

*MISSION: To tackle urban environmental health concerns with community-based education and organizing, leading to measurable improvements and a healthy environment for people who live and work in Dorchester.*

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Members/Partners

- Alternatives for Community & Environment Alliance for a Healthy Tomorrow A.N.G.E.L.S.
- Ashmont Adams Neighborhood Association
- Ashmont Hill Association
- Boston Greenspace Alliance
- Boston Urban Asthma Coalition
- Breath of Life: Dorchester (BOLD) Teens
- Bowdoin Street Health Center
- Cedar Grove Civic Association
- Civic Health Institute, CSHC
- Clam Point Neighborhood Association
- Clean Water Action
- Codman Academy Charter School
- Codman Square Health Center
- Codman Sq. Neighborhood Development Corp
- Codman Square Neighborhood Council
- Columbia Savin Hill Civic Association
- Dorchester Center for Adult Education
- Dorchester House Multi-Service Center
- City Councilor Maureen E. Feeney
- Greater Bowdoin/Geneva Neighborhood Assoc
- Greater Four Corners Action Coalition
- Greenwood Family Life Center, Inc.
- Health Services Partnership
- State Senator Jack Hart
- John Snow Institute
- Mattapan Community Health Center
- Mattapan Community Development Corp
- MassCOSH
- John W. McCormack Civic Association
- Melville Park Association
- Richard J. Murphy School Parent Council
- Park Partners of Wainwright Park
- Pope's Hill Neighborhood Association
- State Representative Marie P. St. Fleur
- St. Marks Area Civic Association
- St Marks Area Main Street
- Technology Goes Home/TGH Alumni, Inc.
- The Urban Ecology Institute
- Viet-American Initiative for Development
- State Representative Martin Walsh
- Washington-Columbia Neighborhood Assoc.

## Environmental News Briefs

### Arsenic Found in Ronan Park

A UMass-Boston/Wellesley College study found that soil in 10 Boston tot lots contains arsenic in dangerously high levels. Dorchester's Ronan Park, near Field's Corner, was among the most toxic, with concentrations of the carcinogen of over 100 parts per million, well above the state's "action level" of 30 parts per million.

This study is among the first to look at arsenic in playgrounds where pressure-treated wood has been used for play equipment or landscaping. Wood injected with the preservative copper chromated arsenate (CCA) has been commonly used for such construction because it is inexpensive and longer-lasting than untreated wood. The study found that, of 76 city playgrounds surveyed,

25 held equipment or infrastructure made of pressure-treated wood; 18 of those contained arsenic. City officials insisted the findings did not represent a public safety concern, and said they will investigate further and decide whether or not the equipment and soil should be removed.

This info is from articles in 11/1/03 Boston Globe, 11/6/03 Dorchester Reporter. For CCA fact sheets, contact DEHC, 617.822.8205.

### Boston Dioxin Policy

Wednesday October 29th the Boston City Council unanimously passed the Boston Dioxin Resolution, which directs city agents to avoid purchasing items that create dioxin. This makes Boston the first city on the East Coast to adopt a purchasing policy designed to



limit the release of dioxin, a highly toxic chemical that can cause cancer, and is released when chlorinated products such as PVC are manufactured or burned. For more info, call (617) 654-8284, email info@healthytomorrow.org

### Lead Safe Homes Website

Parents, tenants, landlords and homeowners in Dorchester were invited to check out a new website being developed by the National Center for Healthy Housing (NCHH) and Abt Associates.

*Continued on page 2*

## Greater Boston Environmental Justice Network—GBEJN

GBEJN held its quarterly meeting at Dorchester House Multi-Service Center in Fields Corner October 28. The agenda included information on: the Redistricting Lawsuit ([www.TheyThinkWereStupid.com](http://www.TheyThinkWereStupid.com)); the New England Grassroots Fund which supports community-based environmental initiatives throughout the region; updates on the Massa-

chusetts Environmental Justice (EJ) Policy adopted one year ago; the EJ Bill sponsored by State Senator Jarrett T. Barrios, and a group presentation by BOLD (Breath of Life Dorchester) Teens on the environmental health survey they have been conducting in Dorchester. For more on GBEJN, contact [info@ace-ej.org](mailto:info@ace-ej.org) or call 617.442-3343.



### Ways to Help the Environment:

- Install compact fluorescent light bulbs
- Recycle cans, bottles, newspapers weekly.
- Use a low-flow shower head.
- Walk or ride a bike whenever possible.
- Create a compost pile.
- Opt for energy-efficient appliances.

**DORCHESTER ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH COALITION**

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*This newsletter is produced monthly.  
Brief articles and upcoming event notices are always welcome.  
Fax or email by 3d Monday for inclusion in next issue.*

News Briefs (Contd from page 1)

DEHC and Bowdoin Street Health Center reps helped run the Nov.14 event at the Codman Square Tech Center computer labs. For more information on the website, call Ryan Torres, Lead Action Collaborative, 617/627-4679, or email LAC@tufts.edu.

