



**NEWSLETTER**  
**December 2009**

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This newsletter is intended to provide a recap of some of the healthy homes and lead-based paint information that we have shared in the IHHN meetings or that has come to us through various Listservs. We want to especially thank the [Alliance for Healthy Homes](#) and the [National Center for Healthy Homes](#)

**IDAHO HEALTHY HOMES NETWORK**

<http://www.hud.gov/local/id/library/healthyhomes/IHHN.cfm>

**RADON RESISTANT CONSTRUCTION STRATEGIES WEBINAR**

<http://www.practitionerresources.org/showdoc.html?id=67320&topic=7.%20Healthy%20Living%20Environment&doctype=Spreadsheet>

**COMMUNITY ACTION FOR A RENEWED ENVIRONMENT (CARE) GRANTS**

The EPA is making \$2 million available in 2010 to reduce pollution at the local level through the Community Action for a Renewed Environment (CARE) program. CARE is a community-based program that works with county and local governments, tribes, non-profit organizations and universities to help the public understand and reduce toxic risks from numerous sources. Applications are due March 9, 2010. EPA will conduct three Webcasts to answer questions from prospective applicants about the application process on Feb 2nd, 23rd, and 26th from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. More information about the grants: <http://www.epa.gov/care/>

**THE JANUARY 2010 EDITION OF THE ALLIANCE ALERT**

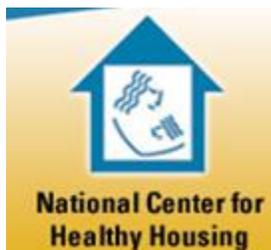
[http://afhh.org/res/alerts/archives/alert\\_nov09.pdf](http://afhh.org/res/alerts/archives/alert_nov09.pdf).

**RENOVATION, REPAIR, AND PAINTING COURSE TRAINING**

is being offered by [Industrial Hygiene Resources](#).

**QAP GREEN BUILDING RATING SUMMARY**

The 5th annual QAP Green Building Rating Summary prepared by Global Green USA is available at: <http://tinyurl.com/yforde8> .



### **PEDIATRIC ENVIRONMENTAL HOME ASSESSMENT TRAINING PROGRAM**

If you're interested in starting a healthy homes home visiting program with your Maternal and Child Health Program or other home visitation program, NCHH has an online training called the Pediatric Environmental Home Assessment. Funded by EPA and CDC, this training prepares nurses and others conducting home visits to do a healthy homes visual assessment. The three-page survey form and a follow-up Nursing Care Plan (to be completed with the family) are included with the training. It's free and nurses who complete it can receive continuing education credits.

[http://www.healthyhomestraining.org/Nurse/PEHA\\_Start.htm](http://www.healthyhomestraining.org/Nurse/PEHA_Start.htm)

### **SIMPLE PAPER TEST MAY DETECT PESTICIDES**

Testing for pesticide contamination usually involves significant cost in time and money. But scientists are reporting the development of a simple paper sensor that can be dunked in a sample and give a reading a short time later, like a litmus test. [New York Times]

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/12/29/science/29obtest.html>

### **CLEANING AGENTS MAY HELP SUPERBUGS GROW**

Disinfectants commonly used in homes and medical facilities can boost the resistance of some bacteria to life-saving antibiotics, according to a study released on Monday.

[http://www.iol.co.za/index.php?set\\_id=1&click\\_id=117&art\\_id=nw20091228231046695C714895](http://www.iol.co.za/index.php?set_id=1&click_id=117&art_id=nw20091228231046695C714895)

### **NEW CDC SURVEY TRACKS MERCURY LEVELS IN AMERICANS**

Mercury exposure in the United States increases with age then starts tapering off when people turn 50, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention found in a new study assessing chemicals in people's bodies.

<http://www.nytimes.com/gwire/2009/12/11/11greenwire-new-cdc-survey-tracks-mercury-levels-in-america-42540.html>

### **OREGON DROPS THE BALL ON MERCURY**

Nearly every day, an eastern Oregon cement factory vents an invisible and toxic cloud of mercury into the skies above Durkee. Only one other factory in the country emits more mercury of the type most harmful to people. [Durkee is just east of Baker City, OR.]

