

# Toxinformer

Environmental Health Coalition

Volume 23, Issue 2

May, 2004

Join EHC on the road to environmental justice –  
your participation makes a difference  
**TAKE ACTION!**



**Click to navigate this issue:**

Barrio Residents take charge of community planning .... Page 3  
EHC, National City partner to end lead poisoning ..... Page 5  
City of San Diego one step closer to lead-safe housing .. Page 6  
A Chula Vista bayfront plan for the people and the  
environment ..... Page 7  
Colectivo wins a seat at the cleanup table ..... Page 8  
Editorial: Military environmental exemptions ..... Page 10  
Take Action Now.....Centerfold

# Environmental Health Coalition

Working for a Toxic-Free San Diego  
1980-2004

## Toxinformer Staff

*Editor* Jason Baker  
*Translators* Claudia Vizcarra Barton  
Mariana Lopez

## EHC Board of Directors

- Beatriz Barraza, President  
*Colaborativo SABER*
- Sharon Kalemkarian, Esq., Vice President  
*Ashworth, Blanchet, Christensen and Kalemkarian*
- Margaret Godshalk, Secretary  
*National School District*
- Tony Pettina, MA, Treasurer  
*San Diego Community College District*
- Albert Huang  
*EHC Staff Representative*
- Patty Bailey  
*MAAC Project*
- Jerry Butkiewicz  
*San Diego/Imperial Counties Labor Council*
- Jaime Cota  
*CITTAC*
- Marta Flores  
*Logan Heights Family Health Center*
- Clarice Gaylord, Ph.D.  
*U.S. EPA, Retired*
- Ruth Heifetz, MD, MPH  
*UCSD School of Medicine*
- Mark Mandel  
*Dana Alexander, Inc.*
- Michael Martinez  
*Community Activist*
- Dan McKirnan, Ph.D.  
*Community Activist*
- Jay Powell  
*Community Activist*
- Molly Rhodes  
*HERE Local 30*

*Affiliations are listed for identification purposes only*

## EHC Staff

- Diane Takvorian *Executive Director*
- Sonya Holmquist *Associate Director*
- Lilia Escalante *Fiscal Manager*
- Patricia Hipolito *Office/Human Resources Mgr*
- Veronica Garcia *Office Assistant*
- Michelle Rodriguez *Executive Assistant*
- Jason Baker *Media Relations/Communications*
- Pilar Arballo *Leadership Training Director*
- Joy Williams *Research Director*
- Melanie McCutchan *Research Associate*
- Laura Hunter *Director, CBC*
- Nohelia Ramos *Organizer, CBC*
- Sonia Rodriguez *Organizer, CBC*
- Albert Huang *Policy Advocate, CBC*
- Paula Forbis *Director, TFN*
- Maria Moya *Community Organizer II, TFN*
- Randa Baramki *Community Organizer II, TFN*
- Rosa Maria Angeles *Organizer, TFN*
- Francisca Jiménez *Organizer, TFN*
- Leticia Ayala *Director, CeCLP*
- Luz Palomino *Organizer, CeCLP*
- Leticia Gallardo *Organizer, CeCLP*
- Amelia Simpson *Director, BEJC*
- Magdalena Cerda *Organizer, BEJC*
- Jorge Osuna *Policy Advocate, BEJC*

PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER WITH SOY-BASED INK  
ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH COALITION  
1717 KETTNER BLVD., SUITE 100  
SAN DIEGO, CA 92101  
(619) 235-0281  
FAX (619) 232-3670  
e-mail: [ehc@environmentalhealth.org](mailto:ehc@environmentalhealth.org)  
[www.environmentalhealth.org](http://www.environmentalhealth.org)

# Environmental Health Coalition

## Organizing for Justice

Environmental Health Coalition is dedicated to environmental and social justice. We believe that justice is achieved when empowered communities act together to make social change. We organize and advocate to protect public health and the environment threatened by toxic pollution. EHC supports efforts that create a just society which foster a healthy and sustainable quality of life.

**The Border Environmental Justice Campaign (BEJC)** works in solidarity with social justice groups in the border region to promote worker and community right-to-know about the chemicals used by the maquiladoras, to increase their capacity to influence conditions that directly affect their health, and to demand cleanup of abandoned and contaminated sites.



**The Clean Bay Campaign (CBC)** unites workers, bayside communities, and conservationists to clean up, restore and protect San Diego Bay as a clean and healthy multi-use water resource capable of supporting a diverse range of activities.

**The Research and Community Assistance Program** responds to the needs of residents by providing scientific, technical, and policy information and assistance, and empowering residents with appropriate and effective strategies.

**The Toxic Free Neighborhoods Campaign (TFN)** works with affected residents to promote land use and planning reforms, the relocation of hazardous industries to industrial zones, and the reduction of toxic air contaminants released by industry.



**The Campaign to Eliminate Childhood Lead Poisoning (CeCLP)** works with community residents, housing advocates, health officials, and government agencies to eliminate the sources of lead exposure in San Diego County.

**STAY INFORMED! BECOME A MEMBER OF EHC TODAY!**  
Yes, I want to become a member of EHC. I am enclosing my tax-deductible membership contribution of:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$15 Students and Seniors | <input type="checkbox"/> \$100 Super Supporter |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$25 Individual           | <input type="checkbox"/> \$250 Toxic Avenger   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$40 Booster              | <input type="checkbox"/> \$___ Other           |

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Street \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: (W) \_\_\_\_\_ (H) \_\_\_\_\_  
Email: \_\_\_\_\_  
Check enclosed  Please charge my  Visa  Mastercard  
Card No. \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to: EHC, 1717 Kettner Blvd., Suite 100, San Diego, CA 92101

EHC encourages the reuse of *Toxinformer* articles. Please acknowledge EHC as the source and send us a copy of all reprints.

