

The National Environmental Education & Training Foundation

Pesticides and National Strategies for Health Care Providers Featured on EPA Website

“Pesticides and National Strategies for Health Care Providers”, a collaborative initiative among NEETF, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and the U.S. Departments of Health and Human Services, Agriculture and Labor, was featured on EPA’s website (<http://www.epa.gov>) during the week of May 13, 2001. The initiative is aimed at incorporating pesticide information into the education and practice of health care providers nationwide. The goal is to improve the recognition, diagnosis, management, and prevention of adverse health effects from pesticide exposures.

The Implementation Plan for the initiative is in its final revision stages. The final document will be released in late summer.

An initiative project currently underway is the development of **National Guidelines**, recommending educational competencies and practice skills for health care providers to improve their abilities to recognize, manage, and prevent pesticide-related health conditions. The guidelines will undergo a peer review, and will be ready to be presented to nursing schools, medical schools and practicing health care providers later this year.

Also, a **National Forum** for the initiative is currently being planned. The Forum’s objective is to launch the national Implementation Plan, showcasing pesticides as a model for other environmental health issues. The Forum is planned for early 2002.

Environmental Health Perspectives Highlights NEETF Nursing Publication

The March 2001 issue of *Environmental Health Perspectives* profiled NEETF’s Health & Environment Programs’ recent nursing efforts. The article, titled “Environmental Florence Nightingales: Nursing’s New Front Line,” highlighted nurses’ unique ability to combat environmental health issues. The article noted that nurses are often very involved at the community level and are therefore mindful of local environmental concerns that doctors may not know of. NEETF’s Health & Environment Programs, which strive to improve the ability of health care providers to identify, manage, and prevent illnesses attributed to our environment, were featured in the article.

NEETF has initiated projects and partnerships to strengthen nursing’s role in addressing environmental impacts on human health. An upcoming publication, titled, “**Nurses and Environmental Health: Success Through Action, Illustrations From Across the Nation**,” contains 28 nursing stories that demonstrate successful environmental health initiatives. The completed document will be posted at <http://www.neetf.org/Health/publications.shtm> in August.

Health & The Environment is a periodic publication produced by NEETF. Further information on all stories is available from Jennifer Bretsch, NEETF’s Health & Environment Coordinator:
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New Senior Director Welcomed to the Health & Environment Programs

NEETF is pleased to announce that Leyla Erk McCurdy is the new Senior Director for Health & Environment Programs. A chemist by training, she brings to NEETF 20 years of professional experience in environment and health. Prior to joining NEETF, she directed the American Lung Association's national programs, where she developed programs and oversaw program activities, conducted public education campaigns, developed outreach materials for the public and health professionals, and provided technical guidance for environmental health policy. Working closely with the grassroots network of Lung Associations and forging partnerships with governmental and non-governmental organizations, she was instrumental in establishing a strong indoor air quality program and spearheaded various projects, including promoting children's health, healthy schools and environmental justice.

Leyla has received awards from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the Congress of Lung Association Staff in recognition of her leadership and commitment to public health protection. Her previous work experience includes product management for Johnson and Johnson health care products; trade association environment, health and safety affairs; and communications.

Leyla is very excited to be part of NEETF, where she is initiating several new projects in addition to building on the current NEETF environmental health program activities. Welcome aboard, Leyla!



U.S. EPA and NEETF Host National Assessment of Worker Protection Program Workshop

The National Assessment of the Worker Protection Program, hosted by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and NEETF took place July 30 - August 1, 2001 in Orlando, Florida. This was the third in a series of four workshops designed to assess the implementation and the enforcement of the agricultural worker protection program in the United States. This workshop provided stakeholders with an opportunity to resolve issues and formulate solutions to the problems highlighted in the earlier workshops. For more information on the entire workshop series see <http://www.epa.gov/pesticides/safety> or call Sara Ager at (703) 308-3003 or Jennifer Bretsch at (202) 261-6470.

Health & Environment Initiative to be Presented at American Public Health Association's 129th Annual Meeting and Exposition

The American Public Health Association will be hosting its **129th Annual Meeting and Exposition** October 21 - 25, 2001 in Atlanta, Georgia. Over 900 scientific sessions, awards programs, poster sessions, workshops and business meetings will take place at the Annual Meeting, with several special panel sessions featuring prominent experts in national and international health. Leyla Erk McCurdy, Senior Director of Health & Environment Programs, will present, **"A Model For Integrating Environmental Health Into Health Care Provider Education And Practice."** For more information on the conference, please see <http://www.apha.org>.

