

February, 2018



## CNHHE News



Hello CNHHE members! Now that we can feel the warmth of the sun across Canada (and, in the far North are glad to catch longer glimpses of it), we know that spring is coming soon.

Thoughts of planting are now on the minds of all gardeners and farmers. In this vein, it is encouraging to hear that Quebec is leading the way in the fight against the use of three neonicotinoids, chlorpyrifos, and atrazine.

As per below, the CMP has Draft Screening Assessments or Risk Management Scopes for several chemicals open for comment at present. Are there any in which you are particularly interested? Please let us know so that we can plan a one hour webinar with experts to inform those of us who are less knowledgeable about a substance in question. By collaborating on comments, we can reduce the amount of work for everyone, and our submission will pack more of a punch for those making decisions.

An easy way to have your voice heard would be to participate in Health Canada's consumer consultations on front-of-food-package labelling.

As always, this month we have included news items from several organizations, to whom we are ever grateful for their dedication to promoting human and environmental health.

Enjoy the remains of winter!

### [Chemicals Management Plan \(CMP\) News:](#)

#### Asbestos

- [The proposed Prohibition of Asbestos and Asbestos Products Regulations and the related publications](#) were released for a 75-day public comment period ending on **March 22, 2018**.

#### Thiocarbamates Group

- [The Draft Screening Assessment for the Thiocarbamates Group](#) was published for a 60-day public comment period ending on **April 4, 2018**.

## Thioperoxydicarbonic Diamide ([[(H2n) C(S)] 2s2), Tetramethyl- [Tmtd]

- The [Risk Management Scope for TMTD](#) was published for a 60-day public comment period ending on **April 4, 2018**.

## Cyanides

- [The Draft Screening Assessment](#) and [Risk Management Scope for Cyanides](#) were published for a 60-day public comment period ending on **April 11, 2018**.

## Selenium and its Compounds

- [A proposed order adding selenium and its compounds to Schedule 1 of the Canadian Environmental Protection Act, 1999](#) was published for a 60-day public comment period ending on **April 18, 2018**.

## Priority B Micro-organisms

- [The Final Screening Assessments](#) for *Trichoderma reesei* strain ATCC 74252, *Bacillus circulans* strain ATCC 9500, *Bacillus megaterium* strain ATCC 14581, *Chaetomium globosum* strain ATCC 6205 and *Micrococcus luteus* strain ATCC 4698 (Priority B micro-organisms) were published. A notice of intent to amend the Domestic Substances List to apply the Significant New Activity provisions of the Canadian Environmental Protection Act, 1999 to *Trichoderma reesei* strain ATCC 74252 was also published for a 60-day public comment period ending on **April 25, 2018**.

## Fatty Amides group

- [The Draft Screening Assessment for the Fatty Amides Group](#) was published for a 60-day public comment period ending on **April 25, 2018**.

## Natural Gas Condensates

- [A Final Order adding natural gas condensates to Schedule 1 of the Canadian Environmental Protection Act, 1999](#) was published.

## Regulations Made Under Section 89 and 114

- [The Regulations Amending Certain Regulations Made Under Section 89, Subsection 93\(1\) and Section 114 of the Canadian Environmental Protection Act, 1999](#) were published.

## Priority C Micro-organisms

- [The Final Screening Assessments for \*Arthrobacter globiformis\* strain ATCC 8010 and \*Cellulmonas biazotea\* strain ATCC 486 \(Priority C micro-organisms\)](#) were published.

## *Trichoderma reesei* ATCC 74252 (T. reesei)

[Publication](#) of the [Final Screening Assessment](#) for the micro-organism T. reesei, and of a [Notice of Intent](#) to apply the Significant New Activity (SNAc) provisions of CEPA to this living organism occurred on February 24, 2018.

...

## Other Opportunities and Information:

### [The Environmental Health Association of Quebec](#)

[Environmental Sensitivities Awareness Day - Online Bilingual Conference, May 12 2018.](#)



For over 30 years patients have been seeking help from primary care physicians for new and emerging medical conditions. In the early years, sceptics challenged the physiological validity of the symptoms but over time, a large body of scientific evidence has grown that supports that these conditions are biological. Education and awareness of the research has not been sufficiently disseminated to medical professionals and politicians. For Environmental Sensitivities Awareness Day, we have gathered a group of experts to help make us more aware of the medical, social and legal issues of Environmental Sensitivities.

