

A weekly electronic news service on ozone protection & related issues compiled by:
UNEP DTIE OzonAction Programme
26 February 2001

Table of Contents:

- 1. Canadian Satellite Instrument to Probe Thinning of Arctic Ozone Layer
- 2. Mafia Cashes in on Trade in Toxic Chemicals Refrigerants are Hot Commodity on the Black Market
- 3. UV Sun Protective Clothing
- 4. Refrigeration Industry Creates Leadership through Environmental Responsibility Program for Ozone Layer Protection
- 5. Abu Dhabi Sets up Network to Monitor Environment

1. Canadian Satellite Instrument to Probe Thinning of Arctic Ozone Layer

TORONTO, Feb. 20 /CNW/ - Environment Canada scientists are developing a new instrument to study the severe thinning of the ozone layer over the Arctic which occurs during the late winter and early spring. The instrument will fly on board a new Canadian science satellite, which will be launched in 2002 by the Canadian Space Agency. Scientists from Environment Canada's Meteorological Service of Canada, the Canadian Space Agency and the Universities of Toronto and Waterloo will discuss the project, provide an update on the state of the ozone layer, and demonstrate the new ozone-measuring instrument and other recent scientific technology.

Ozone depletions of up to 45% have been observed over the Arctic during the 1990s. Considerable action has been taken to reduce the chemicals that are damaging the ozone layer. However, the ozone layer in the Arctic is not recovering as expected. Scientists suspect that other factors, such as climate change, could also be affecting the ozone layer. This satellite research will help scientists gain a better understanding of the situation.

Full Text @: http://www.newswire.ca/releases/February2001/20/c5119.html

Source: Canada NewsWire, 22 February 2001

Contact: Heather Mackey, Environment Canada Communications, (416) 739-4766

2. Mafia Cashes in on Trade in Toxic Chemicals - Refrigerants are Hot Commodity on the Black Market

When the modern Mafia puts someone on ice, they're not just talking about murder any more. They might be referring to the black-market trade in refrigerator coolants.

That's right: Chlorofluorocarbons -- the chemical cooling agents that destroy the ozone layer -- are hot commodities on the black market. And organized crime is involved in importing and trading the chemicals, also known as CFCs, in Canada and the U.S.

"The big market takes organized people who can camouflage it among legal materials, people who can make sure it won't be inspected at the border," said Yvan Lafleur, head of enforcement for Environment Canada. "It's like drugs. It's like everything else criminal gangs are involved in."

Full article @: http://www.ottawacitizen.com/national/010210/5150958.html Source: The Ottawa Citizen Online, by: Kate Jaimet, 10 February 2001,

3. UV Sun Protective Clothing

Higgins Industries, Inc. announces the development of an UV sun protective clothing process called "BFX". Certified and tested by International UV Testing Laboratories at Auburn University, this BFX process has received a 50+UPF rating, the highest International rating level available.

A spokesperson for Higgins Industries has said that "before there was fashion, clothing had a utilitarian purpose. In this new millennium the protective quality of our clothing has become increasingly more important, particularly with the dramatic increase of skin cancer."

It is estimated this year that in the United States, Melanoma cases will reach 47,700 with deaths of 7,700. It is the fastest growing of all cancers, and among all accidental deaths it has experienced the largest percentage of increase from 1986 -1996, 22%.

Textiles treated with the BFX protection block 98%-99% of the sun's harmful UVA & UVB rays.

Tom Higgins, of Higgins Industries, has expressed his concern about the depletion of the ozone layer and has said, "it is a small price to pay for such an important protection. If you consider that 80% of the harmful exposure occurs during our childhood, it is really important we get an educational message out to our youth of the importance of protecting themselves with sunscreens and the correct clothing."

Full Text @: http://www.bfxtextiles.com/press_releases/frameset_press_releases.htm

Source: Higgins Industries Press Release, 1/14/2001 Contact: Coleen, Email: coleen@bfxtextiles.com

4. Refrigeration Industry Creates Leadership through Environmental Responsibility Program for Ozone Layer Protection

TORONTO, Feb. 12 /CNW/ - Leading companies from the refrigeration and air conditioning industry today announced a new program that is expected to dramatically reduce the quantity of ozone-depleting chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) that are released into the atmosphere.

The industry-led initiative, organized through a new non-profit extended producer responsibility corporation called Refrigerant Management Canada (RMC) will see the safe and environmentally-responsible collection and disposal of CFC chemicals used in many large air conditioning and commercial refrigeration systems.

Full Text @: http://www.newswire.ca/releases/February2001/12/c2620.html

Source: Canada NewsWire, 12 February 2001

5. Abu Dhabi Sets up Network to Monitor Environment

A report released 9 Feb. 2001 by the Federal Environment Agency (FEA), showed that levels of dangerous pollutants and radiation in Abu Dhabi were well below approved international levels.

The Government of Abu Dhabi has established a system to monitor the environment, including three monitoring stations, to track regional radiation and pollution levels. Particular attention is given to gases harmful to the ozone layer.

In addition, the stations undertake checks and inspections to ensure that industrial facilities and factories are complying with government regulations governing the treatment and disposal of industrial wastes. Foodstuffs are also covered by the stations, both those that are exported and imported.

The FEA report also drew attention to the enlightened the enlightened and far-sighted directives of President H. H. Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan. These enabled the authorities in Abu Dhabi to provide financial and technical assistance to industrial sectors to help and encourage factories to recycle their chemical and industrial waste. This helped to minimise pollution and potentially dangerous landfill sites.

Source: WorldNews.com, By: George Diakou, 10 February 2001

 $\textbf{@:} \underline{\text{http://www.globalwarm.com/?action=display\&article=5699280\&template=globalwarm/ozone.txt\&index=recent}$

United Nations Environment Programme Division of Technology, Industry, and Economics (UNEP DTIE) OzonAction Programme is providing **OzoNews** as an internal information service to keep UNEP DTIE staff informed on current ozone depletion & related issues, to promote information exchange and stimulate discussion about ozone protection. The views expressed in articles written by external authors are the viewpoints of those authors and do not necessarily represent the policy or viewpoint of UNEP. Additionally, the citing of commercial products or services does not constitute endorsement of those products or services by UNEP.

If you have questions, comments, ideas for future articles, or you want to discontinue receiving this update, please contact: Mrs. Samira de Gobert, Tel. 0144371452 Email: sami.degobert@unep.fr

Prepared by: Samira de Gobert, *Research Assistant* Reviewer: Jim Curlin, *Information Officer*