

RACHEL'S FRIENDS

BREAST CANCER COALITION

Pollution Comes Home and Gets Personal

Americans are more aware of toxic chemical exposure from common untested household products like bisphenol A in some baby bottles and lead in some toys. However, women do not easily connect these products with personal chemical exposure and adverse health effects, according to research from the December 2008 issue of the *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*.

The researchers interviewed 25 Massachusetts women who participated in the Silent Spring Institute's Household Exposure Study,

which tested for 89 pollutants in air, dust, and urine samples. That study found an average of 20 target chemicals per home, including pesticides and compounds from plastics, cleaners, furniture, cosmetics, and other products.

Most women had a hard time relating chemicals in their homes and bodies with images of contamination happening outside the home from industrial accidents or dumping.

"People more easily equate pollution with large-scale contamination and environmental disasters, yet

the products and activities that form the backdrop to our everyday lives — electronics, cleaners, beauty products, food packaging — are a significant source of daily personal chemical exposure that accumulates over time," said Rebecca Gasior Altman, the study's lead author.

"An important shift occurs in how people understand pollution, its sources and possible solutions as they learn about chemicals from common products that are found in urine samples and dust under the[ir] sofas."

New Oregon laws reduce toxic exposures but there's more to do

Integrated Pest Management for Schools

The 2009 Oregon Legislature passed a law requiring public and private K-12 schools and community colleges to use integrated pest management (IPM) plans.

Pesticides commonly used in Oregon schools are linked with cancer, reproductive problems, and nervous system damage. IPM uses safe cost-effective strategies

to reduce food, water and shelter for pests in buildings and public outdoor areas.

Diesel School Bus Exhaust

All diesel school buses in Oregon must be retrofitted by 2017. Retrofit means to install new exhaust controls to reduce pollutants. About 70% of Oregon's 3,700+ diesel-powered school buses release hazardous diesel ex-

haust. Buses too old to be retrofitted must be replaced by 2025.

"Diesel exhaust contains high levels of particulate matter, other air toxics, nitrogen oxides, and hydrocarbons," said Renee Hackenmiller-Paradis, PhD, of the Oregon Environmental Council. "Even at relatively

(Continued on page 3)



Save trees, avoid toxins, and help us keep more \$ for programs

We're pleased that so many of you want information on environmental causes of cancer. But – paper, copying, and postage keep going up. We'd rather spend the money on educational programs and advocacy. Here's the plan:

Sign up now to get a free e-mail alert when our next newsletter is ready. Just e-mail your city, state, and ZIP to rachelsfriendsbcc@gmail.com so we can send legislative and advocacy information relevant to you. Of course, you may join or unsubscribe at any time.

In 3 or 4 months, you'll get an e-mail to alert you that the fall

newsletter is online at www.rachelsfriends.org/newsletter.html.

The summer 2009 issue and others through winter 2006 are on our website. We encourage you to print and forward the newsletter to anyone who's interested in environmental causes of cancer.

If you need a paper newsletter, we're happy to mail one. Call 503-777-2761 in Portland or e-mail rachelsfriendsbcc@gmail.com.

Every online newsletter saves trees, reduces ink toxins in your home, saves \$, and keeps you in the loop.

We promise that we will **never** spam, sell, or share your contact information.

Welcome, Elizabeth!

Rachel's Friends is happy to welcome our newest board member, **Elizabeth Arledge**. Elizabeth is the director of communications and development for Disability Rights Oregon.



We appreciate your donations. Thank you!

In memory of Helen Keen: Wynn Avocette

In memory of Virginia Kotka: Don and Alona Steinke

In memory of Rita McDonagh:

- Nancy Crumpacker
- Phil Goldsmith
- Barry Gorden, Laule'a Gorden-Kuehn, and Jim Kuehn
- DeLayne Larson. Ms. Larson also honors Rita's daughters and their families – Sierra, Noble, and Laurel Benjamin and Jennifer Caruso
- Len Laviolette
- Rich and Peggy Lundquist
- Kelsi Deters McCarthy

Rachel's Friends Breast Cancer Coalition is a non-profit Oregon advocacy organization dedicated to lowering the incidence of breast and other cancers by reducing our exposure to environmental carcinogens. We do this through education, legislative action, and organizing for change on behalf of Oregonians.

We honor Rachel Carson, a biologist and writer who died of breast cancer. Her 1962 book *Silent Spring* exposed the dangers of pesticides.

