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African America Media

EPA to look for link between dump, defects (*UPI*) This story also appeared: *Essence Magazine*

Published: Jan. 27, 2010 at 6:38 PM

KETTLEMAN CITY, Calif., Jan. 27 (UPI) -- A U.S. environmental agency plans to investigate a possible link between an apparent cluster of birth defects in a poor California town and a toxic waste dump.

Kettleman City in the Central Valley about halfway between San Francisco and Los Angeles on Interstate 5 is home to about 1,500 people, many of them poor migrant farm workers. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency announced Tuesday its scientists will examine whether the nearby dump has caused facial deformities in infants there, the Los Angeles Times reported.

Jared Blumenfeld, regional EPA administrator for the Pacific Southwest, told the Times in an interview Tuesday the Obama administration is looking more at issues of economic justice.

"Kettleman City is a very vulnerable community at the confluence of large agriculture and pesticide use, heavy truck traffic, a chemical waste facility accepting PCBs and a proposed 600-megawatt power plant," Blumenfeld said. "This is also a community trying to be represented in a way to get its voice heard.."

Kettleman City residents have gone to court to try to block Kings County from expanding the dump to accept toxic waste from Los Angeles and other cities.

Hispanic Media

Emisiones de Asia contaminan el oeste de Estados Unidos (*La Opinión*)

- |
- 2010-01-21
- | La Opinión

LONDRES, Inglaterra (EFE).- Las emisiones contaminantes procedentes de Asia afectan al ambiente en el oeste de Estados Unidos, por lo que será más difícil para este país alcanzar sus objetivos de reducción de gases tóxicos en la troposfera.

Así lo indica un estudio publicado hoy en la revista "Nature", que demuestra por primera vez lo que hasta ahora era una sospecha, que los niveles de ozono en la troposfera libre en esa zona de EEUU podrían estar subiendo como resultado de las emisiones asiáticas.

El ozono en la capa atmosférica superior de la Tierra ayuda a filtrar los rayos ultravioleta nocivos, pero cuando se encuentra en la atmósfera baja -la troposfera- puede actuar como gas tóxico y causar enfermedades respiratorias y afectar ecosistemas.

Desde el siglo XIX, las emisiones industriales han provocado un aumento de los niveles de ozono, y actualmente Asia oriental es la zona con mayor crecimiento de emisiones del mundo.

Desde que empezó a medirse la incidencia de estos gases, en los años 70 del siglo pasado, se especulaba con que el incremento de la producción asiática podía hacer aumentar los niveles de ozono en la troposfera estadounidense, pero esto no se había comprobado.

El estudio dirigido por Owen Cooper recabó mediciones de ozono desde diferentes plataformas en el occidente de EEUU y descubrió un significativo aumento de la proporción de ozono en el ambiente entre 1995 y el 2008.

El ritmo de crecimiento de la presencia de ozono era mayor cuanto más influidas estaban las mediciones por polución directamente transportada desde Asia.

Los expertos sugieren que ese aumento de ozono observado puede perjudicar los objetivos de limpieza atmosférica a los que aspira Estados Unidos.

Climate Panel Apologizes for Glacier Error (*Hispanic Business*)

Jan. 21, 2010

The head of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change in Switzerland apologized for a report asserting the Himalayan glaciers could disappear by 2035.

Rajendra Pachauri, chairman of the U.N.-affiliated body, conceded the 2007 claim by the Nobel Prize-winning panel of climate scientists was "poorly substantiated."

The data actually indicate the disappearance will likely be around 2350 if global warming trends continue, 315 years later than 2035, Pachauri said.

The incorrect date appears in an error-riddled paragraph of a 938-page report.

The paragraph also misstates the total land area covered by Himalayan glaciers, claiming it is 193,000 square miles when it is actually about 13,000 square miles, said geography Professor Graham Cogley of Trend University in Peterborough, Ontario, one of four scientists who addressed the issue in a letter to be published in the Jan. 29 issue of the journal Science.

The glaciers would have to melt 10 times faster than they are now to disappear by 2035, he said.

The scientists who identified the mistakes say the report relied on news accounts that appear to have transposed 2350 as 2035, ClimateWire reported.

But the gaffes don't undermine the IPCC report's main conclusion -- that evidence for global warming is "unequivocal" and that human activities are driving the climate shift, the scientists said.

Ben Santer, a climate scientist at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory in Livermore, Calif., called the error a "breakdown" in the peer-review process.

But "focusing on a mouse and ignoring the elephant would be a mistake," he told reporters, especially since independent assessments by the National Academy of Sciences, the U.S. government and other sources echo the IPCC's overall findings.

The controversy comes as the IPCC begins work on its next major report, due in 2013.

Native American Media

EPA awards Inter Tribal Council of Arizona (*Indian Country Today*)

By Rob Capriccioso
Story Published: Jan 29, 2010
Story Updated: Jan 29, 2010

Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Lisa P. Jackson has awarded $200,000 to the Inter Tribal Council of Arizona to fund childhood lead poisoning prevention campaigns for 20 tribes in Arizona.

The EPA says young children are particularly susceptible to lead poisoning since they are more likely to ingest lead paint chips, flakes, or dust and are more sensitive to the adverse health effects of lead. Elevated lead levels in young children can trigger learning disabilities, decreased growth, hyperactivity, impaired hearing, and brain damage. Lead can be found in a number of places inside and outside the home.