...

### [McMaster Optimal Ageing Portal](#)

#### [Fact or fiction: research reveals the truth about common medications](#)

People believe all sorts of things that aren't necessarily true. Do we really need to wait an hour after we eat before swimming? Will we catch cold if we go outside with wet hair? Many times, there is no harm in believing common myths about our health. However, when it comes to the medications you're taking, myths and misconceptions can potentially be harmful.

Research reveals that some drugs don't live up to their claims and in fact, may cause other health problems. Here are six recent examples. Click on the links to find out more about the research and the myth-busting results.

#### 1. Heart health benefits of hormone therapy for menopause?

For many years, women happily signed up



for hormone replacement therapy believing it would not only help with those annoying symptoms of menopause, but would also provide some protection against heart disease. Evidence from large-scale studies found that HRT actually increases the risk of blood clots and stroke (1).

[News 'flash' for women: the latest findings on hormone therapy for menopause & heart disease](#)

## 2. Opioids for chronic pain?

Opioid drug addiction – and the resulting healthcare costs and tragic overdoses – have reached epidemic proportions. As a result, the tide is beginning to turn on the widespread prescribing of opioid drugs for relief of chronic pain. Research evidence suggests opioids may actually only provide limited relief and physicians are urged to recommend alternative treatments first, to manage chronic pain, including antidepressants, exercise, acupuncture or mindfulness (2; 3).

[A closer look at opioids for chronic pain](#)

## 3. Cholesterol pills to lower risk of dementia?

Promising research evidence suggested that taking statins – cholesterol-lowering pills that improve heart health – could also reduce the risk of dementia. Unfortunately, it's not that simple.

[Do cholesterol lowering drugs help prevent dementia?](#)

## 4. Antipsychotics for people with dementia?

The distressing behaviours associated with dementia – including aggression, agitation, hallucinations, delusions and wandering/exit-seeking – are the most challenging for caregivers. Antipsychotic drugs help to a degree, which is why they're widely prescribed, but there are many side effects. Research evidence suggests that non-drug approaches should be considered first. Person-centred care, sensory stimulation and listening to music are three evidence-based drug-free treatment strategies to help ease challenging behaviours (4).

[Treating behavioural problems of dementia: When confusion leads to controversy](#)

[Dementia and antipsychotic medications](#)

## 5. Vitamin supplements for vision?

Common age-related vision issues include cataract and macular degeneration. Vitamin and supplement companies often claim that taking antioxidants will help you avoid these conditions. But buyer beware! Research evidence shows conclusively that these supplements do not prevent or slow the progress of either of these vision problems (5)

## 6. Prescribed treatment for heartburn?

Proton pump inhibitors (PPIs) – drugs that suppress the production of stomach acid – are among the most commonly prescribed medications in the world. That's beginning to change as they are recognized as not necessary for many people. Current recommendations are to avoid PPIs altogether, and if they must be taken, to take the lowest dose for the shortest time possible (6).

[Got heartburn? Avoid these common acid-blocking drugs](#)

## Stay informed to avoid unnecessary medications

Sure, go ahead and drink warm milk before bed and avoid reading in low light. But don't be so trusting when it comes to the drugs you're taking.

Medical researchers are always working to test the effectiveness of drugs and treatments as well as assess their risk of side effects, and new findings can contradict long-held beliefs. Staying in regular contact with your doctor and pharmacist will help ensure the drugs you're taking are up-to-date and appropriate for your needs.

