



## HEALTHY SCHOOLS

Serving Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma,  
New Mexico, Texas and 66 Tribes

### Helping Kids Learn in a Pollution Free Environment



Pollution Prevention (P2) is any practice that reduces, eliminates, or prevents pollution at its source, prior to treatment, recycling and disposal. P2 is also known as source reduction, the ounce-of-prevention approach to waste management. P2 reduces both financial costs and environmental costs. P2 protects the environment by conserving and protecting natural resources while strengthening economic growth through more efficient production in industry and less need for schools, households, businesses and communities to handle waste.

Various P2 approaches can be applied to all potential and actual

### What Is Pollution Prevention?

pollution generating activities, including those found in the *many sectors*. For example, in the *Energy Sector* the approach includes increasing efficiency in energy use and use of environmentally benign fuel sources. In the *Agricultural Sector*, P2 approaches include reducing the use of water and chemical inputs, adoption of less environmentally harmful pesticides or cultivation of crop strains with natural resistance to pests and the protection of sensitive areas. In the *Industrial Sector*, examples of P2 practices include modifying a production process to produce less waste, using non-toxic or less toxic chemicals as cleaners, degreasers and other maintenance chemicals, implementing water and energy conservation practices and reusing

materials such as drums and pallets rather than disposing of them as waste. Lastly, in *Homes and Schools* examples of P2 practices include using reusable water bottles instead of disposables, automatically turning off lights when not in use, repairing leaky faucets and hoses, and switching to green cleaners.

In 2021, P2 Week is September 19 - 24. Region 6 will host a webinar on "Lean in Pollution Prevention," by Thomas Vinson of Zero Waste Corp. on Wednesday, September 22, focusing on how lean manufacturing and environmental performance are linked together. Register for the webinar [here](#). For more information, please contact Annette Smith, P2 Coordinator, [smith.annette@epa.gov](mailto:smith.annette@epa.gov).

### October Is Children's Health Month!

Pollution in our environment, in schools and at home can affect kids more than adults, because they are smaller and still growing. We hope you can use some of these ideas to join us this October to promote children's environmental health in your schools.

Assess your school's health. [Use a fillable, printable PDF form to assess the current](#)

[environmental health of your school.](#)

Teach students about the environment using our [Lesson Plans, Teacher Guides and Online Environmental Resources for Educators.](#)

Participate in [Children's Environmental Health Day](#) on October 14, 2021!

### Top Ten Ways to Make Your School Healthier

- Clear the air inside
- Clear the air outside
- Reduce / remove radon in school buildings
- Use chemicals carefully
- Test the water
- Get the lead out
- Eliminate mercury



- Cover up
- Use toxics with caution
- Educate yourself

Learn more: [Sensible Steps to Healthier School Environments \(April 2017\) \(PDF\)](#).

## Learning Links — Environmental Education



Environmental education is a process that allows individuals to explore environmental issues, engage in problem solving, and take action to improve the environment. As a result, individuals develop a deeper understanding of environmental issues and have the skills to make informed and responsible decisions.

The components of environmental education include:

- **Awareness and sensitivity** to the environment and environmental challenges,
- **Knowledge and understanding** of the environment and environmental challenges,
- **Attitudes** of concern for the environment and motivation to

improve or maintain environmental quality,

- **Skills** to identify and help resolve environmental challenges, and
- **Participation** in activities that lead to the resolution of environmental challenges.

Environmental education does not advocate a particular viewpoint or course of action. Rather, environmental education teaches individuals how to

weigh various sides of an issue through critical thinking and enhances their own problem-solving and decision-making skills.

The [National Environmental Education Act of 1990](#) requires the EPA to provide national leadership to increase environmental literacy. EPA established the [Office of Environmental Education](#) to implement this program.

For more information, go to [www.epa.gov/students](http://www.epa.gov/students).

## Notes for Nurses — New Schools Guidance from the CDC



[K-12 Guidance](#): Strategies to reduce the spread of COVID-19 and maintain safe operations

[ECE/Child Care Guidance](#): For all types of early childhood education (ECE) and child care programs

## Custodian's Closet — About Safer Choice



### Same program, new label

Finding cleaning and other products that are safer for you, your family, and the

environment should be easy. That's why we developed our new Safer Choice label.

