

# National Conversation on Public Health and Chemical Exposures



## LET'S TALK

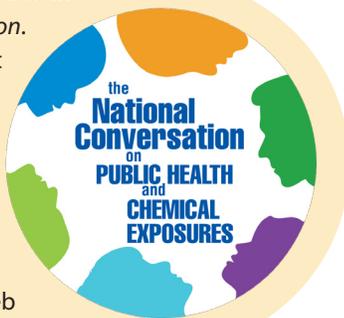
In keeping with their mission to protect public health, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) are supporting the *National Conversation on Public Health and Chemical Exposures*.

Most of us use products that contain chemicals every day. However, we need to better understand the potential health effects of the chemicals we use daily. And as a nation, we need to better protect people from harmful chemical exposures. Although there are many organizations that have had major successes in recent years with protecting the public from exposure to harmful chemicals, we can—and must—do a better job.

## Joining the Conversation is easy and everyone is welcome!

CDC and ATSDR are engaging many organizations to participate in the *National Conversation*.

We also hope that everyone interested in chemical exposure issues will join the *Conversation*. To get involved in the *National Conversation*, you can participate online in Web dialogues, host a meeting to collect input from community members, and even find us on Facebook and Twitter. Visit <http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/Nationalconversation/> to learn about ways to become involved in this collaborative project.



## Vision

Chemicals are used and managed in ways that are safe and healthy for all people.

## Goal

Develop an action agenda—clear, achievable recommendations—that will help government agencies and other organizations strengthen their efforts to protect the public from harmful chemical exposures.

## What We Hope to Accomplish

Drawing on ideas that work groups will develop and those that you will suggest, the *National Conversation* Leadership Council will produce an action agenda that advances the project's vision—that chemicals are used and managed in ways that are safe and healthy for all people. The agenda—clear, achievable recommendations—will help government agencies and other groups strengthen their efforts to protect the public from harmful chemical exposures. The agenda will help our nation identify better ways to

**Collect** information about chemical use, people who are exposed, and the levels at which they are exposed.

**Understand** how chemicals affect people's health.

**Use** policies and practices that tell us about risks, how to reduce harmful exposures, and how to create and use safe chemicals.

**Prevent, prepare for, and respond** to chemical-related emergencies.

**Protect** all communities from harmful chemical exposures.

**Create** a well-informed public and health care provider network to help people understand chemical exposure risks.

**Involve** the public in government decision making.

**Encourage** teamwork among partner groups and agencies.

In addition, this project will create a well-informed network of interested citizens, public health professionals, community leaders, and government agency employees, who could continue the search for solutions to protecting the public from harmful chemical exposures.

## How to join the *Conversation*

# Questions?

Contact us at  
[nationalconversation@cdc.gov](mailto:nationalconversation@cdc.gov)

### Leadership Council

The Leadership Council is a group of key environmental and public health leaders who guide the *National Conversation*. The Leadership Council will produce an action agenda that will help government agencies and other organizations strengthen their efforts to protect the public from harmful chemical exposures. We hope that you will comment on the draft action agenda when it is available.

### Work Groups

Six work groups (listed below) will research and make recommendations to the Leadership Council about public health and chemical exposure issues.

- Monitoring
- Scientific Understanding
- Policies and Practices
- Chemical Emergencies
- Serving Communities
- Education and Communication

### Web Dialogues

We invite the public to participate in the *National Conversation* on the Internet. We are using Web-based forums, called Web dialogues, to get your input and feedback at key points during the process.

### Community Conversations

We are inviting everyone interested in chemical exposure issues to host their own community conversation. We have developed a *Community Conversation Toolkit*, which provides a set of discussion questions and a method for sending ideas back to the *National Conversation* project team.

### Listening Sessions

*National Conversation* partners will periodically hold listening sessions at conferences and other meetings to gain input from key stakeholders.

### Social Media

Look for the *National Conversation on Public Health and Chemical Exposures* on Facebook and follow us on Twitter @NatlConvo.

## GET INVOLVED!

- Participate in our online [Web dialogues](#).
- Host a [community conversation](#) with your group or in your neighborhood.
- Spread the word to your family, friends, and colleagues and invite their participation.
- Visit us at <http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/nationalconversation>.
- Look for the *National Conversation* on Facebook and follow us on Twitter @NatlConvo.