## References

1. Boardman HM, Hartley L, Eisinga A, et al. [Hormone therapy for preventing cardiovascular disease in post-menopausal women](#). *Cochrane Database Syst Rev*. 2015; 3:CD002229. doi: 10.1002/14651858.CD002229.pub4.
2. Chou R, Turner JA, Devine EB, et al. [The effectiveness and risks of long-term opioid therapy for chronic pain: A systematic review for a National Institutes of Healthy Pathways to Prevention Workshop](#). *Ann Intern Med*. 2015; 162(4):276-86. doi: 10.7326/M14-2559.
3. Chou R, Deyo R, Friedly J, et al. [Noninvasive treatments for low back pain](#). *AHRQ Comparative Effectiveness Reviews*. 2016; Report No.: 16-EHC004-EF.
4. Ueda T, Suzukamo Y, Sato M, et al. [Effects of music therapy on behavioral and psychological symptoms of dementia: A systematic review and meta-analysis](#). *Ageing Res Rev*. 2013; 12(2):628-641. doi: 10.1016/j.arr.2013.02.003.
5. Evans JR, Lawrenson JG. [Antioxidant vitamin and mineral supplements for preventing age-related macular degeneration](#). *Cochrane Database Syst Rev*. 2017; 7:CD000253. doi: 10.1002/14651858.CD000253.pub4.
6. Haastrup P, Paulsen MS, Begtrup LM, et al. [Strategies for discontinuation of proton pump inhibitors: A systematic review](#). *Fam Pract*. 2014; 31(6):625-630. doi: 10.1093/fampra/cmu050.

...

## [Environmental Health Perspectives](#)

### [Chips off the Old Block: How a Father's Preconception Exposures Might Affect the Health of His Children](#)

Charles W. Schmidt

Scientists have long known that when it comes to harm from environmental exposures, the youngest children often face the greatest risk.<sup>1</sup> Chemicals and pollutants that pass through a woman's placenta into her fetus can interfere with the child's normal development and cause health effects lasting into adulthood.<sup>2</sup> Newer research is examining the role a woman's pre-pregnancy exposures may have on the fetus. What has gotten far less attention, however, is how the biological consequences of a father's environmental exposures before conception might affect his unborn children. [Read the full article here!](#)

...

## [CBC](#)

### [Quebec places new restrictions on pesticides in bid to protect honeybees](#)

Neonicotinoids are commonly used by farmers to help keep crops free of pests.

Quebec is introducing new restrictions on pesticides considered harmful to honeybees.

Under the changes, farmers will have to get permission from a certified agronomist before using certain pesticides on crops.

The restricted pesticides include three types of neonicotinoides, as well as chlorpyrifos and atrazine, which has been banned in Europe for more than a decade.



[Read the full article here!](#)

...

## [CAREX Canada](#)

[E-Bulletin November 2017](#)

NEW RESOURCES - Two new Package Summaries now available



A new industry-focused summary on [carcinogens that health care workers may be exposed to](#) is now available. The package provides an overview of the most prevalent exposures for those working in health care, including shiftwork, antineoplastic agents, formaldehyde, artificial ultraviolet radiation, and diesel engine exhaust. For more information on exposure to antineoplastic agents in Canadian workplaces (including health care), view a recording of our recent webinar with WorkSafeBC on our [Videos page](#).

Another exposure package summary - on [priority carcinogens in traffic-related air pollution](#) (TRAP) - is also now available. TRAP is a major contributor to outdoor air pollution, which is classified by the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) as carcinogenic to humans. This package summarizes the many components of TRAP associated with cancer, including diesel engine exhaust, gasoline engine exhaust, particulate matter, 1,3-butadiene, benzene, and formaldehyde.

To learn more, and to view the other summaries we've developed visit our [Package Summaries page](#).

...

## CAREX Canada - PARTNER UPDATE

OCRC and CCO release burden of occupational cancer report



[The Occupational Cancer Research Centre \(OCRC\)](#) and [Cancer Care Ontario \(CCO\)](#) recently released their **Burden of Occupational Cancer in Ontario report**, which focuses on the most common carcinogens found in Ontario workplaces and their contribution to occupational cancer. Results show that [solar radiation](#), [asbestos](#), [diesel engine exhaust](#), and [crystalline silica](#) had the largest cancer burden in the province. The report also highlights opportunities to reduce the burden of cancer in Ontario, including strengthening occupational exposure limits, enforcing existing regulations, and reducing the use of toxic substances. CAREX Canada's

occupational exposure estimates were used to produce the burden estimates. To view the full report, visit the [OCRC website](#).

...

