



EPA's Dioxin Study – Over Twenty Years of Delays

1985 – EPA completes the first health assessment of dioxin, finding that the cancer risk to humans from dioxin exposure is by far the highest defined for any man-made chemical.

1986 – Dioxin found in paper products, due to chlorine bleaching.

1986 – The paper and chlorine industries pressure EPA to reconsider no threshold cancer risk model used by agency to establish “acceptable daily dose” of dioxin which industry claims is too low.

1986 – EPA Administrator asks staff to re-examine data and methodology used by EPA to derive 1985 cancer risk. First reassessment begins.

1986 – EPA sets up internal working group to review models for estimating cancer risk. Group cannot agree on best model to use, so they decide to average the risks predicted by different models.

1988 – EPA releases draft of first reassessment of dioxin that only addresses data and methodology used to estimate 1985 cancer risk.

1988 – EPA Science Advisory Board (SAB) criticizes working group for combing risks from different models but finds no new data to support changing the cancer risk estimate. EPA maintains its 1985 cancer risk estimate.

1990 – EPA and Chlorine Institute (later to become the Chlorine Chemistry Council) sponsor scientific conference on dioxins held at Banbury Center on Long Island, NY.

1991 – First Citizens Conference on Dioxin held in Chapel Hill, NC; organized to provide the public and grassroots activists with scientific information on the toxicity of dioxins.

1991 – EPA Administrator William Reilly announces EPA will conduct a new (second) reassessment of the health effects of dioxins.

1991 – NIOSH cancer mortality study of U.S. workers finds strong link between cancer and dioxin exposures.

1991 – Scientists report evidence that dioxin acts like a hormone, disrupting many systems in the body.

1993 – Researchers in Italy find increased cancer in residents living near pesticide plant in Seveso that exploded exposing thousands to dioxin in toxic cloud.

1994 – Second Citizens Conference on Dioxin held near Times Beach, MO.

1994 – EPA releases new draft reassessment report that confirms cancer risk estimate and finds that non-cancer effects may have greater impact on public health than cancer effects.

1994 – CHEJ kicks off the Stop Dioxin Exposure Campaign.

1995 – EPA Science Advisory Board completes its second review of EPA’s draft reassessment of dioxins and finds no major issues with report.

1996 – Third Citizens Conference on Dioxin held in Baton Rouge, LA.

1997 – IARC classifies dioxin (TCDD) as a human carcinogen.

1998 – The World Health Organization (WHO) reduces its daily tolerable intake (TDI) for dioxins.

July 1999 – 167 signers from communities impacted by dioxins, local, state and national environmental health, environmental justice, consumer, labor, parenting and health-affected organizations send letter to EPA Administrator Carol Browning demanding the release of the dioxin reassessment.

June 2000 – EPA releases revision of 1994 Reassessment Report. The revision finds even stronger links between exposure to dioxins and adverse impacts on human health. The EPA found the cancer risk to be 10 times higher than in the 1994 report.

August 2000 – Fourth Citizens Conference on Dioxin held in Berkeley, CA.

January 2001 – The National Toxicology Program concludes that dioxin (TCDD) is *known to be a human carcinogen*.

May 2001 – EPA Science Advisory Board completes third review of EPA’s draft reassessment of dioxins and recommends that the “agency proceed expeditiously to complete and release” the dioxin reassessment.

August 2001 – Nancy Pelosi and 40 Congressional Representatives write to EPA Administrator Christine Whitman urging the EPA to complete and release the agency’s reassessment of dioxin.

September 2001 – EPA announces it will send draft reassessment of dioxin to the White House’s Interagency Working Group for review.

February 2002 – Congressman James Walsh (R-NY) requests that EPA submit the draft reassessment of dioxin to a full review by a committee of the National Academy of Sciences.**pril**

2002 – Government Accounting Office (GAO) report supports scientific methods used by EPA in draft reassessment of dioxin.

July 2002 – Nancy Pelosi and 65 Congressional Representatives write to EPA Administrator Christine Whitman urging the EPA to complete and release the agency's reassessment of dioxin.

February 2003 – A rider to the 2003 EPA appropriations bill add by Rep. James Walsh requires the National Academies to review the EPA's reassessment if the White House's Interagency Working Group does not come to consensus on the dioxin report within 60 days.

April 2003 – White House's Interagency Working Group fails to come to consensus on the draft dioxin reassessment and supports request for the National Academy of Sciences to review the EPA's reassessment of dioxin.

December 2003 – EPA releases revision of 2000 Reassessment Report and continues to conclude that there are strong links between dioxin exposure and adverse impacts on human health. This draft is sent to the NAS for review.

November 2004 – The National Academies holds first meeting of the Committee to Review EPA's Exposure and Human Health Reassessment of TCDD and Related Compounds.

July 2006 – The National Academies releases a [report](#) confirming earlier studies that found dioxin to be a potent cancer-causing chemical.

October 2008 – Weeks before leaving office, President George W. Bush's EPA orders the formation of another EPA Science Advisory Board to review the EPA's response to the National Academies report.

January 2009 – Over 100 environmental health groups ask newly inaugurated President Barack Obama to stop former President Bush's 'last minute gift to the chemical industry' of a further delay of the dioxin reassessment.

February 2009 – CHEJ and scores of environmental health groups call on EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson to release the Dioxin Reassessment.

April 2009 – [Health advocates and dioxin impacted communities](#) call on the EPA to release the Dioxin Reassessment Report and share their [stories](#).

May 2009 – Doctors, nurses and scientists around the country join CHEJ to urge the EPA to release the Dioxin Reassessment Report.
(<http://besafenet.com/pvc/documents/2009/letters/Dioxin%20Letter%20Nurses%20Doctors%20and%20Scientists%20FINAL.pdf>)

May 2009 – EPA Administrator [Lisa Jackson releases EPA's Science Plan](#) for activities related to dioxin including its intent to release the final Dioxin Health Assessment by December 2010.

November 2009 – CHEJ submits comments on EPA dioxin cleanup goals plan.

December 2009 – The Chlorine Chemistry Division of the American Chemistry Council asks EPA to postpone the development of new Dioxin soil cleanup guidelines until the Dioxin Reassessment is finalized.

December 2009 – EPA misses deadline to release to the public its response to the NAS report, but does release Draft Recommended Interim Preliminary Remediation Goals for Dioxin in Soil at CERCLA and RCRA Sites.