

RACHEL'S FRIENDS BREAST CANCER COALITION

U.S. Senate endorses Phthalates Ban in Children's Products; WA State and Calif. ban Phthalates in Toys

On March 6, 2008, the **U.S. Senate** approved an amendment to the Consumer Product Safety Commission Bill that would ban phthalates in children's toys and products nationwide. Senator Diane Feinstein (D-CA) led the fight to pass the amendment.

Phthalates are chemicals added to plastic products to make them soft and pliable. They are in teething rings, rubber ducks, and plastic books, and in common products such as vinyl shower curtains and nail polish. Phthalates disrupt hormones and

are linked to early puberty in girls, which increases breast cancer risk in adults.

Fourteen countries and the European Union have banned or are phasing out phthalates. Mexico outlawed imports and sales of products with phthalates for children.

The Consumer Product Safety amendment would ban toys and children's products with more than 0.1 percent of any one of six types of phthalates. The phthalates cannot be replaced with chemicals identified by the Environmental Protection

Agency as carcinogens, possible carcinogens, or chemicals that cause reproductive or developmental harm.

On April 1, 2008, **Washington State** Governor Christine Gregoire signed the Children's Safe Products Act into law. When the law goes into effect on July 1, 2009, Washington will have the nation's strongest standards restricting three toxic chemicals — lead, cadmium, and phthalates — in toys and other children's products. Manufacturers must report if their products

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2008 State of the Evidence: The Connection Between Breast Cancer and the Environment

Breast cancer incidence rates in the United States increased by more than 40 percent between 1973 and 1998. In 2008, a woman's lifetime risk of breast cancer is one in eight.

State of the Evidence 2008 is a comprehensive re-

port on environmental exposures linked to increased breast cancer risk, including natural and synthetic estrogens; xenoestrogens and other endocrine-disrupting compounds; carcinogenic chemicals; and radiation.

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Rep. Slaughter Sponsors Legislation to Research how Environment affects Women

On April 15, Rep. Louise Slaughter (D-NY) introduced legislation to fund research on how environmental factors affect women's health.

- The **Environmental Hormone Disruption Act** would establish a program to study the impact of hormone disrupting pollutants in the environment on the health of women and children.
- The **Women's Environmental Health and Dis-**

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Phthalates bans

contain other chemicals harmful to children's health. Washington is the first state in the nation to require this type of disclosure.

On Oct. 14, 2007, **California** Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger signed legislation that made California the first state in the U.S. to ban phthalates in toys and other children's products. California law classifies four of the six banned phthalates as reproductive toxins. The bill was sponsored by the Breast Cancer Fund and Environment California.

Effective January 1, 2009, any product intended for use by children under age three that contains more than 0.1% of any one of six types of phthalates cannot be made, sold, or distributed in California.

ease Prevention Act would authorize the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences to create up to six research centers regarding how environmental factors affect the health of women and their children.

"More than 80,000 chemicals have been introduced over the last 50 years. At the same time, we've seen increases in diseases and dis-

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Oregon Environmental Council's 2008 Healthy Environment Forum

Packing on the Compounds: How Exposure to Common Chemicals is Fueling the Obesity Epidemic

Thursday, April 24, 2008,
Bruce Blumberg, PhD

The Falling Age of Puberty in U.S. Girls: What We Know and Need to Know

Thursday, May 22, 2008,
Sandra Steingraber, PhD

Drugs in the Water: How Our Medicine Cabinets are Contaminating Nature

Thursday, June 19, 2008,
Ilene Ruhoy, MD

6-8 p.m. **New location:**
Doubletree Hotel Lloyd Center,
1000 NE Multnomah, Portland.
Heavy hors d'oeuvres included.
\$35 per event. \$25 for OEC
members and employees of non-
profit and governmental agen-
cies. Call 503-222-1963.

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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State of the Evidence 2008

The report provides a complex picture of breast cancer causes, where timing, chemical mixtures, and the dose of environmental exposures interact with genes and lifestyle factors such as weight gain, alcohol consumption, and lack of exercise.

Evidence from human and animal models indicates that exposure of fetuses, young children, and adolescents to radiation and environmental chemicals puts them at considerably higher risk for breast cancer in later life.

[Read the report, download a PDF, or order copies.](#)

Also, read [An Advocate's Guide to State of the Evidence 2008](#)

www.breastcancerfund.org/evidence

Look for our table at VegFest

10 a.m. to 6 p.m.
Benson High School
546 NE 12th Ave., Portland



BOOK REVIEW

Courage for the Earth: Writers, Scientists, and Activists Celebrate the Life and Writing of Rachel Carson. Peter Matthiessen, editor. 2007.

Biologist Rachel Carson's books and her 1963 testimony to Congress introduced the public to environmental health and the interconnections between humans and nature. In her 1962 book *Silent Spring*, Carson defended "the right of the citizen to be secure in his own home against the intrusion of poisons applied by other persons."

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Silent Spring inspired demands to ban DDT and end indiscriminate pesticide spraying in the United States. The book's popularity generated personal attacks against Carson from chemical companies. She chal-

lenged the government for refusing to respond to evidence of environmental damage by pesticides. Carson's death from breast cancer at age 57 helped mobilize advocacy for prevention-oriented breast cancer research.

Essays from 11 scientists and scientific writers (including former Vice President Al Gore, scientist and nature writer

Sandra Steingraber, Carson biographer Linda Lear, and biologist Edward O. Wilson) demonstrate how Rachel Carson's warnings continue to ring true for scientists and anyone who values an unpolluted natural environment.

(Continued from page 2) legislation orders, including childhood cancers, testicular cancer, juvenile diabetes, thyroid disorders, learning disabilities, cognitive impairments and autoimmune disorders over the last 30 years. To prevent further damage to our nation's public health, we must expand our research programs that examine the affects of these chemicals on the human body," said Rep. Slaughter.

About 100,000 chemicals are used in the U.S.

However, 90% have never been fully tested for their impact on human health. Women are typically smaller than men, so toxins have a greater impact. Also, women have a higher proportion of fatty tissue, where toxins accumulate.

While evidence builds that there is an association between chemicals and hormone disruption, research remains incomplete, especially on the impact on women.

Rachel's Friends
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Thank you, volunteers

for staffing the Rachel's Friends tables in March at the Komen conference and International Women's Day.

Karla Daniel, Celeste Janssen, Karen Moffat, Shari Rochelle, Kathy Royce, Caroline Skinner, Anne Voegtlin

We received donations in memory of **Teresa Lyn Broersma Beall** from:

- Leslee Broersma
- Dona and Duke Edmundson
- Pat Nolan
- Lisa Selig
- Inge Weiss

Free legal help for breast cancer patients

- Does your insurance company seem to be working against you instead of with you?
- Is your employer making it hard for you to receive treatment or manage your disease?
- Do you have legal problems related to your illness?

Contact the Breast Cancer Legal Advocacy Project of Oregon.

- BClegalOR@gmail.com
- 503-312-4156

The Environment and Your Health Tuesday, May 13, 6 p.m.

Portland Community College
Cascade Campus
Terrell Hall, Room 122
705 N. Killingsworth St.
Portland. FREE

Film: *Toxic Bust*. This documentary looks at growing evidence that links breast cancer to chemical exposures.

Speakers:

Renee Hackenmiller-Paradis, Program Director, Environmental Health, Oregon Environmental Council

Hester Dooley, OEC National Program Director, Eco-Healthy Childcare

Questions? E-mail
srochell@pcc.edu.