*Toxinformer* is designed using PageMaker 6.5, donated to EHC by Adobe.

## EHC, Barrio residents taking charge in community planning

Major developments and changes in land use and traffic are being planned for Barrio Logan, but unfortunately, they are happening in the absence of a new community plan that ensures the changes address existing environmental justice issues. Now, Environmental Health Coalition leaders are taking an active role in making sure these changes are beneficial for the community.

In February and March, EHC participated in a series of land use planning workshops with consultants from the City of San Diego. Coordinated by the City's Planning Department and the office of District Eight City Councilmember Ralph Inzunza, the workshops are designed to allow residents input in planning for changes in their community.

Members of EHC's Toxic-Free Neighborhoods Community Action Team have demonstrated their community commitment by dedicating countless hours to developing and presenting their perspectives in the planning process. Their goal is to ensure that the developing plan addresses issues like traffic, industrial/residential zoning, access to San Diego Bay, affordable housing, and a precautionary approach to development by addressing existing and potential health risks associated with poor urban planning.

EHC has worked in the Barrio Logan community since the mid-1980s, empowering residents to work together to solve the community's environmental justice problems. In



*Barrio Logan residents review several planning options before breaking out into small group discussions. Eliminating mixed-industrial zoning and diesel pollution while preserving the culture and affordability of the Barrio were top priorities.*

October 2002 after years of organizing, residents and EHC celebrated the shutdown of Master Plating, a metal-plating shop that had been operating within several feet of homes on the 2100 block of Newton Avenue since the late 1970s. For the residents of Barrio Logan, the victory meant a 75 percent reduction in cancer risks from chromium at the most exposed residences. It also meant a commitment from the San Diego City Council to revise and update the area's zoning and 1978 community plan.

Please see **PLANNING**, Page 4

## *EHC stops Port plan to resume methyl bromide fumigation*

Determined not to repeat history, Environmental Health Coalition in March blocked a plan by the Port of San Diego to resume fruit fumigation with methyl bromide, a highly toxic pesticide used to kill insects in imported fruit. As part of a proposed expansion of operations, staff from the Port of San Diego had begun promoting a return to fumigation at the Tenth Avenue Terminal and the addition of up to six new fumigation chambers to support the process. Barrio Logan residents live directly downwind from where the fumigation would take place, and Perkins Elementary School is only ¼ mile from the terminal.

On March 10, EHC appeared under public comment at the Board of Port Commissioners meeting, making it clear that no plan for a return to the use of methyl bromide would be acceptable, and that any plan to use the pesticide would violate a 1997 court approved agreement between the Port, EHC, and the San Diego Unified School District. The Port

decided to abandon any discussion of the plan just a few days later.

"I think we made it clear to the Port that the community would not stand for a return to operations that put their health at risk," said Maria Moya, Community Organizer for EHC's Toxic-Free Neighborhoods Campaign. "The Port needs to focus on the problems they already contribute to in this community, like pollution from diesel truck exhaust, instead of proposing plans that would only make existing public health problems worse."

EHC first took on the Port over methyl bromide fumigation in 1992 when the Port moved forward with fumigation operations despite community concerns. Five years of community protests, lawsuits, and bitter meetings ensued, with the Port finally agreeing in 1997 to a Fruit Fumigation Policy and Settlement Agreement, which prohibit future fumigations at the terminal.



*The first step to reducing diesel pollution in Barrio Logan has been accomplished -- reducing truck idling and parking on residential streets.*

#### PLANNING, continued from Page 3

“Barrio Logan stands for loyalty: families and businesses here span generations. Gaining insight from them as the City develops a new Community Plan has been a fantastic exercise,” Inzunza said. “These are the individuals who know what the community lacks, and how it can build on its strengths. We are listening closely to the community as they determine the future vision of Barrio Logan.”

With the help of EHC staff, CAT team members have conducted first-hand research on diesel pollution and truck traffic, and are working to organize and educate their neighbors about this and other environmental justice issues. They are also doing research on air pollution from freeways, to test prevailing hypotheses about how much of a buffer should be between homes and freeways. CAT team members have used the knowledge they gained in community research and organizing to guide their participation in the planning process.

“When you see the existing problems in the community, like the problem we have with pollution from diesel trucks, you know that it makes no sense to allow more development without a community plan,” said Liliana Guzman, a CAT team member and EHC youth organizer who recently won several awards for her study of air pollution in the Barrio (see Page 9). “This is our chance to make sure changes that happen here are for the good of the entire community.”

Barrio Logan’s mixed industrial residential zoning, which is allowed under the existing community plan, has created a hodgepodge of industrial/residential development. On many blocks, polluting industries are located just a few feet from residences. Some 210 industries with regulated hazardous materials or wastes coexist with the Logan area’s 29,000 residents in about 3 square miles. Of these industries, 129 are located in Barrio Logan, an area

less than 1.2 square miles. The community’s proximity to San Diego Bay also yields tons of diesel exhaust from ships and truck commerce from the Port of San Diego, which is looking to expand its operations.