## [National Collaborating Centre for Environmental Health](#)

### [Lead in Drinking Water: Homes and Schools](#)

Lead is a potent neurotoxin that is commonly present in our environment and can have serious, irreversible cognitive and behavioral impacts, particularly in children. Historically, most lead exposure has occurred through inhaling leaded-gasoline combustion products in the atmosphere; this contribution has drastically declined due to the global phase-out of leaded gasoline. Other sources of exposure include occupational exposure, leaded paint found in older homes, and in drinking water. Although source water supplying drinking water systems is generally low in lead, lead can enter drinking water by leaching from lead service lines, plumbing, and fixtures. There is

no known level below which lead exposure is considered "safe" ([Centers for Disease Control, 2017](#)).



The pervasiveness of lead in our environment can make it difficult to completely eliminate all sources of exposure. However, there are actions that can be taken to limit our intake. The resources presented here are intended to:

- assist public health practitioners in understanding the issues around lead in drinking water;
- highlight the approaches taken to addressing lead nationwide; and
- provide practical advice on sampling, testing, and mitigating lead exposure in homes and schools.

#### NCCEH Resources

- [Public Health and Industry: Partners in Reducing Lead Exposure](#) (Eykelbosh, 2017)  
This *presentation*, delivered at the Canadian Water Quality Association (CWQA) meeting in May 2017, uses Flint, Michigan, as a case study to examine the factors leading up to a public health disaster, and discusses how the drinking water treatment industry and public health professionals can collaborate to reduce Canadians' risk of lead exposure.

- [Flint Water Crisis: Can It Happen in Canada?](#) (Fok, 2016)  
This *presentation*, delivered at CIPHI's 82nd Annual Education Conference, discusses the regulatory failures that led to the drinking water crisis in Flint, Michigan, and examines whether similar weaknesses exist within the Canadian regulatory system.
- [Investigating elevated copper and lead levels in school drinking water](#) (Barn et al., 2013)  
This *paper* investigates elevated lead and copper levels in a school's drinking water and includes an assessment of the effectiveness of flushing as a solution to reducing lead and copper concentrations. Flushing protocols that adequately reduce metals in school water may require significant staff time and effort to be effective.
- [Risk Management for Lead](#) (Struck, 2012)  
This *presentation* gives an overview of the health effects of lead exposure, trends in Canadians' blood lead levels, guidelines (currently under revision), factors that facilitate lead levels in water systems, and general principles regarding risk management for lead in homes and schools.
- [Lead in School Drinking Water: Canada Can and Should Address This Important Ongoing Exposure Source](#) (Barn and Kosatsky, 2011)  
This *commentary* describes the fundamental data gap with respect to children's exposure to lead through school drinking water, highlights the limited actions taken within Canada so far, and compares and contrasts regulatory approaches between the US and Canada.



...

## [Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment](#)

Press Release – February 16, 2018

Today the Federal Government released its proposed amendments to coal-fired electricity regulations and proposed natural-gas-fired electricity regulations:

- [The Government of Canada outlines next steps in clean-energy transition](#)
- [Just transition task force](#)

“CAPE is pleased to see the Federal Government moving forward on its promise to accelerate the phase-out of coal plants across the country by 2030. Coal plants threaten the health of millions of people around the world” noted Kim Perrotta, Executive Director of CAPE. “By acting decisively at home, Canada can more effectively work towards the closure of coal plants around the world.”

On a global scale, coal-fired are the major source of air pollution which kills 3.7 million people per year. They are also responsible for 29% of the greenhouse gases that are driving climate change

which is already killing tens of thousands of people each year with heat waves, wildfires, hurricanes, malaria and malnutrition.

The proposed amendments to the coal regulations would affect 14 generators in nine coal-fired power plants located in four provinces – Alberta, Saskatchewan, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick.



They would require the closure of all of these units by 2030 unless they are outfitted with carbon capture and storage technology (CCS) or converted to natural gas. The proposed gas regulations would apply to the coal plants converted to natural gas and to new natural gas plants.

“We look forward to commenting on the proposals” offered Dr. Joe Vipond, emergency physician from Calgary. “We will be looking for ways to improve the health benefits associated with the regulations such as emissions limits for nitrogen oxides on natural gas plants and emission limits for sulphur dioxide on coal plants equipped with CCS.”

“We strongly support the government’s proposal to establish a Just Transition Taskforce that will include representation from unions, labour associations, and municipalities” noted Kim Perrotta. “It is essential that we support the workers and communities affected by these necessary changes in our economy.”

