Hospitals Resources for E-Waste Reduction](#)

[CEH "Safe Playgrounds Project" Goes Online](#)

[Dust Testing Shows Toxic Chemicals Are a Health Threat in Our Homes](#)

[Outreach on Environmental Health for Families Grows](#)

[Joe Guth to Serve on National Chemicals Policy Committee](#)

Anita Sarah Jackson (Re) Joins CEH

CEH on the Wire

Despite Recalls, CEH Finds Lead Jewelry Still Sold to Children

Last summer, lawsuits filed by CEH helped prompt the largest product recall in U.S. history, when 150 million pieces of children's jewelry were pulled from vending machines nationwide. Despite this and other more recent jewelry recalls, our continuing investigations are finding that major retailers still have lead-tainted children's jewelry on store shelves.

In January, CEH Executive Director Michael Green and Senior Policy Analyst Joe Guth traveled to Washington, D.C. to meet with staff at the government Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) and tour the CPSC's laboratory. Michael and Joe also met with staff from Congressman Henry Waxman's office, to discuss the Congressman's recent legislation calling for tougher approach on lead in kid's jewelry. CEH has been urging the CPSC to take strong protective action to keep lead jewelry off of store shelves, rather than waiting until kids are harmed before ordering product recalls. Instead, CPSC recently came out with a weak standard that calls only for voluntary action by industry, and creates a government testing system that has wide loopholes for potentially dangerous jewelry. "CPSC's attitude is, 'after kids get exposed to lead in jewelry, we might take action,' " Michael said in a press statement. "It's past time for strong action to put our children's health first and to force industry to take responsibility for safety before they market children's products."

Take Action! We need your help: CEH needs to continue our groundbreaking work investigating the hazards of lead in jewelry and getting these toxic trinkets out of stores. We recently identified new sources of lead-tainted jewelry, and we need your help to stop stores from selling contaminated jewelry to kids. We urgently need funding for independent laboratory testing, filing legal action and conducting a national media campaign to stop the sale of lead-tainted jewelry. Please help us to stop the sale of jewelry that exposes children to lead poisoning that can cause brain damage, birth defects, and other diseases.

To help our lead-jewelry campaign, and for more information and photos of lead-tainted jewelry, see <http://www.cehca.org/saferjewelry.htm>.

[Back to top](#)

Apple Protested for Poisonous Products at MacWorld Expo

In January, the Computer TakeBack Campaign (CTBC), a national coalition of environmental watchdog organizations, called on Apple Computers, maker of the popular iPod, to support proper recycling of the massive mounds of discarded toxic electronics that bear the Apple name. Pressure from the Campaign has recently brought other computer makers, including Dell and HP, to take this responsible stand. CEH staff joined the Campaign outside the recent annual Mac World conference to protest Apple's refusal to offer viable recycling options for consumers. Mamta Khanna, CEH Pollution Prevention Program Manager sits on the national CTBC Steering Committee. "While other computer makers have accepted that they have a responsibility for their outdated machines, Apple continues to oppose e-waste recycling legislation across the country," Mamta told the assembled media and conference attendees. "We want to know why Steve Jobs and Apple refuse to support electronic recycling programs."

Take Action! To learn more about the campaign and send an email to Apple CEO Steve Jobs, see <http://www.computertakeback.com/>

[Back to top](#)

Health Care Buyer Offers Hospitals Resources for E-Waste Reduction

The healthcare industry is responsible for the consumption and disposal of millions of electronic devices every year. Computers, televisions, lab analyzers, EKG monitors and other types of equipment used in hospitals every day contain many hazardous constituents - from lead in cathode ray tube (CRT) monitors to chlorinated plastics in cable wiring, brominated flame retardants in circuit boards and mercury in LCD displays. Hazardous substances in electronics have been linked to human health effects like cancer, birth defects, and hormone disruption.

In February, Premier Inc., one of the nation's largest health care suppliers, launched a comprehensive Web-based resource to assist healthcare organizations in environmentally responsible purchasing and management of computers and electronics. The Center for Environmental Health, a leader in

the national Health Care Without Harm coalition and the Computer TakeBack Campaign assisted and supported the development of the new Premier web site. "Premier's actions are a clear sign to vendors that hospitals are demanding safer products and better disposal options," said CEH Program Manager Mamta Khanna. "With the market shifting toward environmental responsibility, vendors who have the safest, most environmentally friendly products will have a strong competitive advantage."