#### People and PLACES

To kick off the planning process in February, the City’s planning consultants met with community members for a “visioning” process, during which people talked about existing conditions in the neighborhood and their visions for the future of Barrio Logan. CAT team members and other residents stressed the need for a plan that eliminates problems like mixed-industrial zoning and diesel pollution, while at the same time preserves the culture and affordability of the Barrio.

During the second workshop in March, consultants introduced residents to a planning method known as PLACES3, a Geographic Information System (GIS) tool that helps communities understand how their growth and development decisions can contribute to improved sustainability. Its name is an acronym for Planning for Community Energy, Economic and Environmental Sustainability. According to the consultants, the PLACES3 tool was designed to be useful in supporting smart growth concepts.

To facilitate dialogue between residents and planners, participants divided into small groups and worked to map out changes in development and land use in Barrio Logan using color-coded maps. The planning consultants will use the maps created by the groups in March to facilitate discussion and completion of a community-driven land use plan during the final planning meetings in May and June.

Maria Moya, EHC Community Organizer, said that while most community members seemed pleased with the planning process, the final measure of success will be the City’s implementation of the new community plan.

“Councilmember Inzunza and other City leaders need to take the next step and remedy the problems that people have identified. We are tired of promises that are never kept. Changes in this community are far overdue, and we simply will not accept another plan that’s shelved and never implemented. More than ever, the future of the people of Barrio Logan is a stake, and it’s time for action, not just words,” she said.

#### TAKE ACTION!

EHC is organizing residents to participate in the final planning meetings in May and June to ensure that the concerns of the community are addressed in the new community plan. We also will be working to hold City officials accountable for implementing the plan and not shelving it like many plans have been in the past.

For more information, contact Maria Moya at (619) 235-0281 or [MariaM@environmentalhealth.org](mailto:MariaM@environmentalhealth.org)

## ***Know the code:***

# **EHC, National City partner to end lead poisoning hazards**

In most cities, code inspectors who regularly check older substandard housing for violations pay little attention to lead-based paint hazards. This was the case in National City until Environmental Health Coalition shared with the city's Building and Safety Department (B&S Dept.) lead sampling data collected by EHC Promotoras in 40 of the city's homes as part of EHC's Community-Based Home Lead Inspection project. Seventy-seven percent of all the homes tested were found to have at least one lead hazard.

San Diego County has one of the oldest housing stocks in the nation, and children in low-income communities of color like National City are most at risk for lead poisoning from sources like deteriorating paint in aging housing. Childhood lead poisoning is the number one health risk to children under age 6.

### **Time for action**

Working with National City officials, it became clear that B&S Dept. officers needed more information about lead safety. At the same time, EHC's Promotoras who were conducting healthy homes assessments wanted a better understanding of the code enforcement process.

This need for information sharing led to the creation of the Community Housing Inspection Project, a community code enforcement team consisting of code enforcement officers, faith-based groups, weatherization specialists from the MAAC Project, a state Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program representative, property owners, neighborhood residents and tenants, and EHC Promotoras from San Diego and National City. Thanks to the forward-thinking work of the partners, National City recently received a \$3 million Lead Hazard Control grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

"National City's code enforcement officers started identifying lead hazards and ordering owners to make repairs before receiving this grant, but the grant provides much needed funding," said Leticia Ayala, director of EHC's Campaign to Eliminate Childhood Lead Poisoning. "We look forward to a long and productive partnership with National City and our other partners."

As part of the grant, a projected 410 housing units will receive lead hazard control combined with rehabilitation and weatherization services. The project will fund lead hazard control work in 110 units, and National City code enforcement officers will require landlords and property owners to control lead in an additional 300 units at the owners' expense. The program's target neighborhoods are West Side/Old Town, Bayside, El Pueblo, Civic Center, Plaza, and Central City as these are the hot spot neighborhoods.

### **A lasting partnership**

The lead hazard control process begins when residents in the city's target neighborhoods allow EHC's Promotoras to perform a healthy homes assessment, during which the Promotoras – who are EPA certified lead sampling technicians – look for health hazards including lead-based paint, mold and other problems common in aging houses. The healthy homes assessments were developed and continue to be funded in part by a grant from the Community Environmental Health Resources Center. The Promotoras also distribute education materials about lead hazards, and document information about residents' health.

Homes found to have lead hazards are then referred to the MAAC project for lead hazard control work by workers trained in lead-safe work practices, and to the city's Building and Safety Department, which is working to hold landlords accountable for repairs to their properties.

"Our grant differs from the City of San Diego. We have included in the grant using code enforcement as well as outreach to locate homes with lead. In addition, any rental homes that do not qualify for free hazard control will be referred to the housing inspector and the property owner will be responsible for controlling the lead," said Kathleen Trees, Director of National City's Building and Safety Department.

"Our partnership with EHC has given us the opportunity to provide a service to the citizens of National City that

Please see **NATIONAL CITY**, Page 6

### **Support AB 2297, the 'Lead-Free Candy' bill**

EHC first brought you this message more than two years ago – now an in-depth investigative report by the *Orange County Register* is getting it out to the whole state. More than 100 brands of candy sold in California, most of them from Mexico, have tested positive for dangerous levels of lead in the past decade, and parents and consumers have been kept in the dark. We now have the opportunity to eliminate this shameful source of poisoning.

