

TOXIC CHEMICALS, HEALTH AND ECONOMY

A Call to Action for Minnesota Candidates

Due to advances in detection methods, we are finding new chemicals in Minnesotans bodies, homes and environment. These chemicals are used in our shampoos, cleaners, children's toys and other products. Some of these chemicals are toxic and are contributing to increases in cancer, asthma and other diseases.

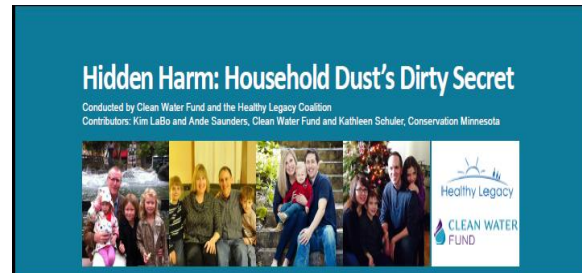
Our Chemical Body Burden

According to the Centers for Disease Control's biomonitoring program, most Americans have a variety of chemicals in our bodies. Local biomonitoring projects conducted by the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) detected harmful chemicals like BPA, parabens, mercury and PFCs in the bodies of Minnesotans.

- **The majority of the 66 pregnant women** who participated in the Riverside Prenatal Biomonitoring Pilot Project had hormone-disrupting BPA (Bisphenol A) and parabens in their urine.
- **All of the 196 participants** of the PFC Biomonitoring project had three PFCs in their blood. PFC exposure is linked to thyroid, kidney and liver disease.

Pollution in Our Homes

Chemicals enter our bodies through various routes of exposure. One source of exposure is household dust, a problem which appears to be widespread. Tests performed in multiple states have found hormone-disrupting chemicals in dust.



A 2013 Healthy Legacy household dust testing project of five Minnesota homes found that all homes tested contained phthalates, a chemical compound that is known to pose a risk to children's health, particularly the future fertility of boys.

Health Impacts

Cancer is the leading cause of death in Minnesota and will impact half of our state's men and 40 percent of women. Some of the most commonly diagnosed cancers, such as breast and prostate cancer, are due to a combination of genetic and environmental factors, including chemical exposure. According to the President's Cancer Panel Report, "the true burden of environmentally induced cancer has been grossly underestimated." Preventing devastating disease by reducing exposure to unnecessary chemicals should be a top priority of lawmakers.

Emerging Threat to Our Water

New chemicals, including those commonly used in consumer products, are being detected in Minnesota's waters. Triclosan, recently banned in body washes and hand soaps sold in Minnesota, was detected at high levels in the Mississippi River and is highly toxic to aquatic life.



Sample of Chemicals of Concern Found in Minnesota's Water

- **AHTN/ Tonalide:** cosmetics fragrance chemical, found in 18 % of waters tested
- **Skatol:** fragrance chemical used in soaps, detergents, lotions, and perfumes, found in 14% of tested waters
- **TCEP/tris phosphate:** flame retardant added to plastics, textiles foam products, found in 20% of water sampled

A Good Business Strategy: Toxics Out, Safe Alternatives In

Some Minnesota businesses have chosen to lead by example when it comes to addressing toxic chemicals by developing safe products and creating policies that assess the toxicity of chemicals in the supply chain and promote the use of safer alternatives.

EarthClean, South St. Paul

Product: Non-toxic firefighting gel

Nature Works LLC, headquartered in Minnetonka

Products: Global leader in bioplastic production -one of the first companies to offer commercially available biobased polymers

Segetis, Golden Valley

Products: Segetis is a green chemistry company which creates safer biobased alternatives to petroleum derived chemicals.

Target, headquartered in Minneapolis

Policy: In 2013 the Minnesota based retailer announced a new chemical policy to address toxic chemicals in children's products and a variety of other product categories



Minnesota Has the Tools –We Need Leaders in St. Paul to Use Them!

Minnesota's Toxic Free Kids' Act, which passed in 2009 with bipartisan support, provides the state with tools to identify and prioritize harmful chemicals in children's products. As a result of this process, the Minnesota Department of Health identified nine priority chemicals that are likely to expose children, including BPA, formaldehyde, lead, cadmium, phthalates and toxic flame retardants

Even though Minnesota has a list of priority chemicals, manufacturers are not required to disclose which products they are in. The Toxic Free Kids Act of 2015 would require such disclosure and give Minnesota consumers the right to know if a product they are purchasing for a child contains any toxic, priority chemicals. Minnesota families need legislators who are committed to protecting kids by supporting policy that ensures their right to know about the worst chemicals in children's products.

Endnotes available online at www.healthy-legacy.squarespace.com



Healthy Legacy Coalition
www.healthy-legacy.squarespace.com



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