

NIEHS Office of Communications and Public Liaison (OCPL)
September 2014 – February 2015

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I. EVENTS



Photo by Raymond Thompson - West Virginia University researchers collect water samples at the confluence of the Elk and Kanawha Rivers.

NTP and West Virginia Chemical Spill. In December 2014, NTP launched new Web pages, dedicated to their West Virginia testing activities, at <http://ntp.niehs.nih.gov/go/wvspill>. The [NTP Research Project Plan](#) and updates on a number of studies have already been posted to the site. Another set of updates will be released in February.



Report on Carcinogens. On October 2, 2014, NTP released the 13th Report on Carcinogens (RoC), listing 243 substances as “known” or “reasonably anticipated” to cause cancer in humans. The biannual report is a science-based document that identifies chemical, biological, and physical agents determined to be cancer hazards for people living in the United States. The report is prepared by NTP on behalf of the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. A [press release](#), five new fact sheets, and [Web pages](#) with supporting materials were developed to accompany the report. About 45 media outlets reported on the release of the RoC.

- October 2, **BNA’s Daily Environment Report** wrote “Herbicide, Rubber Chemical Listed as Human Carcinogen.”
- October 2, **Chemical and Engineering News** wrote “Federal Report on Carcinogens Report adds three chemicals, ranks ortho-Toluidine as a known human carcinogen.”
- October 3, **The Scientist** wrote “HHS updates carcinogens list.”
- October 3, **Environmental Defense Solutions** wrote “Newly listed carcinogens are all chemicals deeply embedded in US commerce.”
- October 6, **BNA’s Daily Environment Report** wrote “Rubber chemical is human carcinogen, three other compounds may be, HHS says.”
- October 9, **eNews Park Forest** wrote “Toxic wood preservative added to government list of carcinogens.”
- October 10, **On Earth** magazine wrote “Caution: Do not touch, eat, or inhale.”

II. NEWS COVERAGE

News Coverage of NIEHS Science, Researchers, and Activities

September 2014 — 590 stories
October 2014 — 607 stories
November 2014 — 364 stories
December 2014 — 689 stories
January 2015 — 352 stories

Press Releases

November 25, NIEHS press release, “[NIH scientists determine how environment contributes to several human diseases](#),” featured work by DIR scientists published in Nature.

November 17, NIEHS posted a link to a press release from the University of Michigan, “[U-M-led study adds to understanding of how phthalate exposure impacts pregnancy](#).”

November 17, NIEHS posted a link to a press release from UC Davis, “[Soap antimicrobial may damage liver and raise cancer risk, mouse study shows](#).”

November 6, NIEHS press release, “[Diversity outbred mice better predict potential human responses to chemical exposures](#),” featured work by NTP scientists published in Environmental Health Perspectives.

November 5, NIEHS posted a link to a press release from Plymouth University in the U.K., “[Blocking mitochondrial fission has potential as an effective treatment for Parkinson's disease](#).”

October 9, NIEHS joined with NIH to announce, “[NIH invests almost \\$32 million to increase utility of biomedical research data](#).”

October 2, NIEHS press release, “[HHS releases 13th Report on Carcinogens](#),” highlights new substances added to report developed by NTP for HHS.

September 23, NIEHS joins with NIH to announce, “[NIH funds next phase of tissue chip for drug screening program](#).”

Highlights from Newspapers, Trade Papers, and National Magazines

January 27, **The Times-Picayune** wrote an article, “No 'compelling evidence' BP oil spill sickened cleanup workers, Gulf Coast residents, witness testifies,” which mentions NIEHS and the GuLF STUDY efforts.

January, NIEHS grantees working on nanotechnology were quoted in **The Conversation**, “Are quantum dot TVs – and their toxic ingredients – actually better for the environment?”

January 14, **The Guardian** wrote, “Seven ways climate change could kill you (really),” which included quotes from John Balbus, M.D., of OD.

December 23, **The Herald-Sun (Durham)** wrote “NIEHS to offer \$4 million in grants for cell research,” which features quotes from Daniel Shaughnessy, Ph.D., of DERT.

December 15, the **Sunday Gazette-Mail** wrote “MCHM toxic in pregnant rats, new study finds,” which includes findings from NTP studies related to the West Virginia chemical spill.

December 18, **NewsWorks** developed a story, “Can activists provide useful scientific data?” which features quotes from ethicist David Resnik, J.D., Ph.D., of DIR.

December 16, **Climate Wire** wrote “Obama admin urges hospitals to prepare for climate change,” which includes quotes from Balbus.

December 15, **Herald-Sun (Durham)** highlighted an agreement that Darryl Zeldin, M.D., of DIR signed on behalf of NIEHS to do more collaboration with researchers in China, in the story, "NIEHS signs agreement with Chinese university."

