

# NEWS



## American Public Health Association

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### **Melnick Earns Rall Award for Environmental Health Advocacy**

*Washington, D.C., November 4, 2007* — For his outstanding contributions to public health through science-based advocacy, Ronald L. Melnick, PhD, received the 2007 David P. Rall Award for Advocacy in Public Health at the American Public Health Association (APHA) 135<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting & Exposition.

Melnick is senior toxicologist and director of special programs in the Environmental Toxicology Program at the National Institute of Environmental Health. He is heralded by his colleagues for standing up to those who propose weakening chemical exposure standards based on inadequate evidence.

“He has devoted his entire professional life to improving our knowledge and understanding of issues concerning public health, working constantly with both a vision of the future and a tight grasp on the daily tasks of getting there,” said APHA member Jennifer Sass, PhD, in a letter nominating Melnick for the award. She called him a “committed workhorse and public servant, laying the scientific foundation for sound policies that protect public and environmental health.”

Melnick’s research has advanced the understanding of the toxicity of such widely used industrial chemicals as butadiene, isoprene, glycol esters and drinking water disinfection by-products such as chloroform. He has testified about the cancer-causing potential of DEHP, a chemical contained in medical devices such as intravenous tubing and dialysis machines, and the gasoline additive known as MTBE.

He has worked at the National Institute of Environmental Health since 1980, where he has been involved in the design, monitoring and interpretation of toxicity and carcinogenesis studies, as well as research on the health effects of environmental and

occupational agents. He spent a year as an agency representative to the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy to work on interagency assessments of health risks of environmental agents and on risk assessment research needs in the federal government.

The author or co-author of more than 140 journal articles, book chapters and technical reports related to the potential health effects of environmental agents, Melnick has organized several national and international symposiums and workshops on health risks associated with exposure to toxins. He has served on numerous scientific review boards and advisory panels, including those of the North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. He is a fellow of the Collegium Ramazzini and is listed in Who's Who in America.

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Founded in 1872, the APHA is the oldest, largest and most diverse organization of public health professionals in the world. The association aims to protect all Americans and their communities from preventable, serious health threats and strives to assure community-based health promotion and disease prevention activities and preventive health services are universally accessible in the United States. APHA represents a broad array of health providers, educators, environmentalists, policy-makers and health officials at all levels working both within and outside governmental organizations and educational institutions. More information is available at [www.apha.org](http://www.apha.org).