“Childhood lead poisoning is easily preventable with the right information and awareness. This grant will help Arizona tribal communities raise awareness about preventing lead’s adverse health effects,” Jackson said.

“This project is an important example of the efforts happening across the country to protect our children from a major health threat.”

ITCA is developing culturally specific outreach materials to educate tribal families, especially parents of young children, and tribal staff on the health risks to children from exposure to lead-based paint. The program specifically reaches out to facility maintenance personnel to stress the importance of using lead-safe work practices when renovating buildings.

Tougher air pollution limit (*The Columbus Dispatch*) This story also appeared: *The Navajo Times*

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has toughened its limits for how much of a common air pollutant we can safely inhale.

Posted by Spencer Hunt on January 25, 2010 3:19 PM

The new standard limits nitrogen dioxide, an ingredient in smog, to an hourly average limit of no more than 100 parts per billion. Nitrogen dioxide forms in the air from

pollution spewed by cars, trucks and buses, power plants, and off-road equipment and helps trigger asthma attacks and other breathing problems.

The state will have to come up with a plan to lower nitrogen dioxide in areas where air monitors show higher concentrations. With only two counties on the U.S. EPA's list, Hamilton and Cuyahoga, this doesn't appear to be as big an issue for the state as ozone, another asthma attack triggering smog pollutant.

Chabin responds to Brewer's stance on uranium mining (*Navajo-Hopi Observer*)

Stan Bindell
The Observer

Wednesday, January 20, 2010

PHOENIX, Ariz. - Arizona Gov. Jan Brewer last week threw her support behind nuclear power and uranium mining, including uranium mining near the Grand Canyon. But that didn't sit well with some state officials and environmentalists.

Arizona State Rep. Tom Chabin responded that he wished she would have asked the people living in northern Arizona before taking a position that would impact them.

"It's reckless and unconscionable," he said. "The governor missed the boat."

Rep. Chabin said the governor is more concerned with the Republican primary election than the residents of northern Arizona. He added this is what the state faces as long as it's run by Republicans.

In Brewer's speech, she called nuclear energy safe and said it reduces the carbon footprint. Chabin responded that before nuclear power can go forward something has to be done to address how nuclear waste can be disposed of because it remains radioactive for many years.

According to the Arizona Republic, Brewer considers nuclear energy a consistent energy source with effective costs and no greenhouse emissions.

Chabin, a Flagstaff Democrat, noted that it would take 10 to 20 years to break ground on a nuclear power plant, so it wouldn't impact the current budget crisis.

"The governor's statement is premature and immature. It involves a discussion that we haven't had," he said.

The Arizona Republic reported that any nuclear power development "would have to be approved by the Arizona Corporation Commission and undergo a lengthy federal permitting process."

Chabin said the proposal to mine uranium near the Grand Canyon is particularly offensive because it

could contaminate the Colorado River and the uranium industry has left many contaminated sites behind in northern Arizona.

"Everybody should weigh in on this proposal. My vote would be no and that would be a strong consensus in northern Arizona," he said.

Stacey Hamburg, a spokeswoman with the Sierra Club, said every level of government from the county to Congress has expressed concern about or opposition to uranium mining near the Grand Canyon.

She noted that this opposition includes all northern Arizona tribes and the National Congress of American Indians.

"This has been codified in resolutions, testimony, letters, opinion pieces, protests, dance, art and lawsuits," she said in a written statement.

Hamburg said rather than side with the majority who are calling for protection of the Grand Canyon, precious waters and sacred sites that Gov. Brewer "has decided to auction off Arizona's natural and cultural heritage."

Hamburg also said that contrary to the governor's claims that nuclear power is safe or a low carbon emission solution, Hamburg said the entire nuclear life cycle - from mining to milling to transportation to building the nuclear power plant and then dealing with nuclear waste - has severe environmental consequences as well as significant carbon emissions.

Flagstaff battles recycle contamination (*Navajo-Hopi Observer*)

Submitted by Tammy Bishop
Special to the Observer

Tuesday, January 12, 2010

FLAGSTAFF, Ariz. - Contamination of recyclables is at a higher than normal level, which means added costs for processing recyclables.

Contamination is defined as "any item that is placed ... with recyclables which is not accepted by the Material Recovery Facility (MRF). Items that are accepted for recycling include: rigid plastics No. 1 through No. 7, paper, cardboard, steel and aluminum cans.

It is equally important to know what types of items are not recyclable and are not accepted at the MRF. These include:

• Aluminum foil

• Clothes - Clothing in good condition should be donated to a local organization and unusable clothing should be placed in trash receptacles.

• Food

• Furniture

• Glass - Cannot be placed with regular recycling. Flagstaff has seven convenient locations where glass can be dropped off.

• Household hazardous waste - The Hazardous Products Center accepts hazardous liquids such as paints/stains, cleaners and gas/oil. Call (928) 527-9005 for more information.

• Paper plates, cups/straws and plastic spoons/forks.

• Plastic shopping bags - These can be taken to local stores for recycling.

• Plastic wrap

• Styrofoam

• Tires - Tires are accepted at Coconino County Waste Tire Yard, call (928) 526-2735 for more information.

• Wood/Green waste

For more recycling information and a complete list of acceptable items visit www.flagstaff.az.gov/recycle.

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