



Environmental Journalism

The good, the bad, the future – and why you are essential



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Douglas Fischer, executive director



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Bozeman, Montana

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How I arrived at Environmental Journalism





Children Show Highest Levels of Polybrominated Diphenyl Ethers in a California Family of Four: A Case Study

Douglas Fischer,¹ Kim Hooper,² Maria Athanasiadou,³ Ioannis Athanassiadis,³ and Åke Bergman³

¹*Oakland Tribune, Oakland, California, USA;* ²*Environmental Chemistry Laboratory, California Department of Toxic Substances Control, Berkeley, California, USA;* ³*Department of Environmental Chemistry, Stockholm University, Stockholm, Sweden*

Polybrominated diphenyl ethers (PBDEs), a major class of flame retardants, are ubiquitous environmental contaminants with particularly high concentrations in humans from the United States. This study is a first attempt to report and compare PBDE concentrations in blood drawn from a family. Serum samples from family members collected at two sampling occasions 90 days apart were analyzed for PBDE congeners. Concentrations of the lower-brominated PBDEs were similar at the two sampling times for each family member, with children's levels 2- to 5-fold higher than those of their parents. Concentrations of, for example, 2,2',4,4'-tetrabromodiphenyl ether (BDE-47) varied from 32 ng/g lipid weight (lw) in the father to 60, 137, and 245 ng/g lw in the mother, child, and toddler, respectively. Decabromodiphenyl ether (BDE-209) concentrations differed significantly between the two samplings. September concentrations in the father, mother, child, and toddler were 23, 14, 143, and 233 ng/g lw, respectively. December concentrations (duplicate results from the laboratory) were 2

rapidly after cessation of exposure, in contrast to the lower-brominated PBDEs, which have longer half-lives in years (Geyer et al. 2004; Sjödin et al. 2003). Our case report compares body burdens of PBDEs in children and adults and examines whether these concentrations change significantly over time.

Materials and Methods

Study design. We measured concentrations of PBDEs in two sets of serum samples collected 3 months apart from a family of four (35

Environmental Health Sciences



Bioplastics: sustainable solution or distraction from the plastic waste crisis? [READ MORE](#)



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3 MIN READ



TOXICS



BY EHN

Evidence of PFAS found in popular bandage brands including Band-Aid



Latest From Our Newsroom

1

Residents fear Pennsylvania, West Virginia chemical recycling proposals will...

2

Q&A: Director of sustainability at Eastman Chemical Company talks...

3

Washington state will become first state to ban lead in cookware

4

Op-ed: "Plastic People" — A documentary that changed my view on plastics

Shell must seek a new air

Beliefs



- That **high quality science** must form the foundation of public health policy
- That jointly with science, **those whose health is affected by policy should have the driving voices** in the creation of those policies.
- That progress is never a result of scientific discovery alone; it requires other forces: **crusading journalism, effective advocacy, an educated public.**

The drip, drip, drip of new science



pxhere.com

Food packaging materials contain large numbers of untested hazardous PFAS

By EHN Curators · Mar 20, 2024 · 2 min read



 TOP SCIENCE

A recent study published in [Environmental Science & Technology](#) points out the large knowledge gaps around the presence of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances ([PFAS](#)) - a group of chemicals associated with severe health issues - in food packaging materials.

In short:

- The study found that 68 types of PFAS have been detected in food packaging materials, including in plastic, paper and metal packaging.



In the US, two victories to celebrate

The New York Times

E.P.A. Says 'Forever Chemicals' Must Be Removed From Tap Water

The rule applies to a family of chemicals known as PFAS that are linked to serious health effects. Water utilities argue the cost is too great.



Health

Life, But Better

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Food

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Mindfulness

Relationships

New EPA rules for about 200 US chemical manufacturers take aim at 'cancer alleys'

By Brenda Goodman, CNN

🕒 3 minute read · Updated 9:29 AM EDT, Tue April 9, 2024



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The rise of Environmental Justice reporting



Rise of niche sites & nonprofit news



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PICK-UP
ZONE
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REMOVED
IMMEDIATELY



EXPLAINER

Ontario could run out of landfill space in nine years. Then what?

Industries, businesses and institutions make two-thirds of Ontario's garbage. It's too easy for them to dump, burn and export instead of reduce, reuse and recycle

Community reporting



A diversity of story approaches



Residents fear Pennsylvania, West Virginia chemical recycling proposals will deepen fossil fuel ties and pollution problems

"We'd like to be talking about positive things, focusing on our renewable energy future."

By Kristina Marusic ■ Apr 01, 2024 ■ □ 7 min read



PITTSBURGH — When Sandy Field first heard about the plan to build a new chemical recycling facility in her community in Point Township, Pennsylvania, she thought it sounded like a great idea.



Residents fear Pennsylvania, West Virginia chemical recycling proposals will deepen fossil fuel ties and pollution problems



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The proposal came from Encina, a Texas-based company that hopes to build chemical recycling plants in the U.S., Mexico, Europe, Middle East and Asia. To date, the company has only recycled plastic at a small demonstration facility in San Antonio, Texas. The facility in Point Township, a suburban and farmland community of about 4,000 people, would be their first attempt to scale their operations.

Learn more at the link in our bio.

#ehsciences #environmentalhealth #fossilfuels
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“Chemical recycling is energy intensive, really expensive and just one in a line of examples of the plastics industry’s proposed solutions that further entrench us in the linear economy while doing nothing to stop the production of single-use plastics.”



Latest chemical recycling plant closing spurs concern over the industry’s viability

From ehn.org





Why chemical recycling has some people in Appalachia concerned about pollution and safety

Allegheny Front

7 days ago

News & Politics





nuestros cuerpos.

EHN

0:08 / 1:18

Sustancias químicas: La situación de los plásticos en el mundo, según el informe de PlastChem

Rise of science as storytelling



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Why you're essential

Impact



- Progress is never a result of scientific discovery alone; it requires other forces: **crusading journalism, effective advocacy, an educated public.**

2008: Canada bans BPA in baby bottles





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Canada first to label bisphenol A as officially dangerous

MARTIN MITTELSTAEDT >
PUBLISHED APRIL 15, 2008

This article was published more than 15 years ago. Some information may no longer be current.

 COMMENTS  SHARE

Health Canada is calling bisphenol A a dangerous substance, making it the first regulatory body in the world to reach such a determination and taking the initial step toward measures to control exposures to it.

Although the government won't announce specific bans or restrictions, the designation as dangerous could pave the way for the hormonally active chemical to

Ottawa Plastic Treaty talks - Apr 23-29



Fourth Session (INC-4)

NOTIFICATIONS



23 - 29 April 2024, Ottawa, Canada

The fourth session of the [Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee](#) to develop an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment (INC-4), is scheduled to take place from 23 to 29 April 2024 at the Shaw Center in Ottawa, Canada. The session will be preceded by regional consultations on 21 April 2024.

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[Registration](#)

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Chemical whack-a-mole



California, Pennsylvania move to ban DEHP



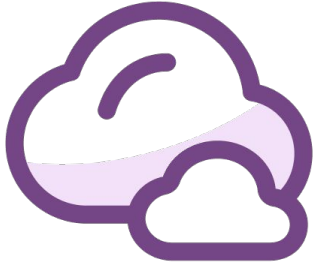
Toxic plasticizer in medical devices faces state bans

California, Pennsylvania move to nix DEHP – 20 years after FDA warns against its use.

By Douglas Fischer ■ Apr 11, 2024 ■ 2 min read



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Merci!

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