79th District Assemblymember Juan Vargas has introduced Assembly Bill 2297, which will prohibit the sale of candies contaminated with lead in the State of California. The bill will be heard by the California State Assembly Committee on Appropriations in May.

**Call Judy Chu, chair of the Appropriations Committee, at (916) 319-2049 and tell her "I Support AB 2297."**

Read the six-part investigative report published April 25-30, plus many web-only extras, at [www.ocregister.com](http://www.ocregister.com).

NATIONAL CITY, continued from Page 5

we probably never would have considered without their encouragement and support. We look forward to many years of working together to remove the lead hazards in National City," said Trees.

All of these important steps to help a community at-risk have been made possible because of the dedication of all partners involved and their ability to work together, combining resources, talents, skills and knowledge to work for a common good.

"EHC especially credits the EHC Community Promotoras for their hard work and dedication to this

project and their fellow community residents and the leadership from Kathleen Trees," said Ayala.

*If you live in any of National City's target communities, call EHC to request a free healthy home assessment. If lead hazards are identified, your family will be referred to the lead hazard control program. Call (619) 235-0281 for more information.*

*EHC is also working with National City's Building and Safety Department to identify landlords who have failed to keep their properties free of lead hazards and force them to make repairs. Residents can call (619) 336-4210 for more information.*

## City of San Diego moves one step closer to Lead-Safe Housing

The City of San Diego is poised to take bold action to prevent childhood lead poisoning. The test of their true commitment to addressing this problem, before thousands more children are affected, will likely come this summer when they vote on the Lead Hazard Prevention and Control ordinance. This ordinance will focus on removing the number one source of the problem – dilapidated lead-based paint in aging homes. San Diego has one of the oldest housing stocks in the nation, and many of these older homes are located in the city's lower-income communities of color.

Environmental Health Coalition has been leading the effort with the city's Lead Poisoning Prevention Citizen's Advisory Task Force and we are now in the final stages of developing a ordinance that works with the city's Neighborhood Code Compliance Department to prevent, identify and remedy lead hazards in housing before children are poisoned. The goal is to stop using children as lead detectors and start focusing on eliminating lead hazards in homes built prior to 1978.

In April 2002, the San Diego City Council – lead by Task Force co-chairs Donna Frye and Ralph Inzunza – approved the Lead Safe Neighborhoods Program, and changed the law to allow the city attorney to prosecute landlords who fail to remove lead-based paint hazards from their property after a child living there has been found to have elevated blood-lead levels. The new ordinance would protect children without waiting for their health to be damaged before forcing landlords and property owners to make repairs.

EHC supports a 'Right to Lead-Safe Housing' ordinance that includes the following:

- Landlords and owners will no longer be able to ignore the problem by claiming they "do not know" if lead based paint is present in the household. All landlords/owners must presume the paint in pre-1978 homes is lead-based, and unless they can show that the home is lead-free with a certified lead inspection, must repair the problem using lead-safe work practices.

- Properties must be declared free of lead hazards at the point of sale.
- Tenants will be protected from eviction if landlords fail to make repairs to lead hazards, and tenants file a complaint. Certain renovation practices that generate high levels of dust from lead-based paint will be prohibited. This will prevent lead-dust from filtering into children's homes, playgrounds, and neighborhoods. Any person who disturbs or removes paint must follow lead safe work practices to prevent lead dust from damaging children and contaminating the environment.
- Families must be relocated, if necessary, during lead hazard control work when the City orders repair to be done. If landlord fails to relocate families, the city must relocate families. The city should be allowed to prosecute landlord/owner to recover funds.

### ***Take Action!***

In June, the Task Force will present the ordinance to the city's Land Use and Housing Department. From there, the ordinance will go to the City Council for approval. As the *Toxinformer* goes to press, many of the key elements of the ordinance are in debate. **Your help is needed to make certain that the ordinance truly provides the 'Right to Lead-Safe Housing' for all San Diegans.**

Now is the time to take a bold proactive step towards ending childhood lead poisoning in San Diego. Stay up to date on the latest developments in this issue by contacting Leticia Ayala at (619) 235-0281 or emailing [LeticiaA@environmentalhealth.org](mailto:LeticiaA@environmentalhealth.org)

For updates on this and other EHC issues, join our email action list. Visit [www.environmentalhealth.org](http://www.environmentalhealth.org) for more details.

# EHC, allies victorious as California Coastal Commission rejects triple border fence project

Saying that the project would be more environmentally harmful than necessary, the California Coastal Commission in February rejected a plan to add two fences and patrolling roads to a section of the U.S./ Mexico border that cuts across a sensitive reserve near the Tijuana River national estuary. The U.S. Bureau of Customs and Border Protection had proposed construction of the final 3 ½ miles of what would be a triple-fenced zone along 14 miles from the Otay Mesa border crossing to the Pacific Ocean.

Environmental Health Coalition and members of our Community Action Team joined a broad range of organizations opposing the triple fence, including Southwest Wetlands Interpretive Association, San Diego BayKeeper, San Diego Audubon Society, Sierra Club, California Native Plant Society, Endangered Habitat League, and others.

Kudos to the Coastal Commission for recognizing that the triple fence will be environmentally devastating. It violates key environmental laws such as the Clean Water

Act, Endangered Species Act and the California Coastal Act. It also violates the California and Federal Environmental Justice Guidelines. It is part of a failed border policy and a failed trade policy.