December 5, **BNA's Daily Environment Report** story, "Bisphenol A is safe for approved uses in food container, packaging, FDA says," included information about NIEHS and NTP BPA research.

December 1, the **Star Tribune** article, "U study finds more evidence of worker harm linked to taconite dust," included quotes from Christopher Weis, Ph.D. of OD.

November 19, **Forbes** wrote "So what about acrylamide in your French fries?" which included findings from NTP on this chemical.

November 18, **BNA's Daily Environment Report** did a lengthy story on an NTP study that was released online. The story, "Genetically diverse mice, like people, have range of responses to benzene, NTP finds," included quotes by Kristine Witt of NTP.

November, **The NIH Record** wrote "From Ebola to e-cigarettes: experts discuss global challenges." The story features quotes and a picture of director Linda Birnbaum, Ph.D.

October, **Modern Farmer** did a feature piece on the Agricultural Health Study, "Landmark 20-year study finds pesticides linked to depression in farmers." Freya Kamel, Ph.D., of DIR is quoted.

October 30, **National Geographic** published a story, "High levels of dangerous chemicals found in air near oil and gas sites," which includes information about fracking research supported by NIEHS.

October 29, the **Alzforum** story, "Good cop, bad cop: can AB15 shield synapses from AB42?" includes quotes from Jerrel Yakel, Ph.D., of DIR.

October 28, **India West** wrote "5 Indian American researchers receive innovator awards," which includes information about the first NIEHS presentation of Young Innovator Awards.

October 24, **The Times-Picayune** story, "Louisiana shrimp safe to eat after BP Gulf of Mexico spill, local study says," includes quotes from Birnbaum.

October, **The Jerusalem Post** wrote "Israel's environmental health show progress, but has much room for improvement, experts find." The story includes quotes by Birnbaum.

October 18, **Philly.com** wrote "Penn study to track Ambler's asbestos legacy." The story includes quotes from NIEHS grantees and William Suk, Ph.D., of DERT.

October 6, **North Carolina Health News** wrote "Back to school, at a National Institute of Health," which includes quotes from Ericka Reid, Ph.D., of OD.

October 2, a **New York Times** story, "Cellphone boom spurs antenna-safety worries," mentions ongoing work by NTP on radiofrequency exposures.

October 2, **Chemical and Engineering News** wrote, "Federal report on carcinogens report adds three chemicals, ranks o-toluidine as a known human carcinogen."

September 29, **The Herald-Sun (Durham)** wrote “NIEHS scientists land local academic positions,” highlighting two DIR postdocs that are now local professionals.

September, **The Atlantic** wrote a flame retardant story, “How to test a couch for toxins,” which featured quotes from Birnbaum.

September 18, **The Warren Record** wrote about one of the students that participated in an NIEHS science education program, in the article, “Math teacher completes summer externship with RTP company.”

September 17, **Scientific American** wrote an article, “Could air fresheners during pregnancy boost childhood asthma risk?” which features quotes from Birnbaum.

September, **Cooking Light** highlighted findings from NTP on Aloe Vera.

September 15, **The Guardian** wrote, “Where the wildfires are: if there’s smoke, there are costly health problems,” which included quotes from Balbus.

September 15, **Med Page Today** featured research by David Armstrong, Ph.D., of DIR, in their article, “Thyroid hormone key to lipid kinase regulation.”

September 14, **Herald-Sun (Durham)** highlighted new hire Robin Stanley, Ph.D., in “Chapel Hill scientist joins NIEHS.”

September 2, **Environmental Health News** wrote a lengthy article, “Toxic gulls: Quebec's contaminated bird colony offers clues about flame retardants,” which featured many quotes by Birnbaum.

September issue of **More** magazine had a large feature piece, “The women’s health crisis no one talks about,” which focused on autoimmune diseases and included quotes from Fred Miller, M.D., of DIR.

August 29, many media outlets, including **ABC News**, highlighted new findings about the microbiome in an article, “Shades of Pigpen: we travel with our own germs,” which included quotes from Lisa Chadwick, Ph.D., of DERT.

August 26, **The Washington Post** wrote “Would you like your receipt? Maybe not, if it’s still coated with BPA,” which mentioned work done by NTP.

August 18, **Times-Picayune** highlighted training being done by NIEHS in the article, “Dillard University to offer free job training in hazardous waste management.”

August 7, the **State Journal** (West Virginia) wrote “NIH studies will commence to evaluate possible health effects from the Jan. 9 Freedom Industries chemical spill into the Elk River,” which highlighted testing efforts being carried out by NTP.

August 4, a lengthy piece in **Inside Prevention**, “Q & A: NIEHS scientists explain findings of breast cancer study” highlighted work being done by Dale Sandler, Ph.D., and Christine Ekenga, Ph.D., of DIR related to the Sister Study.