We support the **Precautionary Principle (better safe than sorry)**. We should act **now** to reduce our exposure to known and suspected carcinogens even if cause and effect relationships are not firmly established.

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2009 OR laws (Continued from page 1)
low levels, these contaminants can cause or make worse asthma and other respiratory ailments, in addition to many other problems such as increased risk of cancer, heart disease, and impaired neurological development.”

- **The toxic fire retardant DecaBDE is banned** from mattresses, computers, and other common products sold in Oregon. OR joins Washington State, Maine, and Vermont as states with Deca bans. OR also added Deca to its list of highest priority river pollutants.
- **Cancer in firefighters is presumed to be caused by** on-duty smoke inhalation and exposure to dangerous chemicals. The new law adds 12 types of cancers to workers' comp coverage, including brain,

colon, stomach, testicular, prostate, throat, mouth, rectal, and breast cancer; multiple myeloma, non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, and leukemia.

- **Fines for environmental pollution were raised** for the first time in more than 30 years.
- **Mandatory fluoride in public water supplies** was defeated.

Disappointments

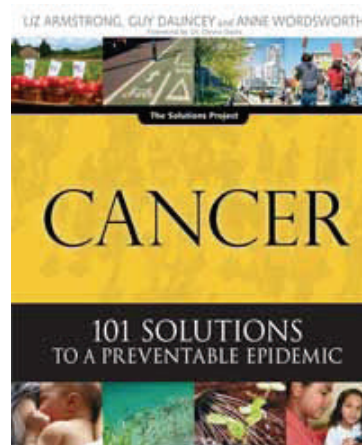
Despite hard work by environmental health groups and advocacy by Oregon voters, the **Children's Safe Products** bill was defeated. We'll try again in 2011 to pass laws protecting babies and children from hormone-disrupting chemicals, such as bisphenol A in baby bottles and phthalates and other toxins in toys and children's products.



Moms' pesticide exposure at work increases children's leukemia risk

A May 2009 article published in *Environmental Health Perspectives* analyzed research comparing parents' pesticide exposure at work and leukemia in their children. Researchers found that the mother's exposure

during pregnancy can double her child's risk of the disease. The father's exposure before pregnancy did not impact the child's risk of leukemia. www.ehponline.org/docs/2009/0900582/abstract.pdf



Cancer: 101 Solutions to a Preventable Epidemic

by Liz Armstrong,
Guy Dauncey, and
Anne Wordsworth

www.earthfuture.com/cancer/book.asp

Cancer: 101 Solutions to a Preventable Epidemic assumes that many cancers can be prevented because they are caused by contamination of our bodies from involuntary exposures to carcinogens in the environment.

The book defines the issue in two-page focuses on pieces of the epidemic, such as "Our Weakened Immunity" and "Awash in Pesticides." Each solution gets two pages, such as "Take Action for Healthy Schools" and "Curb Electromagnetic Radiation."

The last solution is for all of us: Don't sit this one out. Audre Lord wrote in *The Cancer Journals*, "Silence has never brought us anything of worth."

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Calendar

(more at www.rachelsfriends.org/events.html)

Aug. 20, Nena Baker, 7:30 p.m. Powell's, 1005 W. Burnside, Portland. Nena reads from her book, "The Body Toxic: How the Hazardous Chemistry of Everyday Things Threatens Our Health and Well-being."

Sept. 19, NW VegFest, 10 a.m. - 8 p.m., Oregon Convention Center, 777 NE MLK, Portland, \$5, children 10 and under free.
www.nwveg.org/vegfest.php

Sept. 26, Green Sprouts Baby & Family Fest, 10 a.m. - 5 p.m., Peninsula Park, Portland, \$3 suggested donation. www.redirectguide.com/greensprouts

Oct. 1-2, NW Children's Environmental Health Forum, Tukwila Community Center, Tukwila, WA.
www.chenw.org/CEHforum.html

Oct. 1- 4, Twin Crises: Time of Action, NW Regional Gathering on the Economic & Environmental Crises. First Unitarian Church, SW 12th and Main, Portland.
Confirmed speaker: Noam Chomsky, Oct. 2, 7 p.m., First Unitarian Church. Dan Leahy, 360-402-0441, or danleahy43@yahoo.com.

'09 Sunscreen Guide

www.ewg.org/cosmetics/report/sunscreen09



The Environmental Working Group's 2009 Sunscreen Guide ranks sunscreens, moisturizers with SPF (sun protection factor) claims, and lip balms from best to worse.