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## Spring 2007 eNewsletter

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### **California Wellness Foundation Awards Sabbatical to Michael Green**



Appalled at the way powerful businesses make people ill, Michael Green took his credit card out of his wallet and started up a one-person non-profit. It was ten years ago, and his goal was simple: to force stubborn corporate polluters to stop threatening people's health. Since that time the Center for Environmental Health has grown more than ten-fold in size, and its impact has reached far and wide:

- forcing companies to curb their emissions of carcinogenic chemicals
- removing toxic chemicals from many everyday consumer and children's products
- partnering with green industries to create markets for safer products

Today, thanks to Michael's vision and tenacity, CEH occupies a position of prominence on the public health landscape.

To support the dedication and leadership that makes organizations like CEH so effective, the California Wellness Foundation established a program that grants sabbaticals to the leaders of effective public health organizations. This year, the foundation recognized Michael's contribution to public health in California and beyond by awarding him a four-month sabbatical.

Michael's sabbatical will begin on May 22. It offers a welcome opportunity to reflect on CEH's first ten years of success and revitalize for the challenges of the coming decade. And with the birth two months ago of Michael and his wife Melanie's first child, Dylan, the sabbatical comes at a perfect time. "It's a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity," says Michael. "I feel fortunate that I'll be able to share this special time with my family. I thank the Wellness Foundation for making it possible, and I'd like all of our supporters to know that I plan to return to CEH with renewed energy and commitment."

CEH's staff has created a plan to assure that the work continues running smoothly during Michael's sabbatical. Associate Director Charlie Pizarro, who will serve as Acting Executive Director, remarks on the staff's outlook: "We'll certainly miss Michael's energy and expertise, but our staff is well-prepared to continue moving our projects forward. From e-waste to sustainable food to pesticides to public health policy, CEH is home to some of our nation's leading experts." Expect to hear much more about CEH's achievements in the coming months.

(All the recipients of the California Wellness Foundation's sabbatical are proven public health leaders. Learn more about their work [here](#).)

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### Help CEH Protect Families

We're pulling into the homestretch of CEH's 10 th Anniversary Campaign. To those of you who have already donated, we send our gratitude. You've helped us approach our ambitious \$200,000 goal.

To those of you who haven't made your donation yet: why not take a minute to make a secure on-line donation? It's fast, it's easy, it's safe, and best of all it, your donation will be matched by our 10th Anniversary Campaign's lead donors.

This will instantly double each gift over \$100, helping CEH kick off our second decade with more cutting-edge legal work to protect children, families, and communities from the unknown dangers lurking in products like lunchboxes.

Thank you for supporting public health!


[Click here to make an online donation](#)

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### Ansje Miller Joins the Center for Environmental Health

Once again, CEH has attracted a national leader in the environmental health movement to our staff. On March 7 CEH welcomed new Policy Director, Ansje Miller. Ansje is a longtime CEH ally and a well recognized authority on environmental health policy. Until recently, Ansje was the Program Director at Redefining Progress, another influential advocate for sustainability. She also staffed the Environmental Justice and Climate Change Initiative. Along with Jose Bravo of Just Transition alliance, Ansje is leading Californians for a Healthy and Green Economy (CHANGE) – the statewide coalition that is working to create laws that prevent industries from unleashing toxic chemicals on people. This is the farthest reaching work in our field, and CEH is proud that we've attracted a person of Ansje's expertise to lead the work. Welcome, Ansje!


## Buy Recycled Clothes on Earth Day and Support CEH



On Saturday, April 21<sup>st</sup>, used clothing retailer Buffalo Exchange is having its annual Dollar Day Sale at locations around the country. This year, all proceeds from the sale will benefit CEH, so stop in to BuffEx. You'll save money and also support CEH's work to protect families from toxic chemicals. For more information, [click here](#).

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## CEH's Work Shows Bush Agency Lied About the Danger of Lead in Children's Lunchboxes




In our ongoing effort to protect children from lead in vinyl lunchboxes, CEH is taking on the manufacturers and retailers of these products. Along the way, we've also been forced to expose the woeful negligence of the government agencies that we all entrust with our health.

In the wake of CEH's warning that parents should take action to protect their children from lead in lunchboxes, the Consumer Product Safety Commission announced that it had conducted its own studies and concluded that the levels of lead in lunchboxes were safe. How did the Commission reach this conclusion? What sort of test did they conduct? How many products did they test? The CPSC, so glad to speak on behalf of industry, suddenly became tight-lipped.

