

CREATION CARE GREEN TIPS - November 2021

1. In its first update in 15 years, the World Health Organization (WHO) has released non-binding guidelines concerning six pollutants known to have impacts on health: two types of **particulate matter (PM 2.5 and PM 10)**, as well as **ozone, nitrogen dioxide, sulfur dioxide and carbon monoxide**. The largest contributors to the air pollution that affects 90% of the world's population include **energy and transportation sectors, waste dump sites and home cooking and heating**. Air pollution has been linked to heart disease, diabetes, cancer and early death, as well as negative effects on pregnancy, cognitive development in children, and mental health. The WHO advises people to change their lifestyles, which includes **avoiding the use of plastics that could end up being incinerated, and walking, riding bikes or using public transportation to get to work**.
2. The EPA recently moved to block the use of **chlorpyrifos**, a widely used pesticide commonly applied to corn, soybeans, apples, broccoli, asparagus and other produce since 1965. For more than a decade, science has linked the pesticide to brain damage in children. Several states, such as California, Hawaii, New York and Maryland, have already banned chlorpyrifos, while the states of Washington, Vermont and Massachusetts were also moving in that direction. The pesticide will still be permitted for nonfood uses such as on golf courses, turf, utility poles and fence posts as well as in cockroach bait and ant treatments.
3. According to a study published in the journal *Science*, **toxicity levels have more than doubled** since 2005 for many key pollinators, aquatic insects and some plants even as American farmers are using smaller amounts of targeted pesticides. German scientists, using EPA and U.S. Geological Survey data, calculated the "total applied toxicity" by examining 381 pesticides used in the U.S. between 1992 and 2016, finding that many pesticides once believed to be relatively benign and short-lived are very toxic even in smaller amounts. This is true of new compounds such as **neonicotinoids**, which have been linked to dwindling bee numbers according to scientists at the University of Kolenz-Landau. Future studies will look at harm done further up the food chain, from dragonflies and mayflies up to humans and mammals.
4. PFAS is a family of more than 5,000 chemicals used for decades in nonstick cookware, fast-food wrappers, and firefighting foam, known as "forever chemicals" because of their inability to break down in the environment. First discovered a decade ago in **six Great Lakes military installations, including the Duluth Air National Guard Base**, the chemical was recently discovered for the first time in Lake Superior smelt, leading to a federal grant awarded to the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) to study PFAS levels in other fish species. The chemicals, **found also in landfills around the state**, have been linked to cancer and reproductive harm and may reduce the effectiveness of vaccines. An \$850 million settlement between Minnesota and 3M Co., which manufactured PFAS compounds in its Cottage Grove, MN plant since the mid-20th Century, is at the center of legal efforts to treat PFAS pollution.