GLASS provides information & referrals on lead poisoning & lead contamination prevention & management, with the goal of eliminating lead poisoning globally & protecting the environment from lead. GLASS is run by The LEAD Group Incorporated ABN 25 819 463 114

global lead advice & support service

What can I do about climate change AND lead?

By Elizabeth O'Brien and Robert Taylor, Global Lead Advice & Support Service (GLASS)

What do I need to know about climate change?

The IPCC {Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change) has estimated that global temperatures may rise by between 1.1 and 6.4 degrees (from a baseline averaging 1960-1990) sometime during the 21st century. The general scientific consensus that emerged in forums like the Bali conference is that for there to be an around 50% chance of limiting the rise of global temperature to a 2°C increase since industrialization, we would need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) in developed countries by 25-40% by 2020, developing nations must peak GHG emissions before 2020, and total global emissions by 50% of 1990 levels by 2050. Even with these reductions, the following are predicted: Global emissions would have to peak by 2020 at the latest (see graph). To date, the rise has been about 0.6°C since industrialization.

With a 2°C increase we should prepare for:

- Disappearance of mountain glaciers
- Damage to coral ecosystems
- Severe impact on the Sahel
- Thawing of arctic including Greenland

What do I need to know about lead poisoning as a global problem?

Lead Health Impacts

- Lead replaces minerals (notably iron and calcium) within the body. Prevents haemoglobin formation in red blood cells producing anaemia
- 10µg/dL decreases kids IQ by 7.4 pts compared to 1µg/dL so this is aptly called "The Age of Stupid"
- 2µg/dL of lead in the blood increases risk of early death
- WHO considers <10µg/dL an adequate goal; researchers calling on WHO to halve that level
- The LEAD Group says reduce goal to <2µg/dL
- >50% of people alive today have probably had a Blood lead above 10µg/dL
- We would all be smarter and live longer were it not for lead

Lead is in Everything & Everyone

- 2.5bn have no regulation of lead in house-paint
- Lead petrol not yet banned in 14 countries
- Savings following US ban: $110-319 bn
- Karachi (2002) 80.5% of kids >10µg/dL
- 5 Indian cities (2005) kids ave. 12.1µg/dL
- >33% kids in China >10µg/dL (2004)
- Lead is in unleaded petrol, diesel, coal, biomass, dung, computers, solar panels...

What do I need to do about lead poisoning AND climate change

Ask your politicians to follow the following recommendations.

Recommendations: Greenhouse Management

- Taxation of hydrocarbons used in transportation; abandon biofuels
- Tougher diesel standards to restrict black carbon emissions
- Reducing biomass combustion for farming/domestic purposes
- Adding insulation to houses while removing ceiling dust
- Price incentives to industries to reduce GHG emissions
- Funding for biosequestration programs rather than geosequestration

Recommendations: Lead Management

- Biosequestration or chemical stabilization of lead waste
- Tax on lead mining *at the mine* to encourage recycling
- Tax new vehicles & reduce numbers of vehicles being made, by providing public transport, bikeways, walkways & incentives to reduce vehicle kilometres travelled (VKT)
- Enhance lead recycling, battery deposit or repurchase and convert small-scale lead battery works into collection points, and ensure all batteries are recycled at large-scale facilities covered by OH&S and Environmental Controls
- Ban leaded AvGas (aviation fuel for propeller aircraft) globally

Recommendations: A Smarter World

- Laws to prevent lead diversion from lead acid batteries to unregulated uses
- Regulation of combustion of materials that may contain lead & vacuuming of leaded ceiling dusts for recycling
- Education & nutritional supplements, veganism
- Decrease all fuel burning by localising all production, encouraging urban gardens, decreasing manufacturing & ending the era of consumerism & long-haul transport
- Prevention of lead poisoning in every way we can, will promote the Age of Reason necessary to mitigate and adjust to climate change

Yes, but what can I do personally?

As an individual, be sure to manage lead paint safely and have ceiling dust removed before adding ceiling insulation (instead of using air conditioning), increase your public transport use, cycling and walking and decrease your car use or try to live without a car altogether, decrease or eliminate air travel and buy local produce (preferably not animal products). Decrease your consumerism, and ensure that your household follows the four Rs: reduce, reuse, recycle, repair.

Join 10:10 Global as an individual and convince your organisation, your council, and your state and federal politicians to join up their organisations to reduce carbon emissions by 10% by 2010. Join up at www.1010global.org

Read up about Climate Change & Lead Toxicity:

See the slide show at www.lead.org.au/bblp/Climate_Change/index.htm
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