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# MCSA NEWS

VOLUME 5 ISSUE 6 JUNE 2010

## Highlights from



# Multiple Chemical Sensitivity Awareness Month

*Feature*

# *Highlights from Multiple Chemical Sensitivity Awareness Month 2010*

May 2010 was Multiple Chemical Sensitivity Awareness Month and brought increased public consciousness to the human health effects of toxic chemicals. Individuals and organizations spread awareness with vigor this year!

Canary yellow was adopted by the community as the theme color. “The color Yellow has stood for wisdom and intellect throughout the ages. It is full of creative and intellectual energy. A sun color, it makes us feel happy and optimistic. Expansive and free to do and be all that we can be. Cheerful, joyful, curious, yellow promotes optimism. Helps you feel expressive, friendly and experimental.”<sup>1</sup>

Many wore something yellow for May Day. Some wore a yellow hat or shirt and others designed homemade pins with a feather, canary, or the abbreviation ‘MCS’. These great conversation starters give rise to many asking what MCS stands for or what the canary or feather signifies.

**Reference**

Gemstone Gifts Handmade Jewelry. <http://www.gemstonegifts.com/Colors/yellow.htm>



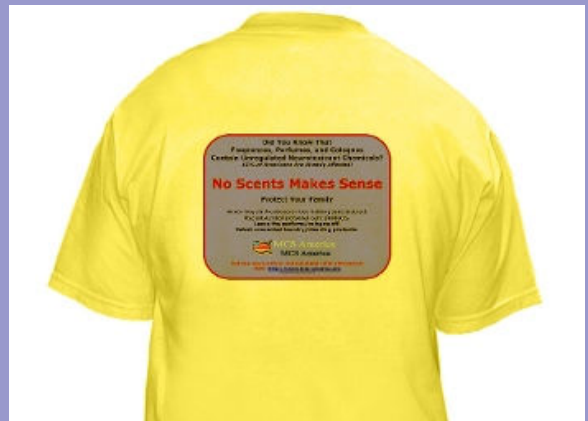
MCS feather pin by Katarina Holgersson, Australia.



The Canary Report launched an online shop featuring a yellow cap with the Canary Report logo.

<http://www.zazzle.com/thecanaryreport>

Kris Kuipers and friends created an electromagnetic shielding cape with a canary picture on the front as a conversation starter for MCS and electromagnetic sensitivity.



MCS America volunteered to make these yellow MCS t-shirts available at Café Press wholesale prices. The MCS America stores for the environment provide clothing and gift items geared towards MCS awareness, as well as fragrance, pollution, and environmental awareness. These items are provided at wholesale cost. Wholesale Awareness T-shirts available at [http://mcs-america.org/index\\_files/MCSstore.htm](http://mcs-america.org/index_files/MCSstore.htm).

Toni temple at the Ohio Network for the Chemically Injured urged others to adopt the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Fragrance-Free Policy and involved Cuyahoga County Public Library's 28 branches and their administrative office building in MCS Awareness Month. Branches provided information and displayed related books. A copy of the CDC Fragrance free Policy was available for copying. The Downtown branch of Cleveland Public Library had an MCS Awareness Month display in the Science and Technology Department.



In Spain, people with MCS submitted photographs with masks to a Greenpeace photo contest and a popular TV show featured Multiple Chemical Sensitivity.



Christiane Tourtet, B.A., Founder and President of International MCS/EMS Awareness, presents her 2010 MCS/EMS Awareness Month Display at The Dr. B. L. Perry, Jr. Public Branch Library, Tallahassee, Florida



Marlene Macfarlane approached the Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region about issues facing patients with multiple chemical sensitivity (MCS) and received a good response! Go Marlene!