Additionally, the triple fence will have serious public safety and human health impacts to Mexican residents. It is part of a failed border policy and a failed trade policy that adopts extreme measures like the triple fence to control border migration, while at the same time maintaining and seeking to expand trade policies that, as EHC has documented, increase the pressure to migrate by increasing poverty and economic instability

Unfortunately, the fight is not over. Congressman Duncan Hunter and others have vowed to work to overturn the Coastal Commission ruling and see that the triple fence is completed. EHC and our allies will continue to monitor the project and work with the Coastal Commission and others to develop alternatives to this misguided project.

## Chula Vista Bayfront: EHC working for a plan that benefits people and the environment

In March, Environmental Health Coalition joined the City of Chula Vista and the Port of San Diego for the beginning of cooperative public planning for development of the Chula Vista Mid-Bayfront and neighboring Port of San Diego properties. The joint planning process represents a positive step towards meaningful public participation and comprehensive planning for this environmentally sensitive area.

Through educational outreach and participation in public hearings, EHC and our allies in 2003 stopped a plan for a sprawling development that would have devastated the Mid-Bayfront. Now, thanks to our efforts and the strong leadership of Chula Vista Mayor Steve Padilla, Vice-Mayor Mary Salas, and San Diego Port Commissioner Bill Hall, we have begun a process that will result in the best overall plan for the Bayfront.

Joint planning of the Port and Mid-Bayfront properties and investigation of a land exchange allows for many options that will help achieve a development that works economically, benefits the community and preserves the integrity of this critically important property.

EHC will support a plan that is appropriate, community-driven, and environmentally protective, that creates community open spaces and development areas for residents and visitors alike, and that creates jobs that will provide living wages and benefits and respect for the workers' right to organize.

### *Take Action!*

Important decisions regarding the proposed development will be made in the next few months. Contact Clean Bay Campaign organizer Nohelia Ramos for dates and time of important planning meetings where you can get involved. Join EHC in supporting a project that enhances the lives of all San Diego County residents.

Contact Nohelia at (619) 235-0281 or email [NoheliaR@environmentalhealth.org](mailto:NoheliaR@environmentalhealth.org). For updates on the planning process, visit [www.environmentalhealth.org](http://www.environmentalhealth.org)



*Make your voice heard -- public participation makes a difference. The fervor of the standing-room-only crowd who attended the first public workshop on the bayfront development set into motion this new round of planning.*

## Campaign to Eliminate Childhood Lead Poisoning Expands

In March, EHC welcomed Leticia Gallardo to our staff as a community organizer with the Campaign to Eliminate Childhood Lead Poisoning. We asked Leticia about making the transition from community Promotora in San Diego to joining EHC in the organizer role.

### *How did your involvement with EHC begin?*

My participation with EHC began when (CeCLP Organizer) Luz Palomino, who also began as an EHC promotora, would invite me to participate in EHC events, presentations, and rallies about childhood lead poisoning and environmental justice. I took the EHC SALTA (Salud Ambiental Latinas Tomando Acción) classes, became a Promotora and now I'm an organizer.



### *Working as a Promotora, what challenges did you see in the community?*

As a Promotora, I saw the needs of many people in the community, and the lack of information that keeps them from the many resources that they aren't aware of. It makes

me very happy to give information to the families and to know that they listen carefully to what I have to say. This is very important when it's the children that are most affected.

### *How responsive are people in the community to the childhood lead poisoning information and other Healthy Homes issues?*

The people have responded very well to the childhood lead poisoning problem. We all value our children and want the best for them. This is why I believe the community is paying attention to the lead issue. They are now more informed and paying more attention to information about lead poisoning. We are noticing that people also are paying attention to toxic products and to other chemicals in their surroundings, like industries that can cause other health problems like asthma.

### *What do you most look forward to in the future with EHC?*

I look forward to staying in contact with the people in our community, and to knowing that their children have zero lead in their bodies, and that their homes are free of lead hazards.

## EHC, Colectivo Chilpancingo form *Metales* cleanup committee with U.S., Mexican officials

Proving the power of persistence and community organizing, Environmental Health Coalition and members of the Colectivo Chilpancingo Pro Justicia Ambiental on March 25 reached an agreement with U.S and Mexican officials to develop a comprehensive cleanup plan for the abandoned *Metales y Derivados* lead smelter. The agreement is a victory for public participation.

*Metales* has plagued the Colonia Chilpancingo community since Mexican officials closed it in 1994 for violation of environmental laws. Since then, thousands of tons of toxic waste have remained exposed to the elements just a few yards from the Colonia. EHC and the community have been demanding a cleanup of the site for more than a decade.

"This is an important first step in finally ending the health and environmental problems that *Metales* has created in our community," said Lourdes Luján, a Colonia Chilpancingo resident and organizer with the Colectivo, EHC's Tijuana affiliate. "We are pleased with the willingness of government officials on both sides of the border to work with us in developing a plan that reaches our goal of a complete cleanup of the site."

During the March 25 meeting, officials from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the Secretaría de Medio Ambiente y Recursos Naturales (SEMARNAT, Mexico's

equivalent of the U.S. EPA), the Dirección General de Ecología de Baja California (Baja California State Department of Ecology), and the Secretaría de Infraestructura y Desarrollo Urbano (State Department of Infrastructure and Urban Development) agreed to a series of planning meetings with EHC and the Colectivo to design the plan and identify funding sources. Carlos A. de la Parra Rentería of SEMARNAT also toured the *Metales* site with Colectivo members on March 27.