Contact:

Kim Perrotta, [kim@cape.ca](mailto:kim@cape.ca) , 905-320-8710, Toronto

Dr. Joe Vipond, [jvipondmd@gmail.com](mailto:jvipondmd@gmail.com), 403-510-9236, Calgary

For more information:

- [Letter to Minister McKenna re: Strengthening national coal phase-out legislation \(July 2017\)](#)
- [Health Collaborative Submission to Environment and Climate Change Canada re: Notice of Intent to develop Greenhouse Gas regulations for Electricity Generation in Canada \(January 2017\)](#)
- [Health Collaborative Submission to Federal/Provincial Climate Working Group on Specific Mitigation Opportunities: Electricity Sector \(June 2016\)](#)
- [Letter to Federal Minister of Environment and Climate Change Catherine McKenna re: Phasing out coal plants across Canada within ten years \(Feb 2016\)](#)

...

## [Food Secure Canada](#)

### [Health Canada Announces Consumer Consultations on Front-of-Package Labelling](#)

On February 9th, Health Canada announced [online consumer consultations for Front-of-Package \(FOP\) labelling \(link is external\)](#), one of the pillars of its [Healthy Eating Strategy \(link is external\)](#). This is a welcome step to encourage Canadians to choose healthier foods, to reduce sodium, sugar and saturated fat consumption, and to incentivize companies to formulate healthier processed foods (and thus avoid front-of-packaging labels).

[Research \(link is external\)](#) commissioned by the Heart and Stroke Foundation shows that the percentage of ultra-processed food (e.g. going beyond canned fruits and vegetables) has grown dramatically over the past few decades, from 10,000 products in the 1960s to 40,000 products currently. And it has grown to be the biggest part of our diets.

“In 2015, Canadians received almost half (48.3 per cent) of their total calories from ultra-processed foods, with the highest rates of consumption among those in whom it can do most harm — children.” (Moubarac, JC. “[Grocery stores and Canadians are bulking up on ultra-processed food \(link is external\)](#).” Toronto Star. 8 Feb. 2018.)



A food-systems lens tells us that this step will be most effective as part of a multi-pronged strategy not only to increase the healthfulness of Canadians’ diets, but also to ensure we are shifting toward more sustainable diets. Another pillar of the Healthy Eating Strategy, the upcoming revision of Canada’s Food Guide is set to recommend reducing the overall consumption of processed foods. [Brazil’s food-based dietary guidelines \(link is external\)](#) set the bar globally in providing clear advice to consumers on healthy diets related to the level of food processing of ingredients and meals. We are interested in how this can ‘come to life’ in a transformative way in Canada.

For this reason, we are encouraged by the fact that the Health Minister has been instructed by the Prime Minister to align the Healthy Eating Strategy with A Food Policy for Canada.

**What our members are saying about FOP labelling:**

*Front-of-package nutrition symbol will put health front and center - [Heart and Stroke Foundation \(link is external\)](#)*

*Front of package labelling will help food choices and encourage healthier product innovations - [Dietitians of Canada](#)*

In watching the evolution of the proposals for FOP symbols, it is interesting to see how they have been modified significantly via consultation with stakeholders. For example, previous iterations included a stop sign, which is a stronger symbol than those currently being proposed. It is therefore important that we remain watchful of the issue and more clearly leverage civil society support for the Healthy Eating Strategy and future policies that link health, equity and sustainability.

[Sweeping reforms in Chile around nutrition labelling\(link is external\)](#) taken alongside Canada's efforts are a promising early sign of a global shift towards governments taking action to transform food systems in order to address growing rates of diet-related disease.

