

“Considering what is in my body, I feel a sense of duty to inform others as much as possible and to protect my own child from possible contaminants.”

PROJECT PARTICIPANT SARA GROCHOWSKI,
AGE 31, MINNESOTA

IS IT IN US?

CHEMICAL CONTAMINATION IN OUR BODIES



www.IsItInUs.com

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Toxic Trespass, Regulatory Failure & Opportunities for Action

Toxic chemicals from everyday products contaminate the bodies of every person in this country. Shower curtains, water bottles, baby bottles, toys, shampoo, cosmetics, couch cushions, computers, and hundreds of other common products that ordinary people use every day contain toxic chemical ingredients that leech out of the products and into our bodies.

Thirty-five Americans from seven states participated in a national bio-monitoring project in the spring of 2007. This is the broadest non-governmental project of its kind to measure toxic chemicals in the bodies of average Americans.

Each participant was tested for contamination by twenty toxic chemicals from three chemical families: phthalates (THA-lates), bisphenol A, and poly-brominated diphenyl ethers (PBDEs). **The project found toxic chemicals in every person tested.**

- All 35 participants had at least 7 of the 20 chemicals in their bodies.
- All 33 participants who contributed urine samples had phthalates in their bodies.
- All 33 participants who contributed urine samples had bisphenol A in their urine.
- All 35 participants had six types of PBDEs in their bodies, and all but one had decaBDE.

“I expected that because I’m a vegetarian and have a healthy lifestyle that the levels in my body would be lower. Now that I see my results, I’m wondering if the water bottle on my bike, or other things I thought were safe, are actually causing harm.”

REVEREND DR. JIM ANTAL, AGE 57, MASSACHUSETTS



Participating State Organizations

ALASKA
Alaska Community Action on Toxics
www.akaction.org



CONNECTICUT
Coalition for a Safe & Healthy Connecticut
www.safehealthyct.org



ILLINOIS
Environment Illinois
www.environmentillinois.org



MASSACHUSETTS
Alliance for a Healthy Tomorrow
www.healthytomorrow.org



The Alliance for a
**HEALTHY
TOMORROW**

MICHIGAN
Michigan Network for Children's Environmental Health
www.mnceh.org

MINNESOTA
Healthy Legacy
www.healthylegacy.org



NEW YORK
The JustGreen Partnership
www.just-green.org

The JustGreen Partnership
*Working for Environmental Health and Justice
for New York's People and Communities*

Participating National Organizations



Commonweal Biomonitoring Resource Center
www.commonweal.org

Environmental Health Fund
www.environmentalhealthfund.org

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Common Sense Solutions

No one can shop, eat or exercise his or her way to a body free from toxic chemicals. We shouldn't be exposed to unnecessary, dangerous chemicals as we go about our daily routines. We can improve our health and the health of our communities by adopting these common sense policies, which are already advancing at the state and federal levels:

- Phase-out the most harmful chemicals and switch to safer alternatives;
- Require that all chemicals are screened for safety and that toxicity data and product ingredients be made publicly available;
- Promote the development of safer alternatives and environmentally friendly "green" technologies;
- Protect workers and communities where toxic chemicals are produced, used, and disposed.

Americans need a new, comprehensive federal policy to raise the standards governing chemical use in society. Some states are taking the lead to create new solutions that could be applied nationally. To learn more about what is happening in your state or in Congress, visit www.IsItInUs.org.

"For me as a pediatrician, the most worrisome thing about the presence of scores of chemicals in people's bloodstreams is the concern about what these chemicals might be doing to children. Children's developing organ systems—their brains, their immune systems, their lungs, their reproductive systems—are extremely sensitive, and the development is easily disrupted, especially in the earliest years of life. The situation in which we find ourselves, in which these industrial chemicals are in children's bodies with insufficient knowledge of their toxicity, is potentially perilous."

PHILIP LANDRIGAN, M.D., CHAIRMAN OF THE
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AND PREVENTIVE MEDICINE,
MOUNT SINAI SCHOOL OF MEDICINE



Human and animal studies link the three families of chemicals detected in this project to birth defects, asthma, cancer, learning disabilities, and other health impacts. **For some toxic chemicals, the levels found in people are near or above levels linked to health impacts in laboratory animals.** Consider that scientists estimate that 95% of Americans are contaminated with bisphenol A at levels thought to cause harm in laboratory animals.

The participants experienced a range of feelings and emotions after learning their bodies were contaminated with toxic chemicals including shock, anger and passion to act for change. Here's just a sampling of participant reactions:

"While it is disturbing to know the level of these unwanted chemicals in my body, I believe it is important to have this information and use it to demand change."

— Elaine Nekritz, age 49, Illinois

"I feel lucky that I was able to participate in an important project like this. Most kids my age don't get to do something that could help so many people."

— Bryan Brown, age 12 (the youngest participant), Michigan

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“The project created a new perspective for me regarding the need for action—if not by the federal government, then by the state.”

— David Koon, age 60, New York

“As a health professional and a legislator, this is empowering information for me and I hope it galvanizes change.”

— Toni N. Harp, age 60, Connecticut

“What other contaminants might be in our systems that we don’t know about?”

— Diane Benson, age 52, Alaska

We Can Fix Our Broken Chemical Safety System

Our nation’s chemical safety system has failed. Three-quarters of the 80,000 chemicals in commerce today have not been tested for safety. We know next to nothing about how the interactions of multiple chemicals may affect our health. Manufacturers of products containing known toxics are not even required to list those contents on the label.

The problem is a Jurassic-era law regulating space-age chemicals. The federal Toxic Substances Control Act was enacted in 1976 and has not been updated to reflect recent research, including evidence that even tiny doses of toxic chemicals may cause harm. U.S. standards are so weak that even well-known toxic hazards, like asbestos and lead, are not banned from commerce.

“With rising numbers of children with developmental and neurological problems, we simply shouldn’t continue to allow chemicals that are toxic to the brain to be used in products.”

SHELLEY MADORE, AGE 45, MINNESOTA

Chemicals of Concern



PHTHALATES: Used in soft PVC (vinyl) toys, shower curtains, flooring, and medical equipment; also binds scents and color in cosmetics and air fresheners. Research links phthalates to feminized genitals in baby boys, prompting bans in California and Europe.

BISPHENOL A (BPA): Used in some plastic water and baby bottles, dental sealants, and the resin linings of metal food cans. Developed originally as a synthetic estrogen hormone, human and animal studies link BPA to reduced sperm counts and other reproductive impacts, cancer, obesity, and miscarriages.



PBDEs: Flame-retardants added to the plastic cases of televisions and home electronics, automobile components, foam cushions, upholstered furniture and other textiles in home and workplace. Studies link PBDE exposure to impaired memory, learning, and behavior in laboratory animals.