Government officials agreed with EHC and the Colectivo's position that a comprehensive cleanup of the site is the only option for truly addressing the public health hazards that *Metales* poses.

"The total cleanup of *Metales y Derivados* sets an important precedent for the future. The community and government representatives will demonstrate that they can work together to achieve justice," said Amelia Simpson, Director of EHC's Border Environmental Justice Campaign.

A report released in 2002 by the environmental oversight commission of the North American Free Trade Agreement confirmed the need for urgent action to stop the adverse health effects on people living or working near *Metales*. A petition filed in 1998 by EHC and the Colonia prompted the report.



## Names in the News

### EHC Executive Director named Social Worker of the Year

**Diane Takvorian**, Executive Director of Environmental Health Coalition, has been named Social Worker of the Year for the San Diego/ Imperial County Region by the National Association of Social Workers. This award honors a dedicated social worker who has exhibited broad professional social work experience and demonstrated leadership, and whose work reflects diversity, multiculturalism, and has an impact on social policy and advocacy. Takvorian was honored at an awards ceremony on March 24, co-hosted by NASW and the California Society for Clinical Social Work, San Diego District.



### Film by EHC Youth Organizer featured in Latino Film Festival

A short video by **Blanca Romero**, a youth member of EHC's Toxic-Free Neighborhoods Community Action Team, was screened along with several youth-produced short videos in March as part of the San Diego Latino Film Festival. Romero's video "Donde yo vivi" (Where I Used to Live) documents stories of Romero's family and others who have



been forced out of the predominately Latino neighborhood of Sherman Heights due to rising rents. Her video and others have been packaged into half-hour programs called Tu Voz TV (Your Voice TV) and will be distributed to San Diego-area schools and community groups. Tu Voz TV has been incorporated into the Media Arts Center San Diego's Teen Producers Project, which has provided training in video production, computer art and the Internet to more than 300 youths.

Romero, a senior at Mission Bay High, has been an active member of EHC's LEAD Academy for youth organizers and graduated from the program in April.

### EHC Youths honored at Science and Engineering Fair

EHC youth leader **Liliana Guzman**, a junior at San Diego High School, garnered three awards at the 50<sup>th</sup> annual Greater San Diego Science and Engineering Fair. Her project took second place in the fair's Environmental Sciences division, and earned the San Diego County Department of Environmental Health and the Alvarado Hospital Awards in the Professional division.

Guzman's project examined ultrafine particulate levels in Barrio Logan and compared them to a San Diego community with similar weather but fewer industries. Diesel trucks that travel to and from the Port of San Diego through Barrio Logan emit a high concentration of ultrafine particles, which are thought to be harmful to respiratory health.

Guzman's project will provide important information to help guide decisions on truck routes in Barrio Logan.

Guzman is an active member of EHC's Toxic-Free Neighborhoods Community Action Team, and graduated from EHC's LEAD Academy in April.



EHC youth leader **Francis Go**, a senior at Sweetwater High School, took third place in the Science and Engineering Fair's Environmental Sciences division for his project



examining the impacts of the South Bay Power Plant on San Diego Bay water quality. Go gathered water samples from Sweetwater Marsh National Wildlife Refuge near the power plant and compared them to samples collected from the Chula Vista Marina and near Shelter Island. Go found the power plant's cooling system, which uses bay water to cool the plant's turbines, caused a significant difference in water

quality in samples collected from the refuge.

EHC's Clean Bay Campaign has documented the environmental and public health impacts from the power plant, and is working with Chula Vista residents to advocate for replacement of the outdated, polluting facility.

Go is a member of EHC's Clean Bay Campaign Community Action Team and began his involvement with EHC organizing around the development of the Chula Vista Mid-bayfront. He graduated from EHC's LEAD Academy in April.

## Military environmental exemptions put San Diego at risk

In 1990, shortly after Iraq invaded Kuwait during the Persian Gulf War, Dick Cheney – then Secretary of Defense for the first Bush administration – told an assembly of military planners and environmentalists, “Defense and the environment is not an either-or proposition. To choose between them is impossible in this real world of serious defense threats and genuine environmental concerns. The real choice is whether we are going to build a new environmental ethic into the daily business of defense.”

But a decade later, Cheney and the second Bush administration have decided that making “impossible” decisions would be much easier if the Department of Defense (DoD) were exempt from the environmental laws that govern other U.S. industries and operations. In April, the administration continued its assault on the environment by asking Congress to exempt the military from the Clean Air Act and the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act, more commonly known as the Superfund law. The requested rollbacks include extending federal deadlines for hazardous waste cleanup on military installations, waiving Clean Air Act violations, and bypassing state environmental protection regulations.

Although defeated in Congress in 2002, the DoD’s latest requests are part of a revamped legislative proposal that DoD has dubbed the “Readiness and Range Preservation Initiative.” The initiative seeks military exemptions from the above mentioned and other key environmental laws, including the Resource Conservation & Recovery Act, the Marine Mammal Protection Act and the Endangered Species Act. **Officials from DoD claim these restrictions compromise military training and readiness.**

San Diego County is host to the largest military complex in the world. The naval presence here occupies over 181,000 acres and includes eight bases, 120 commands, and more than one-third of the Pacific Fleet. Past naval activity in the region has been responsible for bombs on local beaches and 100 toxic waste sites.

