



Welcome to this edition of *Occupational Health Watch*, an update of recent activities of the California Department of Public Health's Occupational Health Branch (OHB).

**Focus on...**

**Cleaning Products and Work-Related Asthma – Multilingual Fact Sheets for Workers**

Custodians, cleaners, and maintenance workers are the employees most at risk for work-related asthma from exposure to cleaning agents.

The Work-Related Asthma Prevention Program (WRAPP), of the California Department of Public Health, Occupational Health Branch, has found that work-related asthma among custodians and cleaners is double the rate in the overall workforce. WRAPP has also found that teachers, office workers, and other building occupants can get asthma from cleaning chemicals used in their workplaces.

A new set of multilingual worker fact sheets explain work-related asthma, how it can be prevented from cleaning product exposures, and what to do if a worker experiences symptoms. The fact sheets are available in English, Spanish and Chinese. Another, more detailed fact sheet is available in English for employers and facilities staff.

The fact sheets can help workers and employers find safer cleaning products by providing web links for two independent organizations, EcoLogo and Green Seal. These groups certify that cleaning products have met high standards to protect human health and the environment. WRAPP participated in the development of cleaning product standards and successfully argued for the prohibition of ingredients known to cause allergic-type asthma.

[Cleaning Products and Work-Related Asthma: Information for Workers \(PDF\)](#) ... [Spanish](#) ... [Chinese](#) – fact sheets, February 2013

[Cleaning Products and Work-Related Asthma \(PDF\)](#) – fact sheet, July 2012

[Certification Standards Help Employers and Cleaners Buy Safer Cleaning Products](#) – announcement, February 2012

The Occupational Health Branch is dedicated to improving worker health and safety through prevention activities. We gather information on job hazards, work with others to test new approaches to prevent worker injury and illness, and assist with making changes at the workplace. For more information, visit the [OHB website](http://www.cdph.ca.gov/ohb) (www.cdph.ca.gov/ohb).

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