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Greetings! We have been very busy since our last newsletter in January. Scroll down to read about our latest projects

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**CEH Exposes Disney's Lead-Tainted Jewelry**

This spring, CEH brought national attention once again to the continuing problem of lead contaminated children's jewelry, when we commissioned independent lab testing showing high lead levels in Disney children's jewelry. The items included a bracelet and necklace purchased at Disneyland and a Disney Princess bracelet purchased at a national chain drug store. A glossy coating on the Princess bracelet contained 166,000 parts per million of lead, a level that is more than 275 times the legal limit for lead in paint.

Last summer, lawsuits filed by CEH helped prompt the largest product recall in U.S. history, when 150 million pieces of children's jewelry were pulled from vending machines nationwide. Despite this and other more recent jewelry recalls, our continuing investigations are finding that major retailers still have lead-tainted children's jewelry on store shelves.

Earlier this year, CEH Executive Director Michael Green and Senior Policy Analyst Joe Guth traveled to Washington, D.C. to meet with staff at the federal Consumer Product Safety

Commission (CPSC) and tour the CPSC's laboratory. Michael and Joe also met with staff from Congressman Henry Waxman's office, to discuss the Congressman's recent legislation calling for a tougher approach on lead in kid's jewelry. But to date, neither Congress nor CPSC has taken action on lead in children's jewelry.

View or download the NBC news clip of our press briefing outside Disney headquarters from our [website](#). There is also a five-minute [CEH video](#) that was used by many television stations for their news reports.

Take Action! Write to CPSC Chairman Hal Stratton and demand a recall of the Disney bracelet and stronger action to protect children from lead-tainted jewelry. [Click here](#) for a sample letter and email address for Chairman Stratton.

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## Apple Protested for Poisonous Products at MacWorld Expo

Earlier this year, the Computer TakeBack Campaign (CTBC), a national coalition of environmental watchdog organizations, called on Apple Computers, maker of the popular iPod, to support proper recycling of the massive mounds of discarded toxic electronics that bear the Apple name. Pressure from the Campaign has recently brought other computer makers, including Dell and HP, to take this responsible stand. CEH staff joined the Campaign outside the annual Mac World conference to protest Apple's refusal to offer viable recycling options for consumers.

Mamta Khanna, CEH Pollution Prevention Program Manager sits on the national CTBC Steering Committee. "While other computer makers have accepted that they have a responsibility for their outdated machines, Apple continues to oppose e-waste recycling legislation across the country," Mamta told the assembled media and conference attendees. "We want to know why Steve Jobs and Apple refuse to support electronic recycling programs."

Take Action! To learn more about the campaign and send an email to Apple CEO Steve Jobs, see [www.computertakeback.com](http://www.computertakeback.com).

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## Tuxedo Renter Agrees to Stop Dry Cleaning Pollution

Selix Formalwear, one of the nation's oldest tuxedo rental companies agreed to a CEH demand to eliminate emissions of the cancer-causing solvent perchloroethylene (perc) from its central dry cleaning facility in Northern California. "This agreement is a victory for everyone who deserves clean air in their neighborhood," said Michael Green, Executive Director of CEH. "We are pleased that Selix has agreed to replace its outdated equipment with cleaner technology, and we expect other polluting facilities to follow suit."

This case is the latest in a string of victories for CEH against dry cleaners and manufacturers who have violated state laws. Under the state's Proposition 65 law, CEH has successfully reduced, or in many cases eliminated air pollution from dozens of dry cleaning and manufacturing facilities throughout the state. In 1993 the California Air Resources Board designated perc as a toxic air contaminant, and the state has listed perc under the states Proposition 65 law as a chemical "known to cause cancer."

For more information on perc and dry cleaning [click here](#).

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### CEH "Safe Playgrounds Project" Goes Online

As we reported in our fall e-newsletter, CEH is following up our successful legal work that forced the wood playground industry to stop using arsenic-treated wood with a new outreach and information campaign to educate schools, playground managers, parents and others on how they can minimize health threats to children from playgrounds where older equipment made with arsenic-treated wood is already present. Our "Safe Playgrounds Project" is reaching out to California parks and recreation sites, school districts, teachers and parents groups, and other agencies so that they are properly informed of the health risks arsenic-treated woods pose, and so that they may take the proper actions to minimize these risks.

