

Chemical Contamination

The growing body of scientific research on chemical contamination exposes a sobering picture. Wherever scientists look- the tropics, marine systems, industrial regions, the Arctic- they find the impacts of our toxic chemicals.

Widespread Contamination

Man-made chemicals are in use all around us- from pesticides to cosmetics and baby bottles to computers- our 21st century society depends on them. During their manufacture and use, chemicals are released into the environment. They can travel vast distances by air or water and are also absorbed by wildlife and humans through the skin or ingested in food and water. What chemicals are used in your daily life? Hazardous man-made chemicals have contaminated every environment, and wildlife- including birds, polar bears, frogs, alligators and panthers- is known to be suffering.

And up to 300 man-made have been found in humans.

Harmful Properties

There is particular concern about 3 types of chemicals in use today.

These are:

- Very persistent and very bioaccumulative chemicals which break down slowly or not at all, and accumulate in the bodies of wildlife and people
- Endocrine disrupting chemicals (EDCs) which interfere with the hormone systems of animals and people
- Chemicals which cause cancer, reproductive problems, or damage DNA