



CHILDREN'S ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH &  
PROTECTION ADVISORY COUNCIL

April 26, 2017

The Honorable Larry Hogan  
Governor  
State of Maryland  
Annapolis, MD 21401-1991

The Honorable Thomas V. Mike Miller, Jr.  
President of the Senate  
H-107 State House  
Annapolis, MD 21401-1991

The Honorable Michael E. Busch  
Speaker of the House  
H-101 State House  
Annapolis, MD 21401-1991

Re: House Bill 313 (Chapter 585), Acts of 2000 and Health-General Article, §13-1506(8)  
2016 Legislative Report of the Children's Environmental Health and Protection Advisory  
Council

Dear Governor Hogan, President Miller, and Speaker Busch:

Pursuant to Health-General Article, §13-1506(8), Annotated Code of Maryland, the  
Children's Environmental Health and Protection Advisory Council submits this annual legislative  
report on their activities.

Thank you for your continued interest in children's environmental health issues in Maryland.  
If you should have any questions about this report, please do not hesitate to contact me at 410-767-  
6234.

Sincerely,

Clifford S. Mitchell, MD, MS, MPH  
Chair

Enclosure

cc: Dennis R. Schrader, Secretary, DHMH  
Ben Grumbles, Secretary, MDE  
Webster Ye, Director, DHMH Office of Governmental Affairs  
Howard Haft, Deputy Secretary, DHMH Public Health Services  
Donna Gugel, Director, DHMH Prevention and Health Promotion Administration  
Sarah Albert, MSAR #1460

**Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene  
Maryland Department of the Environment**

**2016 Annual Report  
Children's Environmental Health and Protection Advisory Council  
Health-General Article, §13-1506(8)**

**April 26, 2017**

**Larry Hogan**  
Governor

**Boyd Rutherford**  
Lieutenant Governor

**Dennis R. Schrader**  
Secretary of Health and Mental Hygiene

**Ben Grumbles**  
Secretary of the Environment

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## **Background**

The Children's Environmental Health and Protection Advisory Council (CEHPAC) was established in 2000 pursuant to Chapter 585 of the Acts of 2000. CEHPAC advises the Governor and the General Assembly on environmental issues that may pose a threat to children. Specifically, this statute requires CEHPAC to:

- (1) Review and comment on existing rules, regulations, and standards to ensure that the rules, regulations, and standards adequately protect the health of children from environmental hazards by taking into account the special vulnerability of children because of their developing physiology, and because their exposures, behaviors, and diets can differ greatly from those of adults;
- (2) (i) Review proposed regulations submitted to CEHPAC, and (ii) recommend to the promulgating unit measures that would avoid or minimize any negative impact that the proposed regulation may have on the health of children;
- (3) Comment on any proposed regulations that may be submitted by any other principal department of the Executive Branch during the public comment period if CEHPAC determines that the proposed regulation will have an adverse impact on children's health;
- (4) Gather and disseminate information to the public, including the research and medical communities, community-based organizations, schools, and State agencies, on how to reduce, treat, and eliminate children's exposures to environmental hazards to further the public's understanding of the environmental hazards that may potentially affect children;
- (5) Recommend uniform guidelines for State agencies to follow to help reduce and eliminate children's exposure to environmental hazards, especially in areas reasonably accessible to children;
- (6) Create and promote education programs, in partnership with health and environmental professionals, for parents, guardians, and caregivers of children that include information on: (i) the potential health effects of environmental hazards; (ii) practical suggestions on how to reduce children's exposure to environmental hazards; and (iii) any other relevant information to assist parents, guardians, and caregivers in protecting children from environmental hazards;
- (7) Provide input to the General Assembly on legislation that may impact environmental hazards that affect the health of children; and
- (8) Report to the Governor and the General Assembly annually on the activities of CEHPAC.

## **Mission**

CEHPAC seeks to identify environmental hazards that may affect children's health and to recommend solutions to those hazards through interdisciplinary problem solving and coalition building. CEHPAC's goals were developed in 2001 and are reaffirmed annually. They are to:

- Ensure that the rules, regulations, and standards of the State protect children from environmental hazards;
- Educate involved parties regarding the environmental hazards that impact children's health and the means to avoid those hazards; and
- Enable children in Maryland to grow up in a safe and healthy environment.

## **Membership**

CEHPAC is composed of nineteen members from the General Assembly, State agencies, private sector representatives, and parents with interest and expertise in the area of children's health and the environment (see Appendix A for current CEHPAC membership).

