



Spotlight on DTSC

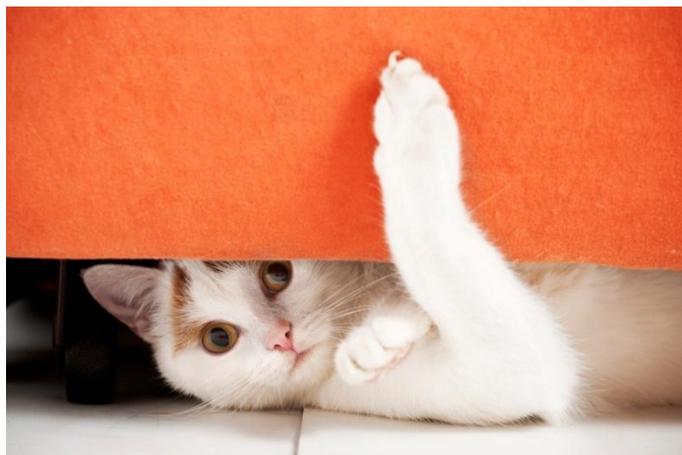
International scholar hails DTSC lab as one of the best pet study labs in the world

DTSC's Environmental Chemistry Lab (ECL) in Berkeley is known internationally and it is routine for visiting scholars to perform research there. Animal lovers now have a reason to love it as well.

Dr. Hazuki Mizukawa, who conducts pet study as an assistant professor at Hokkaido University in Japan, spent one month at the ECL working with DTSC's scientists. She returned to Japan in March after investigating the source of PBDEs (polybrominated diphenyl ethers) in California household cats. PBDEs are flame retardant chemicals that are commonly added to household products. Some flame retardants are known carcinogens.

"Hazuki helped to analyze cat food for those chemicals," said DTSC's Dr. June-Soo Park, who worked closely with Mizukawa and is the chief of DTSC's Human and Environmental Monitoring Section (HEMS). "While she was here, she had a chance to watch our newly developed analytical method for (PBDEs) and she helped us better understand why California household cats had such high levels of flame retardants like PBDEs."

Studies have shown that there is a higher concentration of PBDEs in pet cats than in humans – with the pets being exposed through diet and ingestion of house dust. Mizukawa explained that the PBDE levels in California household cats are higher than in cats in other parts of the country.



"For a long time I have been interested in pet research, and DTSC's lab is a one of best pet study labs in the world," Mizukawa said. "Domestic pets, such as dogs and cats, who share their environment with humans can be an indicator for human, especially infant, exposure to environmental contaminants."

Mizukawa, who earned her PhD while she was at the ECL, has been studying this issue for about five years. She has already done a pet food study in Japan and her goal at the ECL was to estimate the dietary PBDE exposure levels. So she and DTSC scientists analyzed PBDEs in dry and wet pet food samples.



DEPARTMENT of TOXIC SUBSTANCES CONTROL

“This was a great collaborative opportunity for both parties because DTSC and Hazuki’s group have a worldwide reputation in the environment pollution field and had similarities and differences in the expertise depending on the subjects,” Park said.

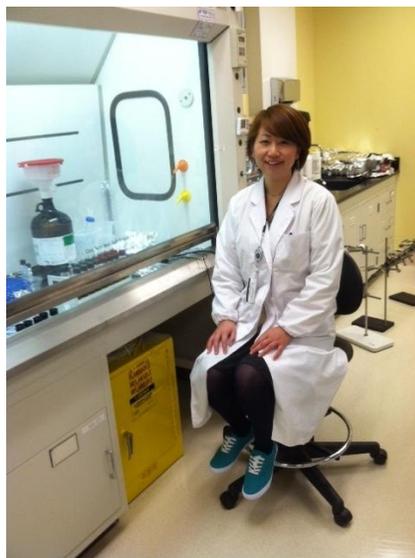
Park first met Mizukawa while he was invited to give a lecture at Ehime University (Japan) in February of 2012. Mizukawa and four of her colleagues from the university then visited the ECL for a tour in November. Park brought up the opportunity for Mizukawa to spend a month at DTSC’s lab during that visit.

DTSC’s ECL routinely hosts international scholars. As recently as last year, the department hosted two scholars from Sweden. Another scholar, doctoral candidate Un-Jung Kim from Korea, started her visit by attending the sixth International Symposium on Flame Retardants (sponsored by DTSC) and will return to Korea on May 10 of this year.

Park says that DTSC is currently analyzing the work that was done while Mizukawa was at the lab.

This is Mizukawa’s third visit to the United States. She visited the ECL last year and has also been to Texas.

“She was very nice and had a friendly personality and got along with my group very easily,” Park said. “I was quite impressed with how hard she worked since day one. I was very happy to have her with us.”



Dr. Hazuki Mizukawa, visiting from Japan, working at DTSC’s Environmental Chemistry Lab (ECL) in Berkeley.