

Greenlist Bulletin

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

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In This Issue

Endocrine disruptors and asthma-associated chemicals in consumer products

Six growing trends in corporate sustainability

Campbell's to end use of BPA in can linings


Green schools and students' science scores are related

Mercury poisoning linked to skin products

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This is the 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 jan@turi.org if you would like more information on any of the articles listed here, or if this email is not displaying properly.



Endocrine disruptors and asthma-associated chemicals in consumer products

[Source: Environmental Health Perspectives, March 8, 2012](#)

Authors: Robin E. Dodson, Marcia Nishioka, Laurel J. Standley, Laura J. Perovich, Julia Green Brody, Ruthann A. Rudel

BACKGROUND: Laboratory and human studies raise concerns about endocrine disruption and asthma from exposure to chemicals in consumer products. Limited labeling or testing information is available to evaluate products as exposure sources.

OBJECTIVES: We analytically quantified endocrine disruptors and asthma-related chemicals in a range of cosmetics, personal care products, cleaners, sunscreens, and vinyl products. We evaluated whether labels can be used to select products without these chemicals.

METHODS: We selected 213 commercial products representing 50 product types. We tested 42 composited samples of high market-share products. We also tested 43 alternative products identified using criteria expected to minimize target compounds. Analytes included parabens, phthalates, bisphenol A, triclosan, ethanolamines, alkylphenols, fragrances, glycol ethers, cyclosiloxanes and UV filters.

RESULTS: We detected 55 compounds, indicating a wide range of exposures from common products. Vinyl products contained >10% DEHP and could be an important source of DEHP in homes. In other products, the highest concentrations and numbers of detects were in the fragranced products perfume, air fresheners, and dryer sheets, and in sunscreens. Some products that did not contain the well-known EDC phthalates contained other less-studied phthalates (also EDCs), suggesting a substitution. Many detected chemicals were not listed on labels.

CONCLUSIONS: Common products contain complex mixtures of EDCs and asthma-related compounds. Toxicological studies of these mixtures are needed to understand their biological activity. For epidemiology, findings raise cautions about potential confounding from co-occurring chemicals and misclassification due to variability in product composition. It appears that consumers can avoid some target chemicals-synthetic fragrances, BPA, and regulated active ingredients-using purchasing criteria. More complete labeling would enable consumers to avoid the rest.

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Six growing trends in corporate sustainability

[Source: Ernst & Young and GreenBiz Group, March 6, 2012](#)

Ernst & Young, in cooperation with GreenBiz Group, conducted a survey in late 2011 consisting of executives and thought leaders in corporate environmental strategy and performance.

Exploring developments in corporate sustainability programs, the report shows that:

- 76 percent of survey respondents anticipate natural resource shortages will affect their core business objectives over the next 3-5 years.
- 65 percent of respondents stated their CFO has become involved in sustainability.

Our survey covered a wide range of topics related to corporate sustainability and reporting, and the results show that interest in these areas continues to rise (although the tools are still developing). CFOs are emerging as key players in sustainability. And employees are too: they are second only to customers as drivers of company sustainability initiatives.

Despite the decreasing likelihood of regulation to address climate change - at least in the United States - greenhouse gas reporting and reduction efforts remain strong, and interest in water usage, efficiency and stewardship is on the rise.

Also rising is stakeholder interest in the sustainable sourcing and availability of raw materials intrinsic to a company's ability to operate. And sustainability-focused surveys and questionnaires from customers, NGOs, investor groups, analysts, media organizations and others continue to grow in importance.

These trends suggest that sustainability efforts are now well-integrated into the corporate fabric of a growing number of large and midsized companies.

But the effectiveness of such efforts may be limited by internal systems that don't allow companies to effectively measure, track and optimize their sustainability impacts, or to understand and manage the risks of insufficient action. To do so will require new levels of engagement by the C-suite, and more sophisticated methods of sustainability reporting and assurance.

[Download the report](#)

Campbell's to end use of BPA in can linings

[Source: Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, March 5, 2012](#)

Author: Meg Kissinger

Campbell's Soup has agreed to stop using the chemical BPA in the lining of its cans, joining a host of other brands moving away from using the substance.

Campbell's Soup Co. spokesman Anthony Sanzio said Monday the company has been working on alternatives for five years and will make the transition as soon as "feasible alternatives are available."