# Cleaning & Laundry Products Fact Sheet

## Facts About Cleaning & Laundry Products

- Indoor air is more seriously polluted than the outdoor air, even in the largest and most industrialized cities.<sup>1</sup>
- Laundry and fabric softener products contain undisclosed hazardous chemicals with known health risks.<sup>2,5</sup>
- Cleaning products, especially those with germ killing properties, are harmful to health.<sup>6</sup>
- Air fresheners actually worsen indoor air pollution by adding toxic chemicals to the air.<sup>4</sup>
- Analysis of fragranced products reveals undisclosed chemicals with known irritant and neurotoxic properties.<sup>3,5,7</sup>

Consumers need to make every effort to ensure work, school, and home environments are clean, comfortable, and safe. It is not sufficient to trust that products have been adequately tested before they go to market. They have not.

## Domestic Household Products to Avoid

All Fragranced Products  
 Fragranced Laundry Detergents, Fabric Softeners, and Dryer Sheets  
 Air Fresheners  
 Window Cleaning Solution, All Purpose Cleaners, Sprays, and Aerosols  
 Scouring Powder  
 Fragranced and/or Anti-Bacterial Vacuum Bags and Trash Bags  
 Disinfectants, Solvents  
 Commercial or Industrial Chemicals and Concentrated Products  
 Solvents

Clean is the absence of dirt and grime that leads to odor. Toxic chemicals and strong fragrances merely cover up odors at the expense of health. There are many safe and effective cleaners:

## Domestic Household Products to Use Instead

Laundry - borax, baking soda, or fragrance free laundry detergent  
 Fabric Softener - white vinegar in wash or towel wet with peroxide, tennis shoe, or tennis ball in the dryer  
 Air Fresheners - white vinegar, open windows, adequate ventilation, fresh herbs, and tea  
 Windows - white vinegar or water & squeegee  
 All Purpose Cleaning - white vinegar  
 Scouring Powder - baking soda or borax  
 Disinfectant - peroxide followed by white vinegar in separate cleanings.  
 Fragrance Free Products

Don't Be Greenwashed! Just because a product is 'green' or 'all natural' does not mean it is nontoxic.

To download detailed brochures with inexpensive and safe household cleaning ideas, see:

General Cleaning <http://www.mcs-america.org/general.pdf>

Kitchen Cleaning <http://www.mcs-america.org/kitchen.pdf>

Laundry <http://www.mcs-america.org/laundry.pdf>

## References

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MCS America <http://www.mcs-america.org>

This fact sheet for awareness month may be downloaded from: <http://www.mcs-america.org/cleaningfactsheet.pdf>



# Fragrance & Perfume Fact Sheet

## Facts About Fragrances

- There are 3,000 – 5,000 chemicals used in fragrance.<sup>1</sup>
- 95% of these chemicals are derived from petroleum.<sup>1</sup>
- Over 80% of the chemicals in fragrance have not been tested for human toxicity.<sup>1</sup>
- Some of the chemicals found in fragranced products are on the EPA hazardous waste list.<sup>1,2</sup>
- The perfume industry is not regulated by any government agency and is not required to disclose the ingredients in “fragrance”.<sup>1</sup>
- The National Academy of Sciences targeted fragrances as one of the six categories of chemicals that should be given high priority for neurotoxicity testing.<sup>1</sup>

## Personal Care Products to Avoid

- Perfume and Cologne
- All Scented Products - including soaps, shampoo, conditioner, and bath products
- Scented Lotions
- Scented Shaving Cream, Aftershave
- Scented Deodorants and Anti-Perspirants
- Scented Shampoo and Conditioner, Hair Spray, Hair Gel and Mousse, and Hair Color
- Scented Nail Polish and Remover
- Scented Make-up
- Scented Anti-Bacterial Hand Wipes or Hand Sanitizer
- Other Scented Toiletries

## Personal Care Products to Use Instead

- Scent - use essential oils if tolerated or eliminate perfume
- Fragrance Free Products - soaps, shampoo, conditioner, and bath products
- Lotion - use unscented versions or natural oils such as jojoba, coconut, and olive oil
- Shaving Cream - soap
- Aftershave - witch hazel or hydrogen peroxide
- Deodorant - peroxide, natural salt crystal, baking soda, unscented deodorants
- Hair Styling - aloe vera gel, lemon juice
- Hair Color - natural variations, peroxide to bleach, all natural henna for color
- Shampoo / Conditioner - unscented variations, baking soda, vinegar, citric acid, oils
- Nail Polish and Remover - safer variations from a health food store or go au natural
- Make-up - unscented, natural variations or go au natural