This spring CEH launched the "[www.safe2play.org](http://www.safe2play.org)" website, with information, resources, and a form for ordering arsenic test kits, for parents and others who want to know if their wood play structures were treated with arsenic. Recently Sue Chiang, head of the Safe Playgrounds Project, spoke at the California Head Start Association conference in Pasadena, and she continues to speak at relevant conferences and associations to help spread the word about the concerns with arsenic-treated wood.

To learn more, please visit the Safe Playgrounds Project [website](#).

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### Health Care Buyer Offers Hospitals Resources for E-Waste Reduction

The healthcare industry is responsible for the consumption and disposal of millions of electronic devices every year. Computers, televisions, lab analyzers, EKG monitors and other types of equipment used in hospitals every day contain many hazardous constituents – from lead in cathode ray tube (CRT) monitors to chlorinated plastics in cable wiring, brominated flame retardants in circuit boards and mercury in LCD displays. Hazardous substances in electronics have been linked to human health effects like cancer, birth defects, and hormone disruption.

Earlier this year, Premier Inc., one of the nation's largest health care suppliers, launched a comprehensive Web-based resource to assist healthcare organizations in environmentally responsible purchasing and management of computers and electronics. The Center for

Environmental Health, a leader in the national Health Care Without Harm coalition and the Computer TakeBack Campaign assisted and supported the development of the new Premier web site. "Premier's actions are a clear sign to vendors that hospitals are demanding safer products and better disposal options," said CEH Program Manager Mamta Khanna. "With the market shifting toward environmental responsibility, vendors who have the safest, most environmentally friendly products will have a strong competitive advantage."

San Diego-based Premier provides supply chain improvement and group purchasing, and is owned by 200 of the nation's leading hospital and health care systems that are affiliated with approximately 1,500 hospital facilities and other health care sites in 50 states. Premier's new Computers and Electronics in HealthCare web site presents specific purchasing strategies, including contractual guidelines for minimal toxicity of materials and vendor programs for "take-back," leasing and upgrades. Premier's new Computers and Electronics in HealthCare web site is at <http://www.premierinc.com/safety>.

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### **Citizen Action Highlighted in New Report**

Private enforcement of environmental laws, as exemplified by the CEH Public Interest Litigation work, plays an important role in stopping pollution and holding corporations accountable for their toxic products. A new report by the California League for Environmental Enforcement Now (CLEEN) highlights how this kind of citizen action has played a pivotal role in protecting the public health and environment of California, and how such public protections are under increasing attacks. As the report notes,

The forecast for effective private enforcement is cloudy. Nationwide, industry lobbyists and ideological opponents of regulation have been making strides in their quest to weaken both public and private environmental enforcement. With budget cuts likely to continue for the foreseeable future, many states, including California, are under pressure to slash public enforcement budgets, threatening to seriously weaken government's ability to act as an effective enforcer. This reality makes it even more important to protect and strengthen private-enforcement capabilities.

The CLEEN report, "Protecting California's Public Health and Environment through Citizen Action," also lists examples of successful citizen efforts to enforce environmental and public health protections, including three CEH cases. To see the full report, [click here](#).

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### **Dust Testing Shows Toxic Chemicals Are a Health Threat in Our Homes**

This spring, a national coalition of environmental and consumer groups released a study of dust samples collected from homes in seven states, that found six main kinds toxic chemicals in all of the samples. Many of the chemicals found in the samples are associated with health problems, including allergic responses; suppressed or hyperactive immune

systems; impaired respiratory, cardiovascular, nervous, and reproductive systems; irritated or inflamed skin and mucous membranes; cancer of a variety of tissues and organs; and developmental effects. The developing fetus, infants and children are especially at risk; toddlers and crawling infants may be subject to greater exposures, taking in up to five times as much dust as adults, while their immature organs and immune system make them more vulnerable to toxic risks.

