

Environmental Health

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About the Cover:

It is generally agreed that emergency response plans should address the potential for terrorist events involving chemical releases. But which chemicals? To address that question, this month's feature article, "Analyzing Acute-Chemical-Release Data to Describe Chemicals That May Be Used as Weapons of Terrorism," looks at data from ATSDR's Hazardous Substances Emergency Events Surveillance (HSEES) system. The authors found that a small group of chemicals—just 2 percent of all those included in the HSEES data—accounted for 20 percent of the releases. These chemicals, categorized as Priority 1 chemicals because of their availability, explosivity range, toxicity, or prior use as weapons, were also associated with twice as many victims as the other HSEES chemicals. Their disproportionate impact is represented on our cover by the prominence of two bottles containing intensely colored liquids.

(See story on page 9)

COMING UP...

in the Journal of Environmental Health

- Lessons Learned from Hurricane Katrina
- A New Jersey Well Testing Program
- Exposure to VOCs in Taiwan
- Leaders in Environmental Health

FEATURES

Analyzing Acute-Chemical-Release Data to Describe Chemicals That May Be Used as Weapons of Terrorism 9
Perri Zeitz Ruckart, M.PH., and Mike Fay, Ph.D.

Hepatitis A in a Food Worker and Subsequent Prophylaxis of Restaurant Patrons 16
Jennifer L. Patnaik, M.H.S., Laura Dippold, M.PH., and Richard L. Vogt, M.D.

SPECIAL REPORT

A Comparison of Environmental Legislation and Regulation in New Zealand and the United States 20
Tim Kelley, M.Ed., Ph.D., and David Slaney, Ph.D.

COLUMNS

President's Message: *The New Guy on the Block* 4

Guest Commentary: *The Ethical Dilemma of Genetically Modified Food* 33

NEW! Direct from CDC's Environmental Health Services Branch: *The Role of Environmental Health Practitioners in a Public Health Emergency* 36

Managing Editor's Desk: *A Source of Light and Energy for Our Profession!* 54

DEPARTMENTS

Practical Stuff! 24

Library Corner 25

JEH Quiz #1 27

JEH Index: Volume 68 29

EH Update 38

NEHA News 39

Products & Services 40

People on the Move 41

Letters to the Editor 41

Special NEHA Members 43

Special Listing 44

Calendar 46

Advertisers Index 46

Tribute to JEH Peer Reviewers 47

Career Opportunities 48

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