So just how did the CPSC decide that leaded lunchboxes were safe? Over a year later, the CPSC's internal documents answer this question once and for all: they cooked the books. When the agency's initial tests revealed alarmingly high levels of lead, they developed a new testing protocol designed to yield lower results. Read more on [CEH's website](#), find the [AP story](#), and see a [short news video clip](#).

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## Generation Green Joins CEH



It was a natural fit. Generation Green founder Rochelle Davis approached CEH to suggest we unite the impact of CEH's precedent setting environmental health work with Generation Green's nationwide membership and built-in public education infrastructure. Now, after almost two years of groundbreaking partnership, CEH and Generation Green have merged.

What does this mean for you?

Longtime CEH supporters can expect our work to continue in the same smart and strategic fashion, but with one invaluable new benefit -- a team of over eight thousand (and growing) nationwide public health advocates ready to respond to calls for action. For example, when the Bush administration last month nominated an industry crony to lead the Consumer Product Safety Commission, Generation Green members flooded their Senators' mailboxes with letters urging them to oppose the nomination and protect public health. Vital issues like this come up year-round, and by joining with Generation Green, CEH is poised to mobilize people in a targeted, effective way to protect public health. In the future, CEH will send its Generation Green action alerts to all of our supporters.

Generation Green members can expect fresh new quarterly newsletters that identify simple things they can do to keep their families safe from toxic chemicals. At the same time, these new materials will also help clarify the big-picture environmental health issues of our day.

CEH is planning to send a sample copy of our next Generation Green newsletter to our recent supporters. If you'd like to be sure to receive a copy, please send an email to [ceh@cehca.org](mailto:ceh@cehca.org). If you enjoy the newsletter and would like to receive it every quarter, let us know. For a \$35 donation, we'll send you four newsletters each year.

Stay tuned for more news, and please let us know what we can do to make this pioneering new partnership even more useful to you and your family.

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### Celebrating our First Decade of Success

Please take a moment to flip forward to October on your calendar. While you're there, remember the Bay Area's beautiful fall weather and save October 11th for CEH's 10th Anniversary celebration.

CEH is planning to host a lively, fun, and inspirational party in the Park Chalet restaurant at the beach end of Golden Gate Park in San Francisco.

Without your support CEH wouldn't be such an effective advocate for public health. This night will be our opportunity to celebrate our first ten years of far-reaching victories, share our vision for the next decade, and most of all, thank you for your partnership in our public health work.

Expect your invitation this summer.

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### Industry Crony Nominated for Top Federal Safety Position -- Take Action!

President Bush's latest pick to run the beleaguered Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) is Michael Baroody, the head of the National Association of Manufacturers (NAM). Under Baroody's leadership, NAM has patently opposed the regulations on product safety and pollution that are necessary to protect the health of all American families. This makes Baroody an inappropriate candidate for a position charged with protecting the public from hazards like lead in consumer products. The same philosophy underlie Bush's 2005 nomination of John Bolton to represent us before the United Nations. Just like Bolton, Baroody opposes the body that Bush nominated him to serve.

Even without Baroody's nomination, the CPSC is already failing in its mandate to protect families. The Commission has consistently failed to adopt prudent and essential product safety regulations and health standards. As you've read above, CEH exposed the agency earlier this year for misleading the public about the danger of lead-tainted children's lunchboxes.

On May 3rd the U.S. Senate will hold hearings to deliberate on Baroody's nomination. Please help protect families everywhere by urging your senator to oppose the reckless, ill-conceived nomination of Michael Baroody. To learn more and join Generation Green's members in taking action, [click here](#).

### Staff Notes

CEH is now preparing to send another brilliant, energetic young leader off to begin the next phase of her life. Alexa Engelman, our Public Interest Litigation Coordinator, has been at CEH for nearly two years, helping to lead our efforts to protect children from lead in jewelry, lunchboxes, and other products. If you've seen television news coverage of CEH's work in the last couple years (including the lunchbox story above), you've likely seen Alexa, who for many has become the public face of CEH.

Alexa is leaving us at the end of May, and will begin a joint environment and law program at one of the several schools that is currently courting her. Please join us in congratulating Alexa on this exciting new period in her life. We'll miss you, Alexa.

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### Job Opportunity

CEH is hiring a new Public Interest Litigation Program Coordinator. A job announcement is [here](#).

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### About the Center for Environmental Health

For ten years, the Center for Environmental Health has worked at the intersection of public health and the environment, reducing pollution and promoting alternatives to chemicals that are linked with cancer, asthma, learning disabilities, birth defects, and other illnesses that harm families. We work with individuals and organizations across the country to protect people from hazardous chemicals and to create markets for healthier products and businesses. Our smart, cutting-edge work helps major industries go greener, and it demonstrates the bottom-line value in business that protects public health.

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