

DESK STATEMENT

CHILDREN'S ENVIRONMENTAL EXPOSURE RESEARCH STUDY (CHEERS)

A U.S. EPA STUDY IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE CDC AND THE DUVAL COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

This two-year children's exposure study began in the summer of 2004 and is being conducted in Duval County (the Jacksonville area of Florida).

The purpose of the study is to learn about levels of pesticides and common household chemicals in homes of young children.

Use of pesticides:

Participants are not required to use pesticides or to change any of their regular household routines or how they normally use bug sprays (pesticides). The study includes a control group of households that do not use pesticides. The study does require that if pesticides are used, researchers should be notified in order that they can arrange a time to conduct the study activities before and after the use of pesticides.

Participants will not be asked to apply any pesticides. We will study them based on their normal pesticide use pattern. Researchers at EPA are very sensitive to issues associated with children participating in the study. We will not ask any parent to apply pesticides in their home to be a part of our study. The study protocols have been reviewed and approved by four independent Institutional Review Boards for the Protection of Human Subjects.

An article about the CHEERS study in the October 18, 2004 edition of *Chemical & Engineering News* (CEN) contained this erroneous statement:

The children chosen to participate must live in homes with potentially high pesticide use. Their parents must agree to spray or have pesticides sprayed inside their homes routinely during the two-year study period, and will receive up to \$970 for participating.

CEN has agreed to print a correction.

Scientific Integrity/American Chemistry Council

EPA is committed to maintaining the highest scientific standards in all of its research programs. This includes the Children's Environmental Exposure Research Study, which is an important study that will allow EPA to understand better children's exposure to pesticides and other chemicals in their home environments.

Because this is such an important research effort, EPA has partnered with the Centers for Disease Control and the Duval County (Florida) Health Department. The American Chemistry Council is providing funding that will enable EPA to expand beyond a pesticides-only study to collect information on selected phthalates, brominated flame retardants, and perfluorinated chemicals, which we would otherwise not be able to study. The study itself will be conducted by a qualified team of scientists who do not have ties to the chemical industry.

Before beginning this study, EPA career scientists developed a study design for the pesticides-only study that was independently peer reviewed. We then submitted a proposal to the ACC to expand the chemicals monitored. The ACC accepted the proposal without any influence over the study design or the chemicals EPA would select. The study design describes in detail what will be measured, how the data will be collected, how the data will be analyzed, and how the data will be quality assured. By following this study design, EPA will maintain its rigorous standards and ensure the integrity of the study. EPA has also formed a Peer Advisory Committee that will provide technical advice during the course of the study. This committee consists of representatives from both academia and industry. The ACC will not have any ability to manipulate the outcome of the study, and EPA will maintain control over the release and publication of the research results.

EPA believes that partnerships are essential to finding solutions to today's complex environmental problems. We currently have more than 80 active CRADAs with organizations that include universities, private industry, non-profit organizations, and public utilities. Not only do these CRADAs allow EPA to leverage its research dollars, they also allow EPA to take advantage of the scientific expertise of the partner organizations.

The \$2 million from the ACC comes with no strings attached.

EPA's CRADAs with Industry

Over the past 15 years, EPA has entered into many CRADAs with industry. For example, during the Clinton Administration EPA signed research agreements with Chevron, Dow Corning, DuPont, Eastman Chemical, the Petroleum Environmental Research Forum, Procter & Gamble, and others. The American Chemistry Council should be commended for participating in this CRADA to advance our understanding of how children may be exposed to the chemicals used by its member organizations.

Congressional Authorization for CRADAs

CRADAs, as authorized by Congress in the 1986 Federal Technology Transfer Act (FTTA), are an important means of fostering collaboration between the federal government and the broader scientific community.

The number of active CRADAs throughout the federal government has surpassed 3,000 each year for more than 10 years.

Additional Information

For more information, go to www.epa.gov/cheers.