

Assessing Your Daily Risks: Reasonable, Rational & Responsible

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Why assess your daily risks??? – Taking precautionary

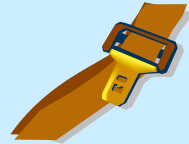
We each “err on the side of caution” as we get up in the morning and go about our daily life. We undertake the process of assessing our smaller daily risks without giving it a second thought (e.g. adjust temperature of shower water, wearing a bicycle helmet or car seat belt). But maybe we each should take more of an active role in assessing the risks for larger issues within our lives. Beneficial and hazardous chemicals are in personal care and cosmetic products, in the fish/seafood we eat each week, and in air we breath.

Human & Environmental Health

“Conditions that ensure that all living things have the best opportunity to reach and maintain their full genetic potential.”

Precautionary Principle

“When an activity raises threats of harm to human health or the environment, precautionary measures should be taken even if some cause and effect relationships are not fully established scientifically.”
Wingspread Conference, 1998



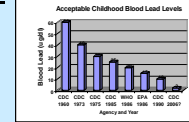
Lessons Learned:

- ❖ Lead
- ❖ Mercury
- ❖ PBDEs
- ❖ PBTs
- ❖ Alcohol
- ❖ PCBs



Lead Lessons

**“Lead Makes
the Mind Give
Way” 200 BCE**



What action can you take?

Taking Action -- Seattle / King County Issues

Look at each potential risk in your daily life with the reasonable, rational and responsible methodology in mind.

Start talking to others about how you assess your risks and the precautionary principle. Don't be afraid, this is the land of opportunity and freedom of speech.

Join & assist the Seattle Precautionary Principle Working Group (www.iceh.org)

Taking Action -- Internationally

Australia: The Queensland Environmental Protection Agency wrote the principles and theories of the Precautionary Principle into its Environmental Protection Legislation. Consultants, lawyers, government officials must keep these legislative requirements in mind when operating within the state of Queensland.

Europe REACH: (Registration, Evaluation and Authorization of Chemicals) Enacted in Europe to require testing of high production volume chemicals.

References:

Precautionary Tools for Reshaping Environmental Policy. Ed. By Nancy J. Myers and Carolyn Rafensperger. MIT Press, 2006.
The Science and Environmental Health Network (SEHN) (www.sehn.org).
Late lessons from early warnings: the precautionary principle 1896-2000 – European Environment Agency, 2001.
Ethical, legal, and social issues: our children's future. Steven G. Gilbert. Neurotoxicology, 26(4), pp 521-530, 2005.
A Small Dose of Toxicology (www.asmalldoseof.org).

How to assess your risks? Ask yourself whether the risks you are about to take are:

Reasonable - Able to discourse or discuss matters

- Comprehensive and inclusive decision making approach
- Brings stakeholders together
- Emphasizes prevention rather than treatment
- Encourages sharing of information
- Considers future generations of humans and other species

Rational - Having the faculty of reasoning

- Decisions based on scientific knowledge and experience
- We have the knowledge and experience to prevent harm to future generations
- Uncertainty is not a reason to delay action to ensure human and environmental health

Responsible - Morally accountable for one's actions

- Ethical responsibility and duty to prevent harm
- Responsibility to promote human and environmental health
- The proponents of an action are responsible for demonstrating safety



(Aldo Leopold - 1887-1948)

"A thing is right when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability, and beauty of the biotic community. It is wrong when it tends otherwise." – Aldo Leopold, 1949, A Sand County Almanac

