

Greenlist Bulletin

From the Toxics Use Reduction Institute
at the University of Massachusetts Lowell

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This is the bi-weekly bulletin of the TURI Library at the University of Massachusetts Lowell. Greenlist Bulletin provides previews of recent publications and websites relevant to reducing the use of toxic chemicals by industries, businesses, communities, individuals and government. You are welcome to send a message to mary@turi.org if you would like more information on any of the articles listed here, or if this email is not displaying properly.



CPSC considers ban on toxic flame retardants in household products

[Source: Chicago Tribune, September 28, 2015](#)

Author: Michael Hawthorne

For the government's top consumer safety watchdog, protecting Americans from household hazards typically means prodding companies to recall defective products that strangle children, cause life-threatening burns or trigger bone-breaking falls.

The chairman of the Consumer Product Safety Commission thinks it is time to start forcing toxic chemicals off the market too.

In an interview, Elliot Kaye said his experience as the father of two young boys led him to push for more aggressive government action to protect children from harmful substances commonly found in toys and other household products.

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EPA Celebrates Sustainability Improvements at N. Dartmouth, Mass. Superfund Site

[Source: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, September 21, 2015](#)

BOSTON -- EPA joined local officials to celebrate the implementation of a sustainable groundwater cleanup system and the installation of solar panels at the ReSolve Superfund site in North Dartmouth, Mass. The groundwater cleanup is happening through an innovative biological treatment process that is fully powered by solar panels at the site.

The site operated as chemical reclamation facility between 1956 and 1980, and included a

distillation tower, unlined lagoons and oil land farming. The surrounding community relies on private wells for drinking water. Since 1985, EPA has overseen 3 cleanup actions at the site.

EPA and the ReSolve Site Group have collaboratively explored sustainable treatment enhancements to the traditional groundwater "Pump & Treatment" system on the site. Two "Anaerobic Bio-Reactor" (ABR) systems have been developed. These are underground, contained, biological treatment beds where the native microbes consume chlorinated volatile organic compounds (cVOCs). This is a natural treatment process that minimizes the use of process chemicals and waste disposal. A further enhancement is that 644 solar panels provide 100 percent of the power needed to run the groundwater treatment system.

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Even Dust Is Fattening, Thanks to Phthalates

Source: [Environmental Building News, September 2015](#)

Author: Alana Fichman

Children eat approximately 50 mg of dust every day, the equivalent of a low dose of aspirin, according to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. New research reveals how that dust could be contributing to unintended fat storage, and potentially obesity.

A study led by Duke University researcher Heather Stapleton, Ph.D., investigated how 30 common semi-volatile organic compounds (SVOCs) -- including brominated flame retardants, organophosphates, and phthalates -- in actual samples from household dust react to PPARgamma (peroxisome proliferator-activated nuclear receptor gamma), a protein responsible for triggering fat metabolism and production in our bodies.

It turns out nearly all of these chemicals can activate PPARgamma.

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See original study in *Environmental Science & Technology*, "[Activation of Human Peroxisome Proliferator-Activated Nuclear Receptors \(PPARgamma\) by Semi-Volatile Compounds \(SVOCs\) and Chemical Mixtures in Indoor Dust](#)".

Also see study in *Environmental Health Perspectives*, "[Exploring a Little-Known Pathway: Dermal Exposure to Phthalates in Indoor Air](#)".

From incremental to fundamental substitution in chemical alternatives assessment

Source: [Sustainable Chemistry and Pharmacy, September 2, 2015](#)

Authors: Peter Fantke, Roland Weber, and Martin Scheringer

Several chemicals in consumer products are subject to binding or voluntary phase-out agreements that are based on international treaties such as the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants or on regulatory frameworks such as the European Union's Registration, Evaluation, Authorization and Restriction of Chemicals (REACH). To facilitate a phase-out process, alternatives assessment is commonly applied as an emerging approach to identifying chemicals (or materials, processes, and behavior changes) serving as substitutes. Polybrominated diphenyl ethers (PBDEs), long-chain poly- and perfluorinated alkyl substances (PFASs), and polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) are well-known cases of chemicals where substitution processes can be studied. Currently, there are various challenges in assessing, evaluating and effectively introducing chemical alternatives. These challenges are mainly related to similarity in chemical structures and, hence, similar hazard profiles between phase-out and substitute chemicals, leading to a rather incremental than fundamental substitution [*sic*]. A hampered phase-out process, the lack of implementing Green Chemistry principles in chemicals design, and lack of Sustainable Chemistry aspects in industrial processes design constitute additional challenges. We illustrate the various challenges in the process of phasing out and successfully substituting hazardous chemicals in consumer products and provide guiding principles for addressing these challenges. We propose an integrated approach of all stakeholders involved toward more fundamental and function-based substitution by greener and more sustainable alternatives. Our recommendations finally constitute a starting point for identifying further research needs and for improving current alternatives assessment practice.

