



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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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

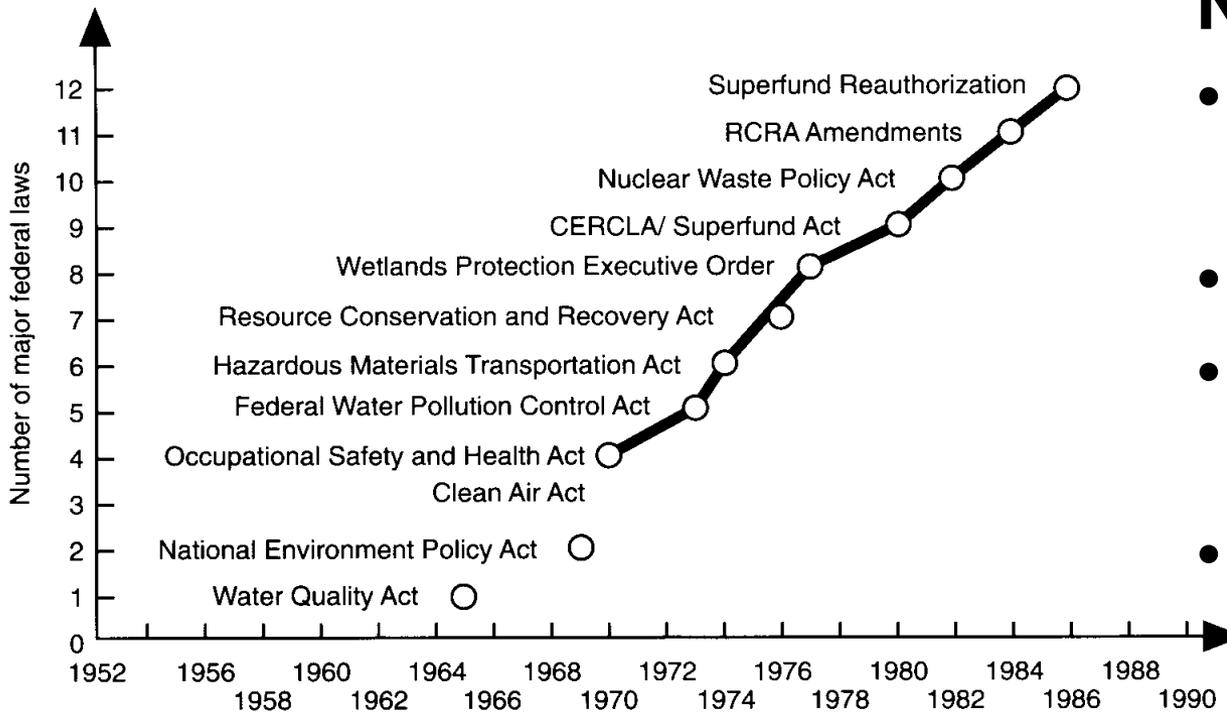
California unveils six-step strategy to promote green chemistry

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.**

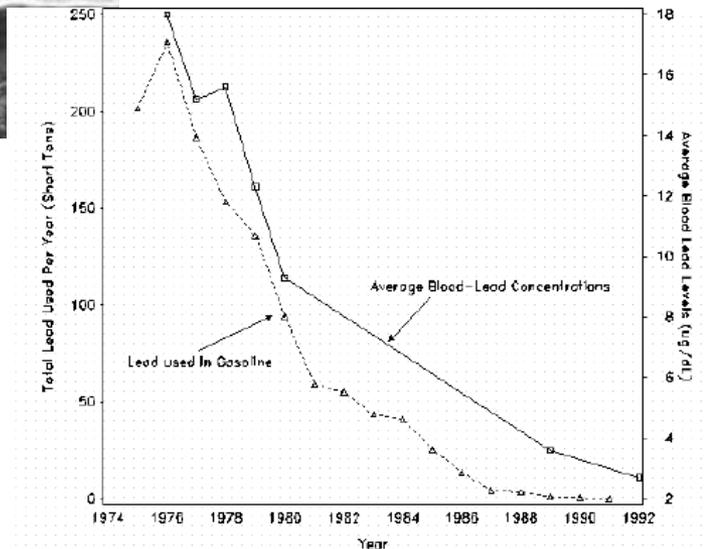


A complex “system”