We all play a role in protecting our families' health and the environment. Products with the Safer Choice label help consumers and commercial buyers identify products with safer chemical ingredients, without sacrificing quality or performance.

More than 2,000 products currently qualify to carry the Safer Choice label. Safer Choice products are available [for your home at retail stores](#) and [for use in facilities like schools, hotels, offices, and sports venues](#).

For the past 15 years, EPA's label for safer chemical products has been known as the Design for the Environment or "DfE" label. We spent

more than a year collecting ideas and discussing new label options with stakeholders, such as product manufacturers and environmental and health advocates. Then we took our ideas to consumers and asked what worked best for them. The result is the new Safer Choice label.

## National Estuaries Week is September 18-25, 2021

Did you know that there are three estuaries in EPA Region 6 in the National Estuaries Program? They are [Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Program](#) in Louisiana, [Coastal Bend Bays and Estuaries Program](#) in Texas, and [Galveston Bay Estuary Program](#) in Texas.

An estuary is a partially enclosed, coastal water body where freshwater from rivers and streams mixes with salt water from

the ocean. Estuaries and their surrounding lands are places of transition from land to sea. Although influenced by the tides, they are protected from the full force of ocean waves, winds and storms by land forms such as barrier islands or peninsulas.

Estuarine environments are among the most productive on earth, creating more organic matter each year than comparably-sized areas of

forest, grassland or agricultural land. The sheltered waters of estuaries also support unique communities of plants and animals specially adapted for life at the margin of the sea. Many different habitat types are found in and around estuaries, including shallow open waters, freshwater and saltwater marshes, swamps, sandy beaches, mud and sand flats, rocky shores, oyster

reefs, mangrove forests, river deltas, tidal pools and seagrass beds.

More information on estuaries and the National Estuary Program can be found at <https://www.epa.gov/nep>.



## National Lead Poisoning Prevention Week is October 24-30, 2021



Every year during the last week of October, National Lead

Poisoning Prevention Week raises awareness about lead poisoning. It's also a week that focuses on helping individuals, organizations, and governments work together to reduce childhood exposure to lead.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), children in 4 million households are

exposed to high levels of lead. When lead builds up in the body, it can result in lead poisoning. Children under the age of six are especially vulnerable to lead poisoning because their growing bodies absorb more lead than adults. Also, children may inadvertently put things that contain lead into their mouths.

Signs of lead poisoning in children can include:

- Developmental delays,
- Learning difficulties,
- Loss of appetite and weight loss,

- Feeling sluggish and fatigued, and
- Seizures.

Babies in the womb can also have lead poisoning. Babies that are exposed to lead before birth might be born too early or have a low birth weight.

Adults can get lead poisoning, too. Symptoms of lead poisoning in adults include high blood pressure, joint and muscle pain, problems with memory or concentration, headaches, and mood disorders.

Lead poisoning occurs when children or adults are exposed to lead. Lead may be found in batteries, pottery, roofing materials, soil, cosmetics, toys, and bullets.

The United States banned lead-based paints in 1978. However, many people still live in older homes that were painted with lead-containing paint. It's these people who are at the highest risk of lead poisoning. Families who live in homes with lead pipes are also at risk.

Learn more at [www.epa.gov/lead](http://www.epa.gov/lead).

## Climate Change Indicators in the United States

The Earth's climate is changing. Temperatures are rising, snow and rainfall patterns are shifting, and more extreme climate events – like heavy rainstorms and record-high temperatures – are already happening. Many of these observed changes are linked to the rising levels of carbon

dioxide and other greenhouse gases in our atmosphere, caused by human activities.

EPA partners with more than 50 data contributors from various government agencies, academic institutions, and other organizations to compile a key set of indicators related

to the causes and effects of climate change. These indicators also provide important input to the [National Climate Assessment](#) and other efforts to understand and track the science and impacts of climate change. Learn more about [EPA's climate indicators](#).