UPCOMING EVENTS

**Challenge 2006: Building a Safe and Healthy Future for Boston Youth**—Kickoff Nov 13, 6-8 pm, at The Medical Foundation, 622 Washington St, Dorchester, 02124, for more info contact Keyon Hurd, Project Director, p: 617-423-4337x513.

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Through Nov 15 - **Native Plant Clearance Sale**, City Natives Nursery, 30 Edgewater Dr., Mattapan, call 617.905.7452, Boston Natural Areas Network, see www.bostonnatural.org.

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**What's in Boston Harbor?** Free program, Saturday, Nov 22, 1 pm, at the Codman Sq Branch Library, 690 Washington St. Arm-chair tour of the natural and cultural wonders of Boston Harbor Islands. Presented by the Island Alliance, 617-436-8214

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Boston Greenspace Alliance's **Emerald City: Faces of Greenspace Celebration**, Thursday, Nov 20th, 6-9 p.m. Two Dorchester awardees this year. Visit www.greenspacealliance.org or call 617.426.7980.

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**Winter Solstice Open House**, Dec 18, 7-9 pm, free - At the Boston Nature Center, 500 Walk Hill St, Mattapan. Trees exhibit, candlelit trail walk, hot cider and cocoa. For more info, call 617.983.8500.

**BOLD Teens Speak Out...**

My article on asthma: My name is Linda Martinez Perez and I am seventeen years old. I work in the BOLD program. I am also a teen peer leader.

What is asthma? A disease causing breathing difficulties of your lungs. Asthma can be triggered by certain allergens, such as pollen or dust, cigarette smoke, air pollution, animal dander, dust mites or cockroaches. You may be at risk for respiratory infections. With some people, strenuous exercise or cold air can trigger an asthma attack. Coughing or wheezing can be an early sign of an asthma episode. Many little kids won't complain about having breathing difficulty.

There are short term and long terms effects of asthma. Short term: irritation of eyes, nose and throat, bronchitis, pneumonia. Long-term health effects can include chronic respiratory disease, lung cancer, heart disease, and damage to the brain, nerves, liver, or kidneys. For more about the Breath of Life: Dorchester Teens program call 617-822-8189.

**Boston STEPS Consortium**

A new community mobilization effort, led by the Boston Public Health Commission in collaboration with Boston Public Schools and a consortium of community and faith-based organizations, government agencies, businesses, health centers and hospitals, academic institutions and other key stakeholders to reduce the burden of diabetes, asthma, and obesity for residents in seven Boston neighborhoods. The neighborhoods are South End, South Boston, Roxbury, Dorchester, Mattapan, Jamaica Plain, Hyde Park.

DEHC will be involved in creating and sustaining a network of neighborhood and school-based wellness activities; and identifying and addressing environmental factors that contribute to disease burden and disparities in our community. Specifically, DEHC will assist in developing ways to improve the walkability, and bikability of neighborhoods, assist in implementing the Safe Routes to School in four pilot schools, and create ways to address barriers to use of local greenways. If you are interested in participating in this initiative, call 617-822-8205.

BPHC FAQs—Flu: Myths vs. Facts

*MYTH:* The flu vaccine can give you the flu.

*FACT:* Vaccines are made from viruses that have been killed, and CANNOT give you the flu.

*MYTH:* The side effects are worse than the flu.

The worst side effect from the flu vaccine is a sore arm. The risk of allergic reaction is far less than risk of severe complications from influenza.

*FACT:* Not everyone should get the vaccine.

Those who are allergic to eggs (used to make the vaccine), and those with a severe reaction to the vaccine in the past may not be able to get it.

*FACT:* It's never too late to get the vaccine. Flu season usually goes from

December to March, and you can get the vaccine throughout most of the season. It's never too late. But why wait?

Who should get the flu vaccine?

People who are at highest risk. This includes: everyone 65 years of age or older; residents of long term care facilities; people with long-term health issues such as heart disease/lung disease/asthma/kidney disease/diabetes/anemia; anyone with a weakened immune system; women who will be more than 3 months pregnant during flu season; and people in close contact with any of the above. For more info, contact Boston Public Health Commission, 617-534-5611 or www.bphc.org

**Who is DEHC ?** The Dorchester Environmental Health Coalition (DEHC) is a network of community organizations, environmental leaders and individuals who are concerned about environmental health threats to Dorchester residents and are committed to identifying and addressing local environmental problems.

The Coalition is supported by funding through the Boston Public Health Commission, Jessie B. Cox Charitable Trust, Merck Family Fund and the Massachusetts Environmental Trust.

