



Choosing Healthy Sunscreens

Is your sunscreen really protecting your health? The fourth annual *Sunscreen Guide* from the Environmental Working Group (EWG) gives low marks to 92% of brand name products, faulting them for containing hazardous chemicals, making overblown claims, and insufficiently protecting skin from sun damage.

To see what they discovered, and how your brand stacks up, go to www.ewg.org/2010sunscreen. Maybe you'll even find a new favorite!

Also, because sunscreen only helps prevent one of the three kinds of skin cancer, and not melanoma, EWG advises further protecting your skin with clothing, hats, and shade.

Flea & Tick Product Warnings

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is recommending caution in using Frontline, Advantage, and similar flea and tick products. The Agency has seen a sharp increase of cats and dogs who've become ill after treatment, and it's hoping that new label instructions and warnings will reduce problems. If not, it will pursue stronger actions.

Learn more about the issues at www.thedailygreen.com/environmental-news/latest/is-frontline-safe-0318. Also, read labels carefully and use the right dose for your particular pet. Even better, explore less-toxic approaches; find

suggestions under "Pets" in the TNS Index (see box above right).



Prominent Report Encourages Cancer Prevention Through Toxics Reduction

Forty-one percent of Americans will be diagnosed with cancer at some point in our lives, at a great cost to us all — physically, financially, and emotionally.

The mainstream advice for protecting ourselves usually focuses on adjusting individual risk factors, such as smoking, diet, and alcohol. While these are important, what's often not addressed are the well-documented connections between cancer and our (often involuntary) exposure to the toxic cancer-causing materials that we now find in all areas of our lives.

Thus, there was quite a buzz when this year's report from the President's Cancer Panel emphasized reducing the environmental causes of cancer. The bipartisan Panel (which *New York Times* columnist Nicholas Kristof calls "the Mount Everest of the medical mainstream") is charged with annually assessing the National Cancer Program and offering its expert recommendations to the President.

In this year's 240-page report, the Panel (appointed by former President Bush) warns that we're being "bombarded continually with myriad combinations" of dangerous materials, and that "the true burden of environmentally-induced cancers has been grossly underestimated."

"Can anyone believe it is possible to lay down such a barrage of poisons on the surface of the earth without making it unfit for all life?"

Rachel Carson, Silent Spring

Quick Tips

■ **To learn which everyday items are toxic and where to discard them**, see www.recycle-now.org or the Yellow Pages Recycling Guide. Or call 565-3375.

■ **The TNS Online Index** lets you look up past newsletters by topic, revealing what's toxic, and the effective alternatives, in everything from housecleaning to pest control. www.healthyworld.org/STEPIndex.html

The authors offer a helpful summary of cancer-causing materials and specify suggested solutions, including shifting regulation to a more "precautionary prevention-oriented approach," updating workplace standards, and improving coordination between agencies. Individuals are also advised to buy organic foods and free-range meats, filter drinking water, avoid toxic products, and speak up for needed regulatory changes.

Hopefully, this vital message will encourage increased mainstream action to truly prevent cancer by avoiding involuntary toxic exposures.

You can review this report at <http://pcp.cancer.gov>. More toxics reduction tips are in TNS past issues (see Index in box above). Also, voice your support for the long-needed TSCA regulation reform at www.ewg.org.

Ask EcoGirl!

If you haven't seen it yet, I invite you to check out my monthly Ask EcoGirl column, which offers information and action ideas on a variety of eco-issues — including the ever-popular topic, healthier housecleaning! See www.askecogirl.info.

ABOUT STEP

The Next STEP (TNS) is published six times a year by the **Sebastopol Toxics Education Program (STEP)**. STEP is a project of the City of Sebastopol, implemented by local citizen volunteers. STEP's mission is to support city residents in reducing their toxic use and exposure, creating a healthier and safer Sebastopol for everyone.

Newsletter Editor, Lead Writer & Layout: Patricia Dines, Email STEP@healthyworld.org

Newsletter Editorial Team: Patricia Dines and Jim Gleaves

STEP, P.O. Box 1776, Sebastopol CA 95473
www.ci.sebastopol.ca.us