[http://www.oregonlive.com/environment/index.ssf/2009/12/oregon\\_drops\\_the\\_ball\\_on\\_mercury.html](http://www.oregonlive.com/environment/index.ssf/2009/12/oregon_drops_the_ball_on_mercury.html)

### **FISH, MERCURY AND CHANGING HEART RHYTHMS**

People who ate enough contaminated fish to raise methyl mercury levels in their bodies to levels still considered "safe" had subtle changes to their heart rhythm that may affect their long-term health. The fish also contain high levels of fish oils including omega 3 fatty acids that are generally considered to be protective for the heart. But, in this study, eating more fish oil in tandem with the methylmercury did

not prevent the heart anomalies.

<http://www.environmentalhealthnews.org/ehs/newscience/safe-mercury-levels-from-fish-pose-risk-to-heart/>



#### **WHAT'S IN YOUR DRINKING WATER?**

[http://www.ewg.org/tapwater/home?inlist=Y&utm\\_source=tapng&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_content=fourth-link&utm\\_campaign=toxics](http://www.ewg.org/tapwater/home?inlist=Y&utm_source=tapng&utm_medium=email&utm_content=fourth-link&utm_campaign=toxics)

#### **CHILD DIABETES BLAMED ON FOOD SWEETENER**

Scientists have proved for the first time that a cheap form of sugar used in thousands of food products and soft drinks can damage human metabolism and is fuelling the obesity crisis.

<http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/uk/health/article6954603.ece>

#### **HOUSEHOLD PESTICIDE EXPOSURE LINKED TO ARTHRITIS AND LUPUS**

<http://tinyurl.com/yjggpej>

#### **ASSESSING RISKS FROM BISPHENOL-A**

Evaluating human health risks from endocrine disruptors such as BPA is difficult, but animal studies suggest trouble is afoot.

<http://www.americanscientist.org/issues/feature/2010/1/assessing-risks-from-bisphenol-a/1>

#### **PLASTICIZER MAY BE TIED TO BOY'S BREAST ENLARGEMENT**

A recent report points to yet another possible harmful effect of exposure to phthalates -- a controversial plastics chemical used widely in the manufacture of consumer products.

<http://www.canada.com/health/Plasticizer%20tied%20boys%20breast%20enlargement/2339376/story.html>

#### **MOLD**

[http://www.afhh.org/hps/hps\\_mold.htm](http://www.afhh.org/hps/hps_mold.htm)

Video and field guide on dealing with flood clean up:

<http://www.nchh.org/Research/Archived-Research-Projects/New-Orleans-Healthy-Rebuilding.aspx>

#### **SOCIAL COSTS OF LEAD EXPOSURE**

<http://archpedi.ama-assn.org/cgi/content/abstract/163/9/844>

#### **THE COST OF LEAD-POISONED KIDS**

The Department retained a professor from Columbia University to assess the cost to New Jersey of having lead poisoned children. The report, released on December 21, 2009, conservatively estimates



that the New Jersey State budget would realize benefits of \$14,000 per student and \$9 billion across the entire cohort of children aged 0 to 6 if no child in this cohort had a blood lead level greater than one microgram of lead per deciliter of whole blood.

[http://www.state.nj.us/publicadvocate/public/pdf/NJ\\_Lead\\_Report\\_Final-5.pdf](http://www.state.nj.us/publicadvocate/public/pdf/NJ_Lead_Report_Final-5.pdf)

#### **DOOR AND WINDOW MANUFACTURERS MAGAZINE ARTICLE ON EPA'S RRP RULE**

<http://www.dwmmag.com/index.php/epa-makes-lead-monitoringabatment-a-top-priority/>

#### **COMPILATION OF ALL CPSC RECALLED PRODUCTS DUE TO LEAD PAINT**

<http://www.state.nj.us/publicadvocate/public/pdf/2009%20CPSC%20Recalled%20Products%20-%20Lead%20Complete%2012.17.09.pdf>

#### **CHILDRENS' BOOTS RECALLED DUE TO LEAD PAINT**

<http://www.cpsc.gov/cpsc/pub/prerel/prhtml10/10076.html>

#### **HALF OF KIDS JEWELRY MADE OF PURE LEAD**

Health Canada oversaw the targeted testing of 67 suspicious pieces and identified 39 with illegal levels of lead. The results, summarized in an internal report released to Canwest News Service under Access to Information laws, show most items contained lead levels nowhere near the legal limit, set at 0.6 per cent or 600 part per million.