## EPA Region 6 - South Central

1201 Elm Street, Suite 500  
Dallas, TX 75270

### EPA Region 6 Children's Health Team

Virginia Vietti, Children's Environmental  
Health Coordinator  
[Vietti.virginia@epa.gov](mailto:Vietti.virginia@epa.gov)  
214 665-7431

Cathy Gilmore, Senior Environmental  
Employee for Healthy Schools Newsletter  
[Gilmore.cathy@epa.gov](mailto:Gilmore.cathy@epa.gov)  
214 665-6574

Protecting human health  
and the environment.



**Sustainable Management of Food, Disposal of Batteries, Electronics, and Electronic Appliances and Compact Fluorescent Light Bulbs:** Stephen Sturdivant, [sturdivant.stephen@epa.gov](mailto:sturdivant.stephen@epa.gov), 214-665-6673

**Recycling and Reuse:** Deanna Debose, [debose.deanna@epa.gov](mailto:debose.deanna@epa.gov), 214-665-6461

**Safer Choice and Wastewise:** Melanie Lillard, [lillard.melanie@epa.gov](mailto:lillard.melanie@epa.gov), 214-665-7588

**Lead Based Paint:** Mikeal Adams, [adams.mikeal@epa.gov](mailto:adams.mikeal@epa.gov), 214-665-6711

**Integrated Pest Management:** Ken McPherson, [mcperson.kenneth@epa.gov](mailto:mcperson.kenneth@epa.gov), 214-665-6754

**Pollution Prevention and Source Reduction Assistance Grant Programs:** Annette Smith, [smith.annette@epa.gov](mailto:smith.annette@epa.gov), 214-665-2127

**Radon, Asbestos, and Indoor Air Quality:** George Brozowski, [brozowski.george@epa.gov](mailto:brozowski.george@epa.gov), 214-665-8541

**Ground Water:** Scott Ellinger, [ellinger.scott@epa.gov](mailto:ellinger.scott@epa.gov), 214-665-8408

**Drinking Water:** Angela Restivo, [restivo.angela@epa.gov](mailto:restivo.angela@epa.gov), 214-665-7123

**Trash Free Waters:** Rachel Renz and Renee Bellew, [renz.rachel@epa.gov](mailto:renz.rachel@epa.gov) and [bellew.renee@epa.gov](mailto:bellew.renee@epa.gov), 214-665-3129 and 214-665-2793, respectively.

**PCBs:** Anupa Ahuja, [Ahuja.anupa@epa.gov](mailto:Ahuja.anupa@epa.gov), 214-665-2701

**WaterSense:** Debora Browning, [browning.debora@epa.gov](mailto:browning.debora@epa.gov), 214-665-8025



## ODDS AND ENDS

[Upcoming Newsletters](#)

[Contacts](#)

[Disclaimer](#)

[Feedback](#)

In our December 2021 issue, the Region 6 Healthy Schools Newsletter will highlight:

- National Radon Month in January and
- National Pesticide Education Month in February.

Other topics will include the quarterly columns on Notes for Nurses, Custodian's Closet, and Learning Links. Healthy Schools is published by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 6 - South Central in Dallas, Texas. Region 6 includes the states of Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas as well as 66 Tribes.

For general information about Healthy Schools or to be added or removed from the distribution list, please contact Cathy Gilmore, Senior Environmental Employee (SEE) for Healthy Schools at [Gilmore.cathy@epa.gov](mailto:Gilmore.cathy@epa.gov).

We would love your feedback on this newsletter or suggestions for future topics. Please email EPA at [Gilmore.cathy@epa.gov](mailto:Gilmore.cathy@epa.gov) with your suggestions and comments.

The newsletter is available at [www.epa.gov/children/region-6-healthy-schools-newsletter](http://www.epa.gov/children/region-6-healthy-schools-newsletter).

*This page may provide links to non-EPA web sites that provide additional information about topics that may be of interest to schools and school districts. EPA cannot attest to the accuracy of information on any non-EPA page. Providing links to a non-EPA web site is not an endorsement of any non-government website, company or application; nor does EPA recommend membership in, donations to or commercial sales from non-government organizations. Also, be aware that the privacy protection provided on the [EPA.gov](http://EPA.gov) domain (see [Privacy and Security Notice](#)) may not be available at the external link.*

