



CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
**Department of Toxic Substances Control**  
**NEWS RELEASE**

11-07

**Arnold Schwarzenegger, Governor**

**Maureen Gorsen, Director**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Symposium to be webcast in real time**

**California Department of Toxic Substances Control Presents Symposium  
on Effects of Pharmaceuticals and Personal Care Products in the Environment**

**SACRAMENTO, Calif.** – The California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) today announced details for an upcoming symposium on May 22 that will explore the impacts of pharmaceutical waste disposal and personal care products in the environment.

DTSC and environmental scientists throughout the country are paying increasing attention to the rising detection of pharmaceutical and personal care products, or PPCPs, in the environment and their potential for adverse impacts to human health and wildlife. These PPCPs are being disposed of, often with a flush of a toilet, and are getting into the nation's waterways and seeping into groundwater via sewage treatment plants and septic systems.

Scientists researching these PPCPs are detecting these substances, called "emerging contaminants," at an alarming rate. PPCPs such as steroids, prescriptions and nonprescription drugs, antibiotics, hormones, and fragrances have been detected in all U.S. streams where researchers have looked for them. The risk to aquatic organisms such as fish is a primary concern, and much attention has focused on the potential for endocrine system disruption. For people, drinking potable water that may contain trace amounts of various PPCPs has been identified as one of many potential routes of exposure.

"It's imperative that we create awareness about PPCPs and their potential harm to public health and the environment," said DTSC Director Maureen Gorsen. "We need to respond proactively and responsibly to increase the understanding of this complex scientific issue, thoroughly evaluate the impacts of the rising detection of these compounds in the environment, and develop strategies to best address these issues."

DTSC's "Pharmaceutical and Personal Care Products in the Environment Symposium," to be held on May 22 at California Environmental Protection Agency headquarters in downtown Sacramento at 1001 I Street, is the fourth in a series of informational symposia sponsored by DTSC. The symposium will educate businesses, government, community representatives, and other stakeholders on emerging chemical issues in the state.

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The symposium will feature speakers from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, UC Berkeley, UC Riverside, the Southern Nevada Water Authority, Merck & Co., Inc. on behalf of the Pharmaceutical research and Manufacturers of America, the state Water Resources Control Board, and the California Air Resources Board.

To register for the symposium or for more information call DTSC at 916-255-6640 or register online at:

[http://www.dtsc.ca.gov/AssessingRisk/PPCP/index.cfm#Pharmaceuticals and Personal Care Products Symposium](http://www.dtsc.ca.gov/AssessingRisk/PPCP/index.cfm#Pharmaceuticals_and_Personal_Care_Products_Symposium)

The symposium will also be available via webcast at <http://www.calepa.ca.gov/broadcast/>.

Previous DTSC symposia covered green chemistry, nanotechnology and biomonitoring. An additional informational symposium of green chemistry will be held later this year.

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FOR GENERAL INQUIRIES: Contact the Department of Toxic Substances Control phone: (800) 728-6942 or visit [www.dtsc.ca.gov](http://www.dtsc.ca.gov). To report illegal handling, discharge, or disposal of hazardous waste, call the Waste Alert Hotline at (800) 698-6942.