



## ***National Conversation on Public Health and Chemical Exposures***

# **Launching the Conversation**

***Ronald Reagan Building and International Trade Center  
Washington, DC***

**June 26, 2009**

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U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention



## Our Vision

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



## This vision requires...

- **Accurate information on chemical use, exposure pathways, and exposure levels;**
- **Scientific understanding of how chemicals affect health;**
- **Policies and practices that prevent or reduce harmful exposures;**
- **Effective prevention of, preparedness for, and response to chemical emergencies;**
- **Elimination of inequities in exposure;**
- **A well-informed and engaged public and health care provider network; and**
- **Close collaboration and coordination among partner organizations and agencies.**

# Are we there yet?



**ATSDR**  
AGENCY FOR TOXIC SUBSTANCES  
AND DISEASE REGISTRY

**Flint-area households kicking the chemicals; medical experts mixed on effectiveness** by Elizabeth Shaw | The Flint Journal

Saturday November 22, 2008, 4:00 PM

Most industries remain dependent on hazardous substances

Some good news: Fewer kids have high lead levels



SPECIAL REPORT  
The Smokestack Effect  
**Toxic Air and America's Schools**

Health risks stack up for students near industrial plants

Accidental child poisonings still a major problem

*Detoxing to get rid of chemicals in the body increasingly popular and much debated*

Rule OK's chemical tankers through cities

Industry group calls for 'modernization' of toxic chemical law

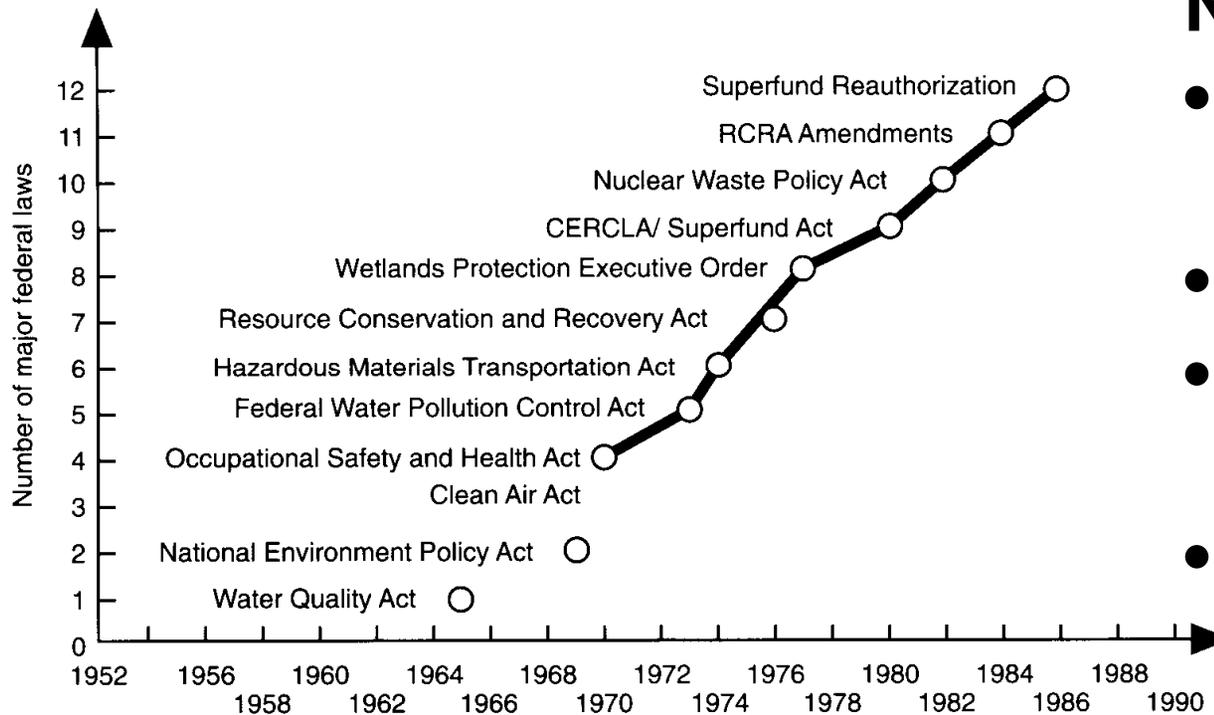
California unveils six-step strategy to promote green chemistry