## **CEHPAC Activities**

CEHPAC has convened in public session seven times in 2016, including an annual joint meeting with the Commission on Environmental Justice and Sustainable Communities. These meetings enabled CEHPAC to discuss proposed legislation, review proposed regulations, provide educational presentations for members, and discuss various children's environmental health issues. During the 2016 legislative session, CEHPAC held one meeting in Annapolis to allow for the appointed delegate,<sup>1</sup> Delegate Angel, to attend and share information on current legislation.

A major focus of CEHPAC throughout 2016 was to gather input and provide guidance on WiFi radiation in schools. This issue was brought before CEHPAC as a public inquiry in 2014. Due to the complexity of this issue, CEHPAC created a work group to study the issue in more depth. After a deliberative process that involved public meetings, review of scientific literature, a report prepared for CEHPAC by a graduate student at the University of Maryland School of Public Health, and extensive public input and comments, CEHPAC formally adopted recommendations and a report prepared by the work group on December 13, 2016. The report and supporting materials can be found online at: <http://phpa.dhmh.maryland.gov/OEHFP/EH/Pages/WiFiCEHPAC.aspx>.

CEHPAC heard regular updates regarding the State's progress on its new lead testing initiative, which started in October 2015 with the release of the 2015 Targeting Plan, which defined the entire State of Maryland as "at risk" for lead exposure. Subsequently, the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DHMH) revised its lead testing regulations for health care providers in March 2016, requiring all children born on or after January 1, 2015 to be tested at 12 and 24 months. CEHPAC is following the State's progress in implementing the new regulations and is hearing regular updates on challenges and opportunities to reduce lead exposure in children in the State.

CEHPAC also discussed potential health concerns associated with the use of electronic device screens. CEHPAC heard public input about potential impacts of device screens on development of vision and vision abnormalities, sleep patterns, and ergonomic impacts. CEHPAC did not address these concerns as part of the WiFi radiation report, but CEHPAC members noted these concerns and expressed some interest in revisiting these issues.

CEHPAC also heard updates on the Federal research agenda regarding synthetic crumb rubber turf. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA), the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, and the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (USCPSC) have been collectively engaged in efforts to: (1) better characterize the chemical constituents and hazards of fields made with tire crumb rubber (USEPA); (2) collect information that would describe children's exposures on playing fields (USCPSC); and (3) design pilot

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<sup>1</sup> Please note that the Senate position on the CEHPAC was vacant at the time of this meeting.

studies to characterize exposures. CEHPAC did not take any action on this item but continues to monitor it.

### **Future Priorities**

CEHPAC continues to work on the items described above and will be considering new priorities in the coming year based on emerging and ongoing scientific investigations (*e.g.*, tire crumb rubber, WiFi radiation), areas in which CEHPAC has had an historic interest (*e.g.*, school environmental health), and State priorities (*e.g.*, lead and asthma).

### **Conclusion**

CEHPAC will continue to review proposed regulations and legislation to ensure that Maryland's children are protected from environmental hazards that detrimentally impact health. CEHPAC will also maintain its current efforts to educate its members and other interested parties on the growing body of knowledge related to children's environmental health.

## Appendix A. CEHPAC Membership 2016

<p><b>Maryland Senate</b> The Honorable Guy Guzzone</p>	<p><b>Licensed Pediatrician</b> 1) Benjamin A. Gitterman, MD 2) Elizabeth Matsui, MD</p>
<p><b>Maryland House of Delegates</b> The Honorable Angela Angel</p>	<p><b>Expert in studying the impact of environmental allergies and childhood asthma from Johns Hopkins University</b> Greg Diette, MD</p>
<p><b>Department of Health and Mental Hygiene</b> Clifford Mitchell, MD, MS, MPH Prevention and Health Promotion Administration (Chair)</p>	<p><b>Parent or Guardian</b> Veronika Carella</p>
<p><b>Department of the Environment</b> Duane Johnson (Vice Chair)</p>	<p><b>Environmental Epidemiologist</b> Nsedu Witherspoon</p>
<p><b>Department of Agriculture</b> Robert Hofstetter</p>	<p><b>Economist</b> Dr. David Bishai</p>
<p><b>Department of Education</b> Alicia Mezu</p>	<p><b>Environmental Toxicologist</b> Dr. Megan Latshaw</p>
<p><b>Department of Human Resources</b> Jacquelyn Powell</p>	<p><b>Maryland Association of Counties</b> Dr. Diana Abney</p>
<p><b>Department of Housing and Community Development</b> Caroline Varney-Alvarado</p>	<p><b>Private Industry</b> Julian Levy</p>
<p><b>Governor's Office for Children</b> Christina Church</p>	<p><b>Maryland Commission on Environmental Justice and Sustainable Communities</b> Benoy Thomas</p>