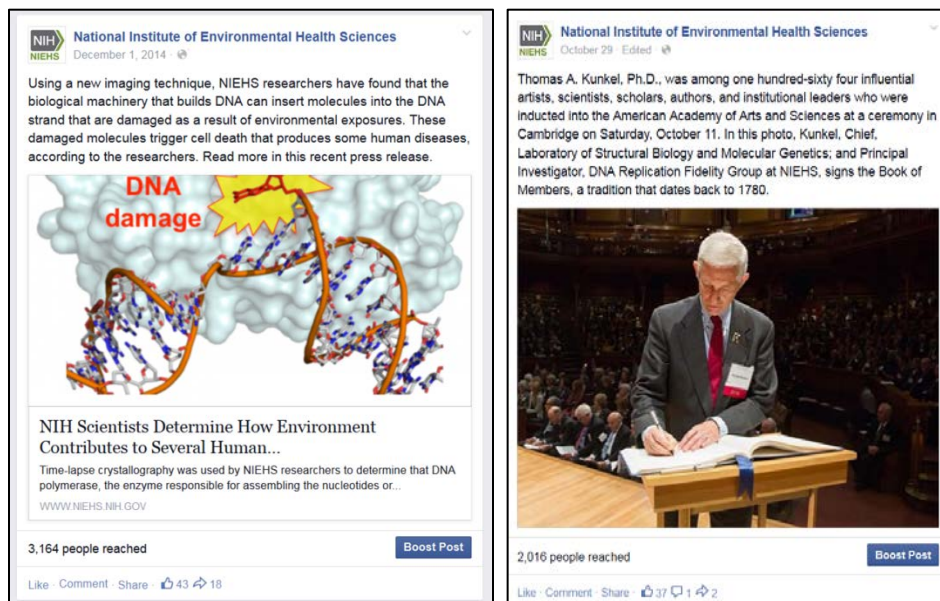
August 1, **WCHS-TV** produced a segment, “Federal agencies promise additional studies, analysis on Jan. 9 chemical spill,” which highlights ongoing studies by NTP on the toxicity of chemicals from the spill.

August 1, **Pleasantville Daily Voice** wrote “Lowey highlights environment impact on women’s health,” which highlighted quotes from Birnbaum at a forum in New York.

III. PUBLIC INFORMATION AND OUTREACH

Social Media Efforts

NIEHS continues to increase its use of social media. NIEHS social media accounts topped significant landmarks in recent months. The **@NIEHS twitter** handle surpassed 10,000 followers, while **Facebook likes** surged last quarter by 60% [5,032 on 10/1/14 to 8,036 on 12/31/14]. These recent examples show the reach that a Facebook posting could have.



Web and Materials Development

New Fact Sheets

- [Hydraulic Fracturing and Health](#) (December)
- [Superfund Research Program](#) (August)

For the October release of the Report on Carcinogens, five fact sheets were developed and coordinated with agency partners.

- [1-Bromopropane](#)
- [Cumene](#)
- [ortho-Toluidine](#)
- [Pentachlorophenol](#)
- [Report on Carcinogens Overview](#)

All fact sheets, pocket cards, and brochures are available on the NIEHS website at <http://www.niehs.nih.gov/health/materials>.

Training

OCPL co-sponsored a writing workshop, November 17, 18, and 21, with the Office of Fellows' Career Development, "Scientific Writing from the Reader's Perspective," presented by George Gopen, J.D., Ph.D., professor emeritus of the practice of rhetoric at Duke University. Approximately 100 NIEHS scientists and OCPL members attended the three-part training.

Exhibit

OCPL staff brought the NIEHS exhibit to the American Public Health Association meeting in New Orleans Nov. 15-19. The exhibit won third place for overall appearance. The December Environmental Factor ran a [story](#) that showcased some of the key conference events.

Online Newsletter

The NIEHS monthly online newsletter, the [Environmental Factor](#) (e-Factor), highlights NIEHS research, staff accomplishments, and ongoing activities. Many of the stories in the e-Factor are selected and used by other publications, including the **NIH Record**, **NIH Catalyst**, **NIH Research Matters**, **NTP Update**, and others. A few examples are illustrated below.

- September-October, **The NIH Catalyst**, "[Sleep, perchance to research](#)"
- September 12, **NIH Record**, "[NIEHS fellow Cruz-Topete earns FLARE internship](#)"
- October 24, **NIH Record**, "[Teachers rate NIEHS summer institute an A+](#)"
- December 8, **NIH Research Matters**, "[Structural snapshots of damaged DNA](#)"

Christine Bruske Flowers

Director, Office of Communications and Public Liaison
National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences
National Institutes of Health 919-541-3665

Robin Mackar

News Director, Office of Communications and Public Liaison