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NATIONAL WORKING GROUP CLAIMS LINK BETWEEN CDC STUDY AND INCREASED USE OF CHLORAMINE IN DRINKING WATER

Demand Action on Chloramine in Drinking Water Causing Skin and Respiratory Problems

The End Chloramine Working Group (ECWG) responded today to a government study by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) showing a marked rise in life-threatening childhood respiratory diseases and skin conditions. The ECWG is a national coalition of non-profits and citizens groups raising awareness about the effects of chloramines as a drinking water disinfectant, and documenting the serious health effects of chloramine for the past ten years.

The May 3, 2013 NBC News article "[Allergies on the rise in US kids, government study finds](#)," describes symptoms consistent with those collected and reported by The ECWG for the last decade.

The symptoms that are on the rise in the CDC study are the same symptoms that are increasing around the country as chloramine is being used more and more.

While CDC and the medical community are scratching their collective heads about the cause of the sharp rise in recent years of what the report refers to as "potentially fatal respiratory diseases" and "disfiguring skin conditions," The ECWG has been alerting the USEPA, CDC and local water utilities to numerous studies on the hazards of chloramine and the thousands of personal reports from 30 states strongly suggesting a connection between chloraminated water and skin, respiratory, and digestive health issues.

Chloramine has been added to drinking water systems at an increasing rate in the past decade as a direct result of EPA rules requiring the reduction of chlorine's regulated disinfection byproducts.

Water system operators are choosing the least expensive option for meeting EPA regulations. Rather than clean up the source water with improved filtration, EPA's regulations are causing water systems across the country to add chloramine to the drinking water.

Denise Johnson-Kula, founder of the non-profit organization [Citizens Concerned about Chloramine](#) (CCAC) in 2004, has worked with symptom sufferers all over the country and helped them form satellite groups who are fighting the use of chloramine. "We are not surprised that children are suffering from the symptoms reported in this study in greater numbers than most other countries," says Johnson-Kula. "Our data shows that in states and countries which use chloramine, there are increased reports of skin, respiratory, and digestive symptoms, some of which are life threatening. To date, CCAC has heard from people in over 30 states in the U.S. as well as other countries using chloramine, who are experiencing the same symptoms.

"When Vermont's largest water system, the Champlain Water District, added chloramine to our water in 2006, hundreds of [people reported skin rashes, respiratory problems, and digestive issues](#). Their symptoms vanish when sufferers move away or take vacations to areas which do not use chloramine, or when they switch entirely to using bottled spring water," reports Ellen Powell, founder of People Concerned About Chloramine.

Michelle Anderson, founder of South Carolinians Against Chloramine said, "My son and I developed skin and digestive symptoms from chloraminated tap water in upstate South Carolina. In 2009 I began

documenting people with skin, respiratory and digestive symptoms which they demonstrated were due to their use of chloraminated water. People contacted me after they saw news articles and [a television segment](#) that covered our family's experiences with chloramine.”

Susan Pickford of the [Chloramine Information Center](#) in Pennsylvania worked for three years to keep Pennsylvania American Water Company (PAWC) from putting chloramine in the drinking water in the Camp Hill area. Despite their efforts PAWC started using chloramine in 2010 which also resulted in the reporting of adverse health effects. Pickford, an attorney, developed evidence that PAWC’s water systems did not need to use chloramine to meet EPA’s regulations. “We have documentation of people who experienced skin rashes and respiratory difficulties after only a three minute exposure to the chloraminated water,” Pickford said.

Despite intense opposition, in July 2012 Tulsa, Oklahoma began using chloramine. Residents immediately began reporting skin rashes, respiratory and gastrointestinal problems. That same month, water boards in Charlottesville, Virginia rejected the use of chloramine in response to a large public outcry.

In March 2013, Rutland, Vermont became the first city in the U.S. to [vote on the use of chloramine](#), and overwhelmingly rejected chloramine 2406 to 1150.

"In 1978, scientists recommended to the EPA that studies be done on the health effects of chloramine, foreseeing that more water systems would be using it in the future," Jeanine Kinney of [Tulsans Against Chloramine](#) points out. “To date, no skin, respiratory or digestive studies on chloraminated water have been done. Many agencies have done exhaustive searches for such studies. All of them have come up empty-handed. Since these studies have not been done, doctors have no way to clinically diagnose chloramine exposure in their patients.”

"Sufferers get allergy testing, colonoscopies, and prescriptions for steroidal inhalers and creams, which do nothing to address the underlying problem,” says Annette Smith, executive director of [Vermonters for a Clean Environment](#), a non-profit organization that has been working with citizens in Vermont and around the country to end the use of chloramine in drinking water. "Most people who present with allergy-like symptoms from chloraminated water test negative for allergies, which makes it all the more difficult for doctors to figure out. Even people who do not live with chloramine in their water supply may be exposed via processed foods made with chloraminated water."

“All the evidence these citizens have gathered seems to point to chloramine as a skin and mucous membrane irritant," says [Bob Bowcock](#), lead environmental investigator for [Erin Brockovich](#), who is working with the End Chloramine Working Group. "USEPA and CDC have been handed credible anecdotal evidence of a link between chloraminated water and the alarming increase in skin and respiratory symptoms in the public. However, they continue to ignore this mounting evidence. The CDC should be investigating the connection between these symptoms and the increasing use of chloramine across the country. It's time they took the complaints about the health issues caused by chloramine seriously."

Some of the major cities using chloramine: Houston TX, Los Angeles CA, Philadelphia PA, San Diego CA, Dallas TX, San Jose CA, Indianapolis IN, San Francisco CA, Austin TX, Fort Worth TX, Milwaukee WI, Boston MA, Washington DC, Denver CO, Portland OR, Oklahoma City OK, Kansas City MO, Virginia Beach VA, Omaha NE, Oakland CA, Miami FL, St. Louis MO, Raleigh NC, St. Petersburg FL, Portland ME, Bangor ME, Concord NH, Manchester NH, Ketchikan AK, Charleston SC, Sarasota FL, Savannah GA, Louisville KY, Lexington KY, Columbia SC, Short Hills NJ, Lincoln NE, Bismarck ND, Ann Arbor MI, Fort Wayne IN, Champaign IL, Peoria IL, Tampa FL

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