This initiative clearly places the environment and public health of San Diego residents at risk. San Diego County is host to the largest military complex in the world. The naval presence here occupies over 181,000 acres and includes eight bases, 120 commands, and more than one-third of the Pacific

Fleet. Past naval activity in the region has been responsible for bombs on local beaches and 100 toxic waste sites.

Right now, regulators for water quality in the San Diego region are faced with the real possibility that they may have to cease enforcement and regulatory oversight of local DoD facilities due to their refusal to pay permit fees, and the inability of regulators to levy penalties for permit violations. The San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board, for example, currently spends

approximately \$630,000 annually regulating federal facilities in the region. In addition, actual fee liability to this date for unpaid fees by federal facilities (including U.S. Navy Bases and Camp Pendleton) is \$296,000. The continued DoD requests for blanket exemptions from environmental laws, combined with the inability of local regulators to ensure adequate environmental protection and permitting, mean the military will continue to threaten the public health and environment of San Diego communities.

Environmental Health Coalition calls for Congress to reject the DoD’s requests for military environmental exemptions and put an end to the assault on the public health and the environment. Undermining the health of the public and our natural resources in the name of national security is simply destroying the very thing our government has pledged to protect. Healthy communities and the environment are not expendable; they are essential parts of a society, and deserve defending.

**Estimados miembros de la Junta Regional para el Control de Calidad del Agua de San Diego:**

Los sedimentos tóxicos amenazan la salud y la seguridad de la gente y a la vida silvestre que usa la Bahía de San Diego. Los sedimentos contaminados deben eliminarse no solo "taparse" o abandonarse a que amenacen futuras generaciones. Queremos una bahía sana para nadar y pescar y sana para la vida silvestre que depende de ella. Es necesario un nivel de saneamiento riguroso para proteger la salud humana, los peces, la vida silvestre y todos los usos beneficiosos de la bahía.

- Favor de:**
- PROTEGER** Los pescadores de la bahía, los peces y la vida silvestre que viven ahí
- APOYAR** Un nivel de saneamiento riguroso para los sedimentos en los astilleros de NASSCO y Southwest Marine
- OPONER** Cualquier propuesta que deje químicas peligrosas en la bahía.
- SOLICITAR** Que los sedimentos contaminados se acarreen por barcaza, ferrocarril, o por camiones cuya ruta de transportación no sea la comunidad de Barrio Logan.

Autorizo el uso de mi nombre en público como apoyo a la postura mencionada en la parte superior.

**Dear Members of the San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board:**

Toxic sediments threaten the health and safety of people and wildlife using San Diego Bay. Contaminated sediments need to be permanently removed, not "capped" over or left-in-place to threaten future generations. We want a Bay that is safe for swimming and fishing and safe for the wildlife that depends on it. A stringent sediment clean up level is needed to protect human health, fish, wildlife, and all of the beneficial uses of the Bay.

- Please:**
- PROTECT** People who fish from the Bay and fish and wildlife who live there.
- SUPPORT** A stringent and protective cleanup level for sediments at NASSCO and Southwest Marine Shipyards.
- OPPOSE REQUIRE** Any proposal that leaves dangerous chemicals in the Bay. Contamination be removed by barge, rail, or trucks passing around, not through, Barrio Logan.

I give permission to use my name in public to support the above position.

Signature/Firma \_\_\_\_\_ Name/Nombre \_\_\_\_\_

Address/Domicilio \_\_\_\_\_ City/State/Zip-Ciudad/Estado/CP \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Tel. Email \_\_\_\_\_

**Complete and return card to**  
 Environmental Health Coalition, 1717 Kettner Blvd., Suite 100, San Diego, CA 92101  
 (619) 235-0281 [www.environmentalhealth.org](http://www.environmentalhealth.org)

▲ **Show your support for a clean, healthy San Diego Bay** ▲

Local shipyards have polluted the Bay for decades by discharging large amounts of toxic materials during their operations. Contaminated sediments can poison fish and can threaten the health of people who eat the fish as the chemicals travel up the food chain. Children, pregnant or nursing mothers, the elderly and infirm are more at risk from eating contaminated fish.

This June, the San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board will make an important decision on the cleanup of toxic sediments in San Diego Bay. EHC is urging the Regional Board to direct the shipyards responsible for the contamination to clean up more than 1.2 million tons of toxic sediments to levels that will protect human health and the environment. Unfortunately, the shipyards are fighting the cleanup and recommending a "do-nothing" approach.

**It's Time to Take Action!**

Clip the above card and send it to EHC to show your support for a cleanup plan that protects people and wildlife and preserves San Diego bay for future generations.

**For more information about the upcoming Regional Board meeting or other Clean Bay Campaign activities, contact Nohelia Ramos at (619) 235-0281 or email [NoheliaR@environmentalhealth.org](mailto:NoheliaR@environmentalhealth.org)**



# Necesitamos una Bahía Limpia

Sana para la Vida Silvestre  
Sana para el Pueblo  
¡Sana para Futuras  
Generaciones!

We need a Clean Bay

Safe for wildlife

Safe for people

SAVED for future generations

---

## Show your support for Fair Trade for Our Future >>

Globalization promised new jobs, lower prices for consumers, and improved public health and environmental quality for countries partnered in so-called “free trade” agreements. But Environmental Health Coalition’s research on the impacts of ten years of North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) on the San Diego/Tijuana border shows that economic instability, poverty, worker injustice and environmental injustice have deepened under this trade agreement.