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Also see article in the European Chemicals Agency September 2015 Newsletter, "[Replacing](#)

Target Expands Sustainable Product Index to Include 1,000+ Toxic Chemicals

[Source: Sustainable Brands, September 30, 2015](#)

Author: Hannah Furlong

Target has improved its sustainable product standard by beginning to test category-specific criteria and consider more toxic chemicals. The retailer's Sustainable Product Index evaluates products based on a points system and the highest-scoring options are promoted under its "Made to Matter" banner.

The Index was previously called Target's Sustainable Product Standard and scored 7,000 products on a 100-point scale. Scores are based on whether the products contain ingredients with high levels of health concerns or ingredients that are hazardous to aquatic environments, the transparency/public disclosure of ingredients, packaging waste/recyclability, and whether the product has been tested on animals. Information is collected and evaluated using UL's Purview Platform.

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Warning of dangers to health, environment, UN experts urge phase-out of hazardous pesticides

[Source: UN News Centre, September 28, 2015](#)

Two independent United Nations human rights experts today called for an immediate worldwide phase-out on use of highly hazardous pesticides that are inflicting significant damage on human health and the environment.

"Workers, children and others at risk continue to suffer severe impacts from hazardous pesticides," the Special Rapporteur on human rights and hazardous substance and waste, Baskut Tuncak, said in a news release. "Those living in danger cannot wait several years for the next opportunity. It is imperative that States take collective action now."

The call for the phase-out by Mr. Tuncak and the Special Rapporteur on the right to food, Hilal Elver, comes as States, businesses and other parties from around the world gather in Geneva, Switzerland, for the fourth meeting of the International Conference on Chemicals Management. The week-long gathering is the last of its kind before 2020, the year by which States pledged to achieve sound management of chemicals following the 2002 Earth Summit.

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TTIP Poised to Gut US States' Ability to Protect on Toxic Chemicals

[Source: Center for International Environmental Law, September 22, 2015](#)

Washington, DC -- A new report Preempting the Public Interest: How TTIP Will Limit US States' Public Health and Environmental Protections by the Center for International Environmental Law (CIEL) details how EU proposals for the Trans-Atlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) would usurp US states' authority to regulate toxic chemicals. These proposals would not only curtail states' efforts to protect the public from toxic exposure, but also threaten any State regulations in the public interest that exceed federal standards.

"TTIP and reform to the US Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA) present a carefully orchestrated, one-two punch to knock out the ability of US States' to protect the public health from toxic chemicals," says Baskut Tuncak, Senior Attorney with CIEL. State regulations that go beyond the woefully inadequate TSCA have been critical to protect public health and the environment from toxic exposure over the past three decades in the United States. Pending bills to reform TSCA in the US Congress -- bills which are championed by the chemical industry -- would dramatically preempt state authority on toxic chemicals. According to the new report, TTIP would go beyond these proposals, further eroding US state authority.

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Access report [here](#).

[Source: U.S. EPA Office of Pollution Prevention and Toxics, October 1, 2015](#)

EPA's Pollution Prevention and Toxics website has a new name, look, and address [<http://www2.epa.gov/assessing-and-managing-chemicals-under-tsca>]. Our old website, previously found at <http://www.epa.gov/oppt/>, is now our new Chemicals under TSCA website. Many of our stakeholders have noticed our gradual move to new versions of our content as part of the larger EPA effort to build a more user-friendly website. With the new Chemicals under TSCA website, information should now be easier than ever to access, regardless of the type of electronic device you use, including tablets and smartphones.

If you have trouble locating information, try using the search feature available on every EPA web page and in the archive (archive.epa.gov).

Visit new site [here](#).

Please send a message to mary@turi.org if you would like more information on any of these resources. Also, please tell us what topics you are particularly interested in monitoring, and who else should see Greenlist. An online search of the TURI Library catalog can be done at <http://library.turi.org> for greater topic coverage.

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