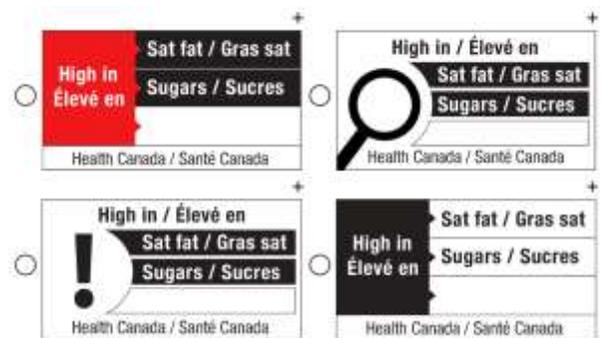
To support Front-of-Package labelling:

1. Participate in the [online consumer consultations \(link is external\)](#), comment on the symbol and share with your networks.
2. Share your support for FOP labelling and the Healthy Eating Strategy with your local MP. In a recent webinar organized by Food Secure Canada, MP Julie Dabrusin observed that she doesn't hear a lot from constituents about food issues and encouraged Canadians to reach out.
3. Look for opportunities to engage on other pillars of Healthy Eating Strategy (e.g. marketing to Kids, Canada Food Guide).

...

### The ABC of Front-of-Package food labels

Health Canada's proposed regulation for Front-of-Package (FOP) food labels will help Canadians to better identify healthier processed foods by labelling food products high in sodium, saturated fat, and sugar. Foods that are healthy (e.g. whole and 2% milk, healthy oils) or self-evidently high in sugar or salt (e.g. salt, sugar, honey, maple syrup) will not require FOP labels, which was one of the sticking points identified by agricultural producer organizations in initial proposals. FOP labelling will be required by 2020.



## [EWG's Skin Deep Cosmetic Database](#)

[EWG's Healthy Living App](#) - Ratings for more than 120,000 food and personal care products, now at your fingertips. (Note: The scan feature of the App does not appear to work in Canada, however it is possible to browse products.)

From food to shampoo – we are exposed to chemicals every second, yet we know very little about them. To navigate this complicated world and make safer choices, EWG combined two of our most popular resources to form our Healthy Living App. Now, the product health and safety ratings for over 200,000 food and cosmetics products are simply one click away.

...

## [Environmental Health Association of Nova Scotia](#)

### [Guide to Less Toxic Products](#)

#### The Guide to Less Toxic Products

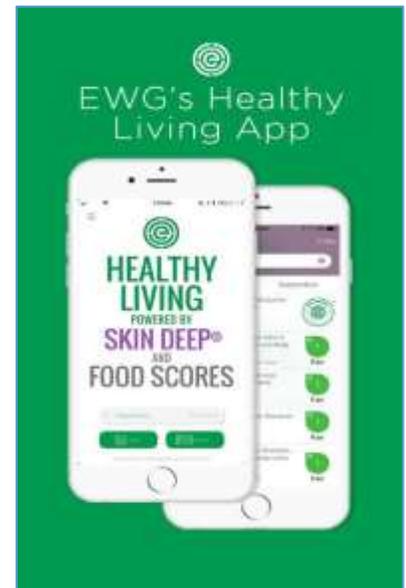
Every day, most North Americans use beauty and cleaning products which contain hazardous ingredients. How can you find the products which are least toxic, among the thousands of products on store shelves?

The objective of this site is to:

- Provide information about potential health risks of commonly used products.
- Help identify less toxic alternatives for personal care, household cleaning, baby care, and household pest control.
- Provide information to help you evaluate products not in this Guide in order to choose the safest ones for your needs.

“Chemicals have replaced bacteria and viruses as the main threat to health. The diseases we are beginning to see as the major causes of death in the latter part of (the 1900's) and into the 21st century are diseases of chemical origin.”

*Dr. Dick Irwin, Toxicologist, Texas A&M University*



The Canadian Network for Human Health and the Environment (CNHHE) is concerned with broad human health-related environmental issues relating to air, water, soil, food, climate- change and consumer products.

Membership is open to non-governmental, research, and healthcare professionals, government policy-makers and individuals who are interested in the connections between human health and environmental exposures.

A primary focus of the network is to educate about and engage members in the [Chemicals Management Program \(CMP\)](#) of [Health Canada](#) and [Environment and Climate Change Canada](#)

**CONTACT US:**

Phone: (506)-455-8961 ext. 105

Email: [cnhhe-rcshe@nb.lung.ca](mailto:cnhhe-rcshe@nb.lung.ca)

**FOLLOW US:**

Web: <https://nb.lung.ca/cnhhe/>

Facebook: [Facebook.com/cnhhe](https://www.facebook.com/cnhhe)

Twitter:  
[www.twitter.com/CNHHE\\_RCSHE](https://www.twitter.com/CNHHE_RCSHE)