CEH staff, relatives and friends contributed household dust for the study and were shocked by the findings. "This study shows that our health is threatened by toxic chemicals even if we don't live near factory accidents or oil spills," said CEH Program Associate Anita Jackson, who contributed dust for the study. "Companies that are using hazardous chemicals should switch to alternatives, because we all have a right to safe homes for our children and families." For more information on the report, [click here](#).

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## Outreach on Environmental Health for Families Grows

CEH continues to write monthly e-newsletters for the [California Women's Foundation](#) on "How You Can Make a Difference," giving practical advice on a range of environmental health subjects. Now, we are growing our outreach through a new collaboration. We recently began exploring ways to connect with [Generation Green](#), a national consumer and environmental health advocacy organization that gives parents and families resources and action steps for safer homes, schools, food, and more. In the coming months, we expect this partnership to be a wide new audience for our work to protect children and families from toxic exposures.

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## Staff News

### Joe Guth to Serve on National Chemicals Policy Committee

CEH Senior Policy Analyst Joe Guth was recently asked by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to join its chemicals policy advisory body, the National Pollution Prevention and Toxics Advisory Committee. The Committee provides EPA with policy advice and recommendations in areas such as assessment and management of chemical risks, pollution prevention, and toxic chemicals regulations. "I hope to work with other progressive members of the Committee to suggest ways that EPA can strengthen its regulation of toxic chemicals," Joe said. "This will be an interesting time for the Committee. Europe will soon pass its REACH laws, which dramatically strengthen its chemicals regulation, and the US system will therefore be coming under more intense scrutiny."

For more information on the Committee, see <http://www.epa.gov/oppt/npptac>.

### Anita Sarah Jackson (Re)Joins CEH

Former CEH intern Anita Jackson joined our staff in January as a Program Associate in our Pollution Prevention Program. Anita interned at CEH last spring with our Public Policy Program, after completing her law degree at American University in Washington, D.C. In law school, Anita focused on health and human rights law, with a particular interest in environmental health and justice. She previously worked as a volunteer labor coach for low-income pregnant women in Zimbabwe and the Bay Area, and she currently serves on the City of Berkeley's Waterfront Commission. We are thrilled to have her back at CEH!

### PJ Johnson Joins CEH

CEH was sad to see Burton Li, our Financial and Administrative Manager leave this spring, and we are very grateful for his presence and hard work during his time with us. We are delighted to welcome new staffer PJ Johnson, a recent graduate of UC Santa Cruz who brings finance and computer systems experience to CEH. PJ spent two years as the Financial and Property Manager for a 12-person residential housing community and has worked installing wireless broadband networks. He has also worked with at-risk youth and interned for Triangle Speakers, an organization that works to eliminate fear, hatred and prejudice against gay, lesbian, bisexual and trans-gendered people. PJ sees sustainable ecology as vital to the success of any other issue, be it human rights or national security, and we are pleased to have him with us!

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### **CEH on the wire**

Our Disney news briefing was carried by nearly fifty television news stations across the country, and was featured in the Orange County Register, Oakland Tribune, and other newspapers. Earlier this year, an Associated Press story on a recent recall of children's jewelry included a quote from CEH, calling for tougher government action to protect children. The recall occurred after a San Jose six-year-old was poisoned by a lead-tainted charm. The AP story was picked up in hundreds of media outlets across the country. CEH Toxics Researcher Lara Cushing was also interviewed for New York's Telemundo television news on our work to stop the sale of lead-tainted jewelry.

The San Francisco Chronicle and Santa Barbara News Press quoted CEH Pollution Prevention Program Manager Mamta Khanna in stories about protests of Apple for the company's refusal to offer a computer take-back program or e-recycling programs. Mamta was also interviewed for public radio and other outlets.

Our successful agreement ending Selix Formalwear's use of perc was covered by two Bay Area television stations and several local newspapers. The January 7 edition of Inside CalEPA carried three stories on CEH's work: our meeting of California chemicals policy organizations was mentioned; our panel at the national American Public Health Association was covered; and Lara Cushing was quoted regarding the state adding a new chemical, DEHP, to its list of known reproductive toxins.