New Health & Environment Grantees Announced

NEETF is pleased to announce its Health & Environment grantees for the upcoming year. Each project is related to a specific goal of the Health & Environment Programs. These grants are provided by funds appropriated from the National Environmental Education Act, through which NEETF strives to support innovative organizations and environmental learning projects.

The **Environmental Law Institute (ELI)**, an independent research, convening and education center, serves a wide constituency of environmental professionals. ELI will receive funding from NEETF for a project titled, **“Greener, Healthier Schools: A Strategic Approach to Changing the Way We Build Schools.”** The broad objective of this project is to change school construction practices in the United States.

The immediate goal is to provide an understanding of the key reasons why public agencies responsible for school construction are not building greener and healthier schools. To accomplish this objective, ELI will undertake research and prepare a report that will be designed to help set in motion changes in school construction practices, programs and policies.

The Self Reliance Foundation, another NEETF grantee, informs the Hispanic community by disseminating practical and educational information and facilitating access to community resources. One such project titled, **“Pesticide Poisoning Prevention Spanish-Language Audio CD,”** is the production of a 30 - 45 minute compact disc that focuses on pesticide poisoning prevention. Initial production of 10,000 discs will be distributed to migrant health clinics throughout the United States.

The target audience is farmworkers who deal with pesticides on a large scale and homemakers, where pesticides play a smaller, but no less significant role. Topics on the compact disc include proper handling and storage of pesticides, as well as first aid emergency procedures.

The **Healthy Schools Network, Inc.** has also received a grant from NEETF for their project titled, **“Creating National Healthy Schools Education and Training Tools for the Protection of Children’s Health.”** The overall goal of this program is to provide local communities with information and assistance necessary for creating healthy school environments.

The funds from this grant will go towards creating a resource tool that includes educational materials such as sample work products, guides to issue-specific technical assistance and “how-to” fact sheets on issues ranging from indoor air quality to renovation and construction.

Key Conferences

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) will host its **2nd Annual Indoor Air Quality Tools for Schools National Symposium** on August 9-11, 2001, at the Grand Hyatt Hotel in Washington, DC. The Symposium's goal is to bring together a variety of school officials, parents, and health association members to discuss the issues surrounding air quality in schools. A variety of available tools and resources will also be presented, including **EPA's Indoor Air Quality Tools for Schools (IAQ TFS) Kit** and program. For more information please see <http://www.epa.gov/iaq/schools/symposium.html> or contact Kim Smith at smith.kim@epamail.epa.gov.

The Children's Environmental Health Network and the Canadian Institute of Child Health are co-sponsoring; **Children's Environmental Health II: A Global Forum for Action**, September 8 - 11, 2001 in Washington, DC. The Global Forum will focus on the special vulnerability of children and how they are impacted by the environments in which they live, learn, work and play. For more information call CEHN at (202) 543-4033 or look on the web at: www.cich.ca/global.htm.

The Society for Occupational and Environmental Health Annual Conference, 2001, **International Pesticide Use and Human Health Effects** will be held December 17 - 21 in Bethesda, Maryland. The first three days will be a general conference format with presentations on topics such as pesticide use trends worldwide and children's health. The last two days will be spent developing medical guidelines for clinicians to help more effectively diagnose, treat and monitor patients who have been exposed to pesticides. For more information see <http://www.soeh.org/conference.html>.

NEETF Launches New Website

NEETF proudly launched its new website, <http://www.neetf.org>, May 10, 2001. The new site is more user-friendly and easier to navigate. It also features a new and improved search engine! The Health & Environment Programs page now contains summaries of new initiatives, including the Health & Environment Partnership, Children's Health Initiative and Managed Care Partnership.



NEETF hosted a National Coalition for Healthier Schools meeting on May 24, 2001. Meeting participants included (left to right) David Akster (CCD), Richard Carson (AAFA), Tobie Bernstein (ELI), Steve Ashkin (HSN), Geri Unger (F2E2), Claire Barnett (HSN), and Leyla McCurdy (NEETF) (top row) Carol Stroebel (CEHN), Ralph Scott (AECLP), Ann Vinup (LDA) and Elissa Petruzzi (NEETF). Additional participants included; Jerome Paulson (GWU), Paul Billings (ALA), Kagan Owens (Beyond Pesticides), Derek Young (NEETF), Elise Miller (ICEH), and Tolle Graham (MassCOSH).