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MCS America <http://www.mcs-america.org>

This fact sheet for awareness month may be downloaded from: <http://mcs-america.org/fragrancefactsheet.pdf>



# Electromagnetic Radiation Fact Sheet

## Major Public Health Concern

- At least 9.8 million people in America suffer from sensitivity to electromagnetic radiation (Levallois 2002).
- Electromagnetic radiation affects people of all ages, economic status, race, and both genders (Levallois 2002).
- Electromagnetic radiation affect everyone to some extent.

## Medical Findings

- People who are sensitive to electromagnetic radiation have significantly higher natural rates of membrane leakage as measured by their skin conductance (Eltiti *et al.* 2007). This leaking of ions short-circuits natural electrical potentials and triggers nerve impulses to the brain.
- Blood tests of electrosensitive patients show thyroid dysfunction, liver dysfunction and chronic inflammatory processes (Dahmen, 2009).
- The concentration of persistent organic pollutants is higher in subjects who are sensitive to electromagnetic radiation when compared to controls (Hardell, 2008).
- Dirty electricity elevates blood sugar among electrically sensitive diabetics and may explain brittle diabetes (Havas, 2008).
- Significant cognitive and neurobiological alterations point to a higher genuine individual vulnerability of electromagnetic hypersensitive patients (Landgrebe *et al.*, 2008).
- Electrosensitive patients show altered central nervous system function (Landgrebe *et al.*, 2007).

## The Cost of Environmental Illnesses

- Annual expenditures for healthcare and lost productivity due to environmental illnesses are estimated at \$71.8 billion dollars per year (Muir & Zegarac, 2001).

## Environmental Factors

- Indoor and outdoor electromagnetic radiation exposures can trigger reactions: cell phones, wireless networks, electric appliances, etc.

## Sensitivity to Electromagnetic Radiation Can be Controlled

- With a plan that includes eliminating sources of electromagnetic radiation, avoidance, and control of environmental radiation exposures, many people with sensitivity to electromagnetic radiation could lead normal, healthy, and active lives.

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MCS America <http://www.mcs-america.org>

This fact sheet for awareness month may be downloaded from: <http://mcs-america.org/emffactsheet.pdf>

# Neighborhood Alert!



Now is the season when people are eager to enjoy sunshine and fresh air outdoors. Please help clear the air of these top 3 neighborhood air pollutants that are especially harmful to children, unborn children, the elderly and people with asthma or heart disease: They compromise sustainability and interfere with the right of others to use and enjoy their property.

**Wood Smoke...**is even more concentrated than tobacco smoke, and contains many of the same fine particles and toxic chemicals. See [www.burningissues.org](http://www.burningissues.org).

**Scented Laundry Products...**contain many of the same chemicals that are in tobacco smoke, wood smoke and lawn chemicals (such as formaldehyde, benzene, toluene and other cancer-causing and hormone-disrupting chemicals). Their fumes are implicated in asthma attacks, birth defects, heart problems and even SIDS sudden infant death syndrome. See [www.takebacktheair.com](http://www.takebacktheair.com) or [www.mcs-america.org](http://www.mcs-america.org)

**Lawn Chemicals...**share a host of the same toxic chemicals that are in tobacco smoke and wood smoke. They are harmful to people and pets. Please search “the hazards of lawn chemicals and pesticides” online, for the facts.

*If you would like to connect with others working towards chemical-free neighborhoods, please contact us at [info@takebacktheair.com](mailto:info@takebacktheair.com)  
Website: [www.takebacktheair.com](http://www.takebacktheair.com),*

This fact sheet for awareness month may be downloaded from: <http://www.mcs-america.org/neighborhoodalert.pdf>