The move comes as the U.S. Food and Drug Administration is poised to decide by the end of March whether to ban the chemical's use in all food and beverage packaging.

Consumers have petitioned Campbell's for the move away from BPA, or bisphenol A, because of worries about the chemical. BPA, used to make hard, clear plastic, has been linked in human and animal studies to heart disease, early-onset puberty, behavioral problems, diabetes and breast and prostate cancer, especially at low doses.

The FDA announced in January 2010 that it had some concerns about the effect of the chemical on the development of infants and young children. Government regulators promised, but didn't deliver, a reassessment by June 2011.

The Natural Resources Defense Council sued the FDA in August for missing its deadline to rule on the safety of the chemical. The FDA agreed to announce its decision before April 1 in exchange for the environmental group dropping the lawsuit.

A series of reports in the Journal Sentinel in 2007 and 2008 showed how government regulators relied on two industry-funded studies to claim that the chemical was safe. The newspaper analyzed the body of research on BPA and found that FDA regulators ignored hundreds of independent studies that found harm to laboratory animals.

The newspaper also found entire sections of the government reports had been written by scientists paid by the chemical industry.

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Green schools and students' science scores are related

[Source: University of Colorado Denver, February 29, 2012](#)

A nationwide survey shows a positive correlation between Green School practices and student achievement in science. The study was conducted by the University of Colorado Denver's Department of Geography and Environmental Sciences. And presented Wednesday at the Green Schools National Network conference in Denver.

Schools that took part in the survey observe GreenPrint core practices as defined by the Green Schools National Network (GSNN). The core practices are:

- Curriculum that advances environmental literacy and sustainability
- Stewardship and service learning
- Sustainable facilities design and management
- Health and well being
- Strong partnerships and networks

The results of the survey suggest that as schools implement Green Print core practices at higher levels, student achievement in science tends to show improvement. Approximately 100 schools from 28 states took part in the survey. Student achievement data was gathered from most recent state and district assessment scores in science via state department of education websites as well as the survey.

Participating schools were divided into four regions based on the United States Census Classification system. The regions are West, South, Midwest and Northeast. An average survey score was calculated for each region. Schools from the Midwest had the highest average survey score at 64 percent. The score for schools in the West, including 16 from Colorado, was 55 percent. Schools from the South scored 58 percent and schools in the Northeast scored 49 percent.

"The green movement is relatively young when it comes to schools," said Bryan Shao-Chang Wee, PhD, assistant professor of environmental science education. "We learned several things that will be valuable in continuing to collect data and validating this preliminary online survey." In order to help establish the importance of green schools in the United States, Wee and his team of researchers would like to do further research by refining the survey and obtaining a larger sample. Researchers would also like to visit green schools for data collection and to evaluate whether the GreenPrint core practices have any correlation to subjects such as reading, writing, social studies and math.

"One more important element moving forward is refining the GreenPrint core practices. We need to accurately define the criteria for measuring these practices so schools can accurately report and gauge their success on the survey," said Hillary Mason, a graduate researcher on the team.

Mercury poisoning linked to skin products

[Source: U.S. Food and Drug Administration \(FDA\), March 6, 2012](#)

Federal health officials are warning consumers not to use skin creams, beauty and antiseptic soaps, or lotions that might contain mercury.

The products are marketed as skin lighteners and anti-aging treatments that remove age spots, freckles, blemishes and wrinkles, says Gary Coody, national health fraud coordinator in the Food and Drug Administration's Office of Regulatory Affairs. Adolescents also may use these products as acne treatments, adds Coody. Products with this toxic metal have been found in at least seven states.


The products are manufactured abroad and sold illegally in the United States—often in shops in Latino, Asian, African or Middle Eastern neighborhoods and online. Consumers may also have bought them in another country and brought them back to the U.S. for personal use.

"If you have a product that matches these descriptions (and others listed below), stop using it immediately," says Coody.

"Even though these products are promoted as cosmetics, they also may be unapproved new drugs under the law," says Linda Katz, M.D., director of FDA's Office of Cosmetics and Colors. FDA does not allow mercury in drugs or in cosmetics, except under very specific conditions, which these products do not meet.

"Sellers and distributors should not market these illegal products and may be subject to enforcement action, which could include seizure of the products and other legal sanctions," says attorney Brad Pace, J.D., of the Health Fraud and Consumer Outreach Branch within FDA's Center for Drug Evaluation and Research.

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