Where are these chemicals?

Brominated Fire Retardants

Brominated fire retardants are mixtures of man-made chemicals added to products to meet flammability standards. They are commonly used in **electrical/electronic equipment**, **textiles**, **furniture**, and **baby products**.





Pesticides

Pesticides are used to kill or repel plant and animal life seen as pests that cause damage in agricultural or domestic settings. They are used on **crops**, **grass in outdoor spaces**, and in **industries**, **households**, and **businesses**

Microplastics

Microplastics are flakes, fibers, spheres, and foams that come off plastic as it degrades. Threats arise from the toxic chemicals in and on these particles. We encounter them in **dust**, **fabrics**, **cosmetics**, **cleaning products**, **seafood**, and **produce**.



How can you get involved in advocating for human and wildlife health?



CALPIRG

Organizations such as the **California Public Interest Research Group** (CALPIRG) advocate for consumers and contribute to advancing solutions to problems that affect Californians' health, safety, and well-being.

Currently, CALPIRG is urging California state legislators to consider the **Safer Food Packaging Act (AB 1148)**. This bill would eliminate the intentional use of **phthalates** and **bisphenols** in food packaging and allow regulators to set standard limits on how much of these chemicals can be incidentally present in food.

Through campaigns such as this, CALPIRG encourages the public to join its efforts to urge state legislators to pass legislation that protects Californians and their future.

To learn more about this campaign and other initiatives, please visit CALPIRG's website:
www.pirg.org/california/



November 16th, 2026

Advancing Public Education on Harms of Toxic Man-Made Chemicals



Toxics and Health Educational Panel

Citations:
Sanchez, A & MC Curras-Collazo, Advancing Public Education on Harms of Toxic Man-Made Chemicals, UC Riverside, 11/16/2026, https://mcurlab.ucr.edu/

How can you protect yourself?

Organizations such as the **Natural Resources Defense Council** (NRDC) provide **toolkits & how-to guides** that serve to inform readers about ways to limit their exposure to toxic chemicals, such as PFAS and those found in microplastics.

For example, the NRDC has launched a campaign, **Microplastics are Micromonsters,** that provides science-backed steps for avoiding microplastics. They advise these simple changes to **reduce your exposure** to microplastics over time:

- Reheat food in glass or ceramic containers instead of plastic.
- Reduce plastic in your kitchen.
- Choose stainless steel, cast iron, or ceramic cookware instead of nonstick.
- Swap from bottled water to reusable bottles.
- Choose baby and children's products made with less plastic.
- Choose natural fibers for clothing and household products when practical.
- Choose lower-plastic menstrual and intimate care products.
- Skip disposable drink cups and plastic straws.
- Check body care product labels to ensure they are free of intentionally added plastic ingredients.
- Choose plastic-free cleaning products and supplies.

To learn more, visit their website: www.nrdc.org



Meet the Speakers!



Distinguished Professor of Biomedical Sciences Director, BREATHE Laboratory

David Lo

Presentation:
Brilliant Sunsets, Unseen Dangers: Wildfire Smoke and Chronic Lung Disease
Research Overview:
The BREATHE Lab at UCR studies air quality and health effects. In this talk, I will discuss how we study these effects in the lab and show how even a brief exposure to wildfire smoke can lead to significant lung damage.

Daniel Schlenk

Presentation:
Fundamentals of Toxicology: All Things are Toxic, It's the Dose That Determines the Poison
Research Overview:
Dr. Schlenk's research focuses on the fate and effects of legacy and emerging contaminants on environmental and human health. He has served as a permanent member and chaired the US EPA's Science Advisory Panel for the Federal Insecticide Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA) and the USEPA Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA) Chemical Safety Advisory Committee.



Distinguished Professor of Aquatic Ecotoxicology and Environmental Toxicology, Department of Environmental Sciences

Jiahui Hu

Presentation:
Reducing PFAS Mobility and Plant Uptake in Agricultural Soils via Biochar Amendment
Research Overview:
Our lab investigates the fate, transport, and impacts of environmental contaminants, particularly per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), in agricultural systems. We focus on developing sustainable remediation strategies, including biochar amendments, to reduce PFAS mobility and plant uptake, minimize exposure risks, and protect environmental and human health.



Postdoctoral Researcher, US Salinity Laboratory under Daniel Ashworth

Arlene Blum

Presentation:
The Chemical Class Approach Towards Healthier Products and People
Research Overview:
Many of the products we use every day contain chemicals that may harm our health. The Green Science Policy Institute carries out research, communicates, educate , and build partnerships among business, government, academia, and nonprofits to find innovative solutions to reduce toxic chemicals in products, people, and ecosystems.



Founder and Executive Director, Green Science Policy Institute; Research Associate, Cell and Molecular Biology, UC Berkeley