- **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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- **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.**



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

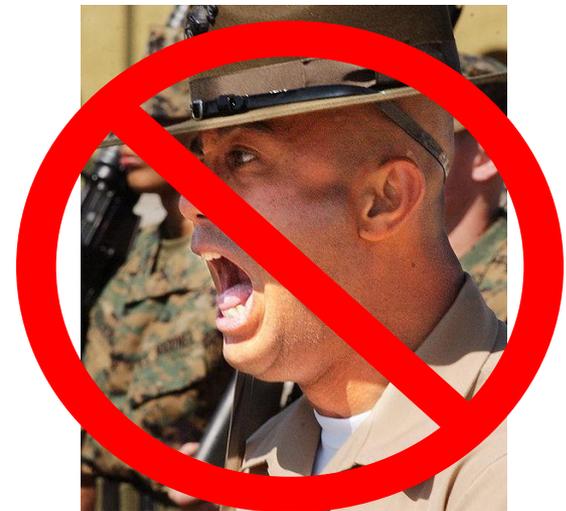
- **Respect for ongoing initiatives**
 - No wrenches in the works
 - Enhance and support with good ideas





Key aspects of the Conversation

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- **No mandates**





Key aspects of the Conversation

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



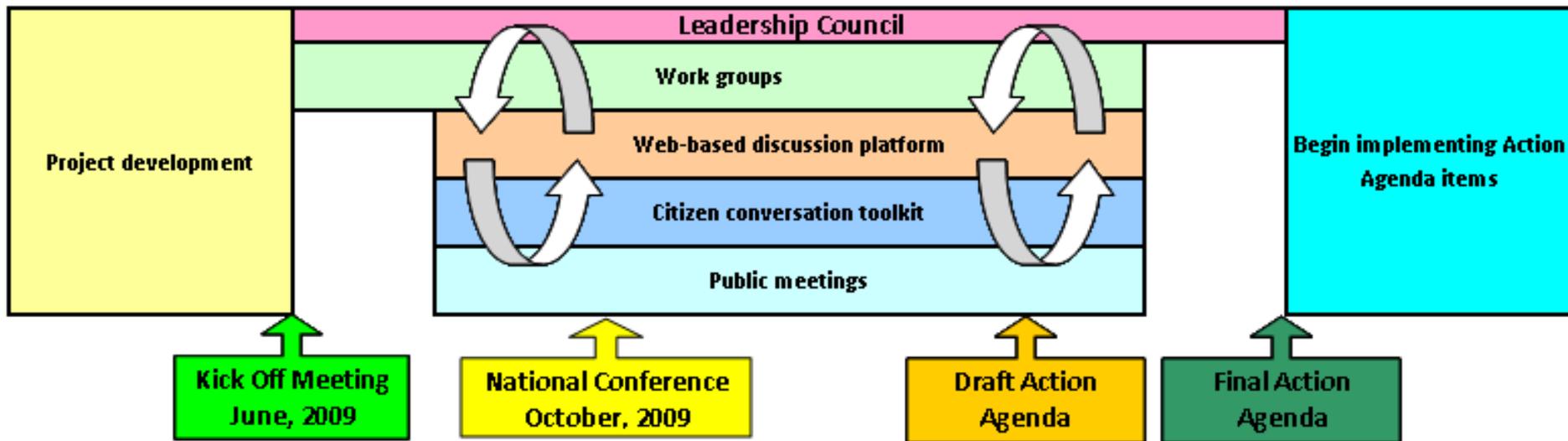
Public participation

- **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

Email: nationalconversation@cdc.gov