Ailing FDA May Need a Major Overhaul, Officials and Groups Say

**MELAMINE-TAINTED INFANT FORMULA LINKED TO KIDNEY STONES**



## 40+ years of effort



## Not to mention...

- **Scientific advances**
- **Organizations**
- **Degree programs**
- **Etc.**

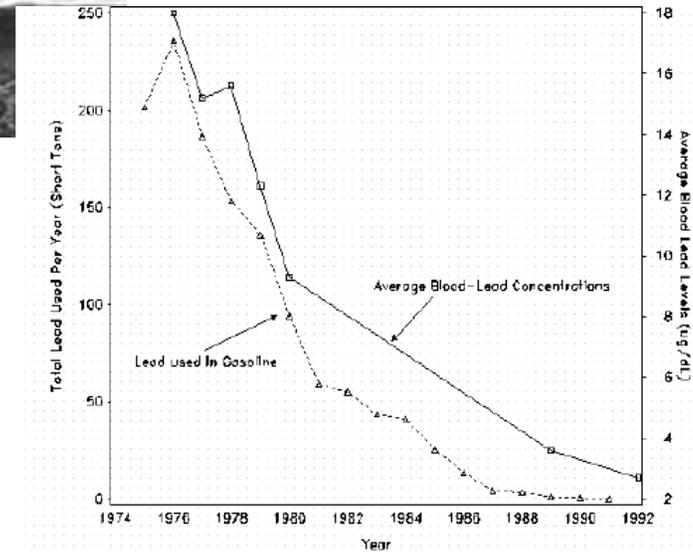


## A complex “system”

- **ATSDR**
- **CDC**
  - NCEH
  - NIOSH
- **CSB**
- **CPSC**
- **EPA**
- **DOD**
- **DOE**
- **DHS**
- **FDA**
- **NIEHS/NTP**
- **OSHA**
- **USGS**
- **USDA**
- **State and local agencies**
- **Professional associations**
- **Industry**
- **Commerce**
- **Environmental groups**
- **Community groups**
- **Academia**
- **Tribal groups**



# Important advances





## Room for improvement

- **Accurate information on chemical use, exposure pathways, and exposure levels;**
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- **A well-informed and engaged public and health care provider network; and**
- **Close collaboration and coordination among partner organizations and agencies.**



## Changed landscape

- **Recognition of many exposure pathways**
- **Recognition of broad range of health outcomes**
- **Biomonitoring**
- **Large numbers of chemicals**
- **New approaches to toxicity testing**
- **Environmental justice**
- **Green chemistry**



## Our Goal

- **Develop an action agenda for strengthening the public health approach to chemical exposures**
  - Identify: gaps, redundancies, priorities and solutions
  - NCEH/ATSDR focus: Improving our work
  - Close collaboration with other federal agencies
  - Engagement with non-Federal partners (state and local agencies, communities, NGOs, academia, private sector)



## Shared values

- **Safe, healthy, wholesome environments**
- **Care for vulnerable populations**
- **Responsible stewardship for future generations**
- **Value of prevention**
- **Reliance on good science**
- **Efficient use of resources**
- **Good government**





## Key aspects of the Conversation

- **Respect for ongoing initiatives**
  - No wrenches in the works
  - Enhance and support with good ideas





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  - No wrenches in the works
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- **No mandates**
- **Transparent, open, inclusive, participatory**





**Today:  
Help us launch the  
conversation**



## Breakout session topics

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



## Work group membership nomination process

- Call for nominations starting today
- Taking nominations through July 20, 2009
- [www.2009nationalconversation.com](http://www.2009nationalconversation.com)