Right now, two trade agreements crafted after the flawed NAFTA model are being negotiated. The Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA) and the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) would expand NAFTA’s version of corporate-driven globalization to all the countries of the Western hemisphere except Cuba.

EHC calls for a halt to all unfair trade agreements and rejects trade agreements crafted after the failed NAFTA model.

- *Join EHC supporters from both sides of the U.S./Mexican border today by signing and returning the ‘Vote No on FTAA and CAFTA’ post card.*
- *Contact your Congressional Representatives and demand that they vote NO on the Central American Free Trade Agreement and the Free Trade Area of the Americas. Urge them to vote YES on the Congressional Resolution “Fair Trade for our Future” (H.R. 276/S.R. 69) to build sustainable development and reduce inequality.*

**For more information, call (619) 235-0281 or log onto [www.environmentalhealth.org](http://www.environmentalhealth.org)**

## ◀◀ Muestre su apoyo por una Bahía limpia y saludable en San Diego

Los astilleros de la zona han contaminado la bahía por más de una década al descargar grandes cantidades de materiales tóxicos durante sus operaciones. Los sedimentos contaminados pueden envenenar los peces y pueden poner en peligro la salud de las personas que los consumen ya que los químicos absorbidos siguen su curso a través de la cadena alimentaria. Los niños, mujeres embarazadas o que están amamantando, los ancianos y los enfermos son los que más expuestos están a los peligros al consumir el pescado contaminado.

Este junio, la Junta Regional para el Control de la Calidad de Agua de San Diego va tomará una decisión sobre la limpieza de los sedimentos tóxicos en la Bahía de San Diego. EHC insta a la Junta Regional que ordene responsables a los astilleros por la contaminación y que limpien más de 1.2 millones de toneladas de sedimentos tóxicos a tal grado que protejan la salud de las personas y el ambiente. Desgraciadamente, los astilleros están peleando por no llevar acabo la limpieza y recomiendan la estrategia de “no hacer nada”.

### ¡Es Hora de Tomar Acción!

Recorte la tarjeta y envíela a EHC para mostrar su apoyo al plan de limpieza que proteja a las personas, la vida silvestre y que conserve la bahía de San Diego para futuras generaciones.

**Para mayor información sobre la próxima reunión de la Junta Regional u otras actividades de la Campaña para una Bahía Limpia, comuníquese con Sonia Rodriguez al (619) 235-0281 o por correo electrónico [SoniaR@environmentalhealth.org](mailto:SoniaR@environmentalhealth.org).**



## ▼ Muestra Tu Apoyo por el Comercio Justo para Nuestro Futuro ▼

La globalización prometía nuevos trabajos, precios bajos para los consumidores, y mejor salud pública así como calidad ambiental para países participantes en los llamados acuerdos de “ libre comercio.” Pero la investigación de la Coalición de Salud Ambiental sobre los impactos de diez años del Tratado de Libre Comercio (TLC) en la frontera de San Diego / Tijuana muestra que la inestabilidad económica, pobreza, injusticia laboral, e injusticia ambiental se han intensificado bajo este tratado de comercio.

Ahora, se están negociando dos tratados de comercio basados en el modelo fracasado del TLC. El Acuerdo de Libre Comercio Centroamérica-Estados Unidos (CAFTA) y el Área de Libre Comercio de las Américas (ALCA) extendería la versión del TLC de la globalización corporativa a todos los países del hemisferio occidental menos Cuba.

EHC hace un llamado a la suspensión de todos los tratados de comercio injustos y rechaza los tratados de comercio basados en el modelo fracasado del TLC.

- Únete hoy a los simpatizantes de EHC de ambos lados de la frontera Estados Unidos/México con firmar y regresar la tarjeta adjunta que hace un llamado a la suspensión del ALCA y CAFTA.
- Ponte en contacto con tus representantes en el Congreso y exígeles que voten NO al Acuerdo de Libre Comercio Centroamérica-Estados Unidos y al Área de Libre Comercio de las Américas. Diles que voten SÍ sobre la Resolución “Comercio Justo para Nuestro Futuro” en el Congreso estadounidense (H.R. 276/S.R. 69) por un desarrollo sustentable y para reducir la inequidad.

**Para más información, llame al (619) 235-0281 o visita [www.environmentalhealth.org](http://www.environmentalhealth.org).**

---

## Fair Trade for Our Future / Comercio Justo para Nuestro Futuro

The Free Trade Area of the Americas and the Central American Free Trade Agreement are the wrong choices for jobs, workers' rights, public health, environmental quality, and democracy. I vote NO on the FTAA and CAFTA.

El Área de Libre Comercio de las Américas y el Acuerdo de Libre Comercio Centroamérica-Estados Unidos son opciones equivocadas para los trabajadores, derechos laborales, la salud pública, calidad ambiental, y para la democracia. Yo voto NO al ALCA y CAFTA.

Signature / Firma \_\_\_\_\_

Name / Nombre \_\_\_\_\_

Address / Domicilio \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip - Ciudad/Estado/CP \_\_\_\_\_

Phone / Tel. \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

I give permission to use my name in public to support the above position.

Autorizo el uso de mi nombre en público como apoyo a la postura mencionada en la parte superior.

Complete and return card to:

Environmental Health Coalition, 1717 Kettner Blvd., Suite 100, San Diego, CA, USA 92101

(619) 235-0281 [www.environmentalhealth.org](http://www.environmentalhealth.org)