San Diego-based Premier provides supply chain improvement and group purchasing, and is owned by 200 of the nation's leading hospital and health care systems that are affiliated with approximately 1,500 hospital facilities and other health care sites in 50 states. Premier's new Computers and Electronics in HealthCare web site presents specific purchasing strategies, including contractual guidelines for minimal toxicity of materials and vendor programs for "take-back," leasing and upgrades. Premier's new Computers and Electronics in HealthCare web site is at www.premierinc.com/safety.

[Back to top](#)

CEH "Safe Playgrounds Project" Goes Online

As we reported in our fall e-newsletter, CEH is following up our successful legal work that forced the wood playground industry to stop using arsenic-treated wood with a new outreach and information campaign to educate schools, playground managers, parents and others on how they can minimize health threats to children from playgrounds where older equipment made with arsenic-treated wood is already present. Our "Safe Playgrounds Project" is reaching out to California parks and recreation sites, school districts, teachers and parents groups, and other agencies so that they are properly informed of the health risks arsenic-treated woods pose, and so that they may take the proper actions to minimize these risks.

In March, CEH launched the "www.safe2play.org" website, with information, resources, and a form for ordering arsenic test kits, for parents and others who want to know if their wood play structures were treated with arsenic. Recently Sue Chiang, head of the Safe Playgrounds Project, spoke at the California Head Start Association conference in Pasadena, and she continues to speak at relevant conferences and associations to help spread the word in regards to the concerns with arsenic-treated wood. The current factsheet and list of

frequently asked questions on the website will be translated into Chinese and Spanish by the end of March.

To learn more, please visit the Safe Playgrounds Project website, <http://www.safe2play.org> or contact [Sue Chiang](#).

[Back to top](#)

Dust Testing Shows Toxic Chemicals Are a Health Threat in Our Homes

On March 22, a national coalition of environmental and consumer groups released a study of dust samples collected from homes in seven states, that found six main kinds toxic chemicals in all of the samples. Many of the chemicals found in the samples are associated with health problems, including allergic responses; suppressed or hyperactive immune systems; impaired respiratory, cardiovascular; nervous, and reproductive systems; irritated or inflamed skin and mucous membranes; cancer of a variety of tissues and organs; and developmental effects. The developing fetus, infants and children are especially at risk; toddlers and crawling infants may be subject to greater exposures, taking in up to five times as much dust as adults, while their immature organs and immune system make them more vulnerable to toxic risks.

CEH staff, relatives and friends contributed household dust for the study and were shocked by the findings “This study shows that our health is threatened by toxic chemicals even if we don’t live near factory accidents or oil spills,” said CEH Program Associate Anita Jackson, who contributed dust for the study. “Companies that are using hazardous chemicals should switch to alternatives, because we all have a right to safe homes for our children and families.” For more information on the report, see <http://www.safer-products.org/>.

[Back to top](#)

Outreach on Environmental Health for Families Grows

CEH continues to write monthly e-newsletters for the California Women’s

Foundation (see http://www.womensfoundca.org/news_ealert.html) on “How You Can Make a Difference,” giving practical advice on a range of environmental health subjects. Now, we are growing our outreach through two new collaborations. We recently began exploring ways to connect with Generation Green (see www.generationgreen.org), a national consumer and environmental health advocacy organization that gives parents and families resources and action steps for safer homes, schools, food, and more. We are also discussing a collaboration with Care2.com, to help provide cutting edge environmental and health information for their members. In the coming months, we expect these partnerships to bring a wide new audience for our work to protect children and families from toxic exposures.

[Back to top](#)

Joe Guth to Serve on National Chemicals Policy Committee

CEH Senior Policy Analyst Joe Guth was recently asked by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to join its chemicals policy advisory body, the National Pollution Prevention and Toxics Advisory Committee. The Committee provides EPA with policy advice and recommendations in areas such as assessment and management of chemical risks, pollution prevention, and toxic chemicals regulations. “I hope to work with other progressive members of the Committee to suggest ways that EPA can strengthen its regulation of toxic chemicals,” Joe said. “This will be an interesting time for the Committee. Europe will soon pass its REACH laws, which dramatically strengthen its chemicals regulation, and the US system will therefore be coming under more intense scrutiny.”

For more information on the Committee, see <http://www.epa.gov/oppt/npptac/>

[Back to top](#)

To be removed from this mailing list,
please send an email to basimah@cehca.org