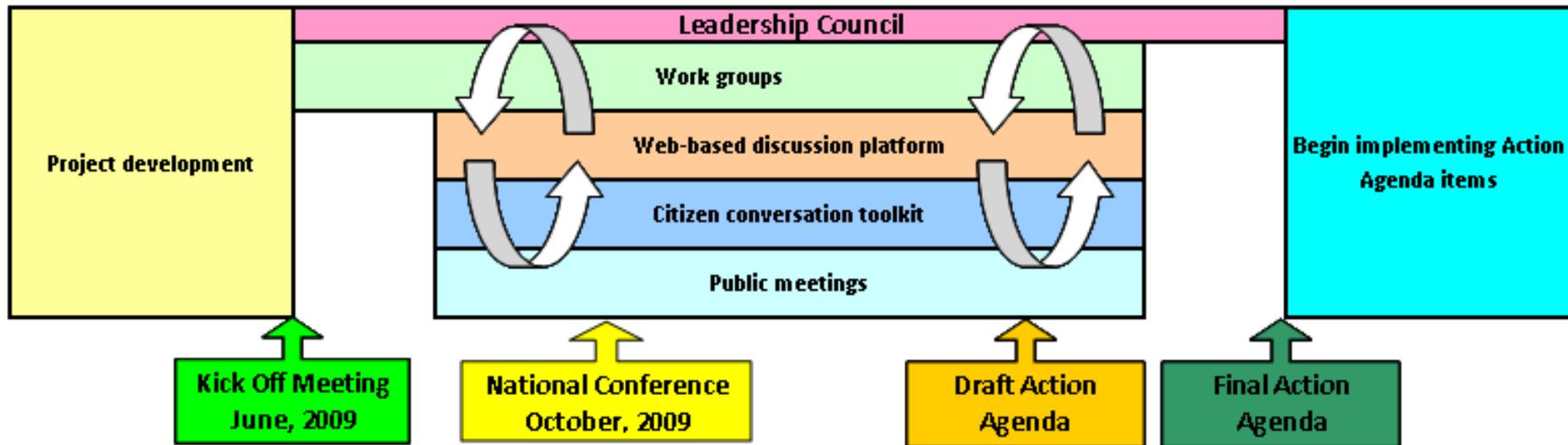
## Public participation

- **Interactive on-line discussion platform**
- **Citizen conversation toolkit**
- **Sector-based meetings**
- **Public meetings**

# National Conversation on Public Health and Chemical Exposures - Process

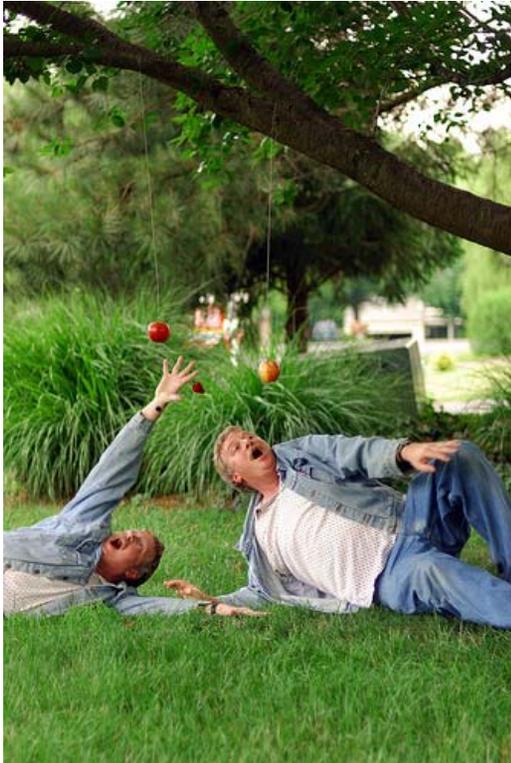
January 2009

January 2011





## Outcomes



- **Early wins**
- **Actionable set of recommendations that we can move to achieve quickly**



**Stay informed &  
participate**

Web: **[www.atsdr.cdc.gov/nationalconversation](http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/nationalconversation)**

Email: **[nationalconversation@cdc.gov](mailto:nationalconversation@cdc.gov)**