Twenty of the metallic pieces were made of almost pure lead, with levels ranging from 80 per cent lead to 95 per cent lead. These levels, comparable to lead-acid car batteries, were found in such things as an apple-shaped pendant and a key-shaped pendant with a heart.

The worst offender, a plastic wrist band with various metallic charms made of 95 per cent lead, was labeled lead-free, according to Health Canada.

Another 10 items had lead levels ranging from 60 to 79 per cent lead, including mood rings and a happy-face necklace. Two other items were made up of 19 per cent and 43 per cent lead.

<http://www.vancouver.sun.com/health/Half+kids+jewelry+tested+contains+pure+lead+Health+Canada/2371840/story.html>

#### **\$1.25 MILLION PENALTY FOR LEAD PAINT ON WOODEN RAILWAY TOYS**

To see this release on CPSC's web site, please go to:

<http://www.cpsc.gov/cpsc/pub/prerel/prhtml10/10094.html>

#### **NZU, TRADITIONAL REMEDY FOR MORNING SICKNESS: POTENTIAL HIGH LEVELS OF LEAD AND ARSENIC**

The Texas Department of State Health Services and FDA notified healthcare professionals and consumers, especially pregnant or breastfeeding women, to avoid consuming a product called "Nzu", taken as a traditional remedy for morning sickness, because of the potential health risks from high levels

of lead and arsenic, noted on laboratory analysis by Texas DSHS. Exposure to lead can result in a number of harmful effects, and a developing child is particularly at risk of effects on the brain and nervous system. Arsenic is a carcinogen, and excessive long-term exposure to it has been associated with a range of adverse health effects, including cancers of the urinary bladder, lung and skin.

Nzu, which is sold at African specialty stores, is also called Calabash clay, Calabar stone, Mabele, Argile and La Craie. It generally resembles balls of clay or mud and is usually sold in small plastic bags with a handwritten label identifying it as "Nzu" or "Salted Nzu." Anyone who has been ingesting the product should contact their health care provider.

<http://www.fda.gov/Safety/MedWatch/SafetyInformation/SafetyAlertsforHumanMedicalProducts/ucm196045.htm>

### **PVC PACKAGING AND LEAD**

*An assessment of Heavy Metal in Packaging: 2009 Update* is available from the Toxics in Packaging Clearinghouse website at: [www.toxicsinpackaging.org](http://www.toxicsinpackaging.org)

### **OTHER LINKS:**

HUD's Office of Health Homes and Lead Hazard Control -- <http://www.hud.gov/offices/lead/>

EPA -- [www.epa.gov/lead](http://www.epa.gov/lead)

OSHA -- [www.osha.gov](http://www.osha.gov)

National Center for Healthy Housing -- <http://www.nchh.org/Home.aspx>

Alliance for Healthy Homes -- [www.afhh.org](http://www.afhh.org)

U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission; Product Recalls --

<http://cpsc.gov/cpscpub/prerel/prerel.html>

LeadNet -- international listserve on lead and lead poisoning; to subscribe: [Leadnet-on@mail-list.com](mailto:Leadnet-on@mail-list.com)

To search LeadNet Archives -- <http://archive.mail-list.com/leadnet>

User Name = leadnet

Password = lswp (The User Name and Password are case-sensitive.)

For parents of a lead-poisoned child: [www.alphalead.org](http://www.alphalead.org)

Tamara Rubin's (Portland, OR) website: <http://www.mychildrenhaveleadpoisoning.com>