

OZONews

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1. Michigan Man Indicted on Conspiracy, Illegal Monetary Transaction, False Statement Charges (USA)

On June 26, James M. Dolmetsch, of Livonia, MI, was indicted on charges that he conspired to violate the Clean Air Act, that he was involved in illegal monetary transactions, and that he made a false statement to criminal investigators. The defendant is alleged to have conspired with others to illegally import approximately 63,600 pounds of the banned chlorofluorocarbon refrigerant CFC-12 from Canada. The CFC-12 was then allegedly sold in the United States and the profits were allegedly deposited through illegal monetary transactions. The importation of CFC-12, which is used in the air conditioners of automobiles manufactured before 1994, is highly restricted in the United States under the Montreal Protocol, because the release of CFC-12 harms the earth's Ozone Layer which protects people from the harmful effects of ultraviolet light. These effects include skin cancer and cataracts. The case was investigated by EPA's Criminal Investigation Division and the U.S. Customs Service. It is being prosecuted by the U.S. Attorney's Office in Detroit. An indictment is merely an accusation and all defendants are presumed innocent unless or until proven guilty in a court of law.

Source: US EPA, Press release: R-120, 27 July 2001- **Contact:** Luke C. Hester 202-564-7818 / hester.luke@epa.gov

@: <http://yosemite.epa.gov/opa/admpress.nsf/b1ab9f485b098972852562e7004dc686/b899da13c6f0ec1f85256a96005fad7e?OpenDocument>

2. Drivers Face Costly Retrofit After CFC Ban (Canada)

Air conditioners of pre-1996 cars will need \$320 fix

Ontario will ban the use of chlorofluorocarbons in car and truck air conditioners to limit damage to the ozone layer, Environment Minister Elizabeth Witmer announced today. As of Jan. 1, 2002, cars made before 1996 will no longer be able to refill or recharge their air conditioners with coolant that contains the ozone-depleting substance known as CFC. "CFC-based refrigerants are some of the most ozone-depleting substances in existence," Witmer told a news conference. "If you ran your CFC-filled air conditioner on an extremely hot and smoggy day you would, of course, be contributing to the problem." CFCs have not been produced in developed countries since 1995 and only one to five per cent of Ontario's five million cars will be affected by the ban. The older air conditioners release about one-tenth of the refrigerant charge into the atmosphere each year, damaging the earth's protective ozone layer. The cost to convert a vehicle's air conditioner to one that uses so-called ozone-friendly coolants will cost the owner about \$320. Witmer called the ban a "modest step" toward protecting the ozone.

Source: The star.com, 25 July 2001, from: Canadian Press

@: http://www.thestar.com/NASApp/cs/ContentServer?pagename=thestar/Layout/Article_Type

3. Sun, Sea and Plankton (UK)

Tiny floating sea plants could have a part to play in developing new suntan lotions. Researchers have found that phytoplanktons contain compounds that protect them against the sun's damaging rays, and they believe these could prove useful to the skincare industry. The thinning of the ozone layer means increased amounts of UV are reaching

the oceans. Researchers have found that some types of algae, including phytoplankton, are dying out as a result, but those protected by algal "sunscreens" tend to do well. "Because phytoplankton live in the surface of the sea they are at risk from the sun's damaging UV rays. These tiny plants have evolved over millions of years and have found a variety of ways to protect themselves, including the production of compounds that block out UV light," explains Carole Lewellyn, a marine chemist at Plymouth Marine Laboratory. The research team have identified the types and levels of compounds that protect phytoplankton from sun damage and are now working with Boots Company to develop the potential of these natural sunscreens for human skincare. Boots' Ed Galley says, "We are interested in these compounds because any products developed will be derived from a natural, renewable source." The findings are published in the Annual Report of the Natural Environment Research Council.

Source: Yahoo News UK & Ireland, 23 July 2001 @: <http://uk.news.yahoo.com/010723/103/bz14t.html>

4. Parasols Fake UV Protection Claims (China)

The Chinese Consumers' Association yesterday warned consumers to be on the lookout for shoddy parasols that might not protect the skin from ultraviolet rays effectively. Environmental pollution and human ignorance have thinned the ozone layer, threatening the health of people directly exposed to ultraviolet and other harmful rays. Consequently people have resorted to using sunglasses, umbrellas and sun protection cream to take the edge off the harmful rays contained in sunlight. Parasols have become a top choice for people wanting to avoid the sun. Almost every woman in China will take a parasol with her before venturing outdoors in the sun. The Chinese Consumers' Association, after receiving several complaints about the poor quality of some brands of parasols, have entrusted the testing of such products to the National Institute of Metrology. A total of 37 parasols, randomly purchased in department stores and supermarkets, were tested. All 37 of the parasols, produced by 24 different manufacturers, claimed that they "protect against ultraviolet rays." However, the test found that of the 37 samples, sold at between 37.5 yuan (US\$4.53) and 268 yuan (US\$32.37) each, seven had an Ultraviolet Protection Factor (UPF) value lower than 15. More surprisingly still was the fact that the UPF of three of the products was lower than 1. According to the association, only when the UPF value of a fabric is above 40 will it offer total shelter from harmful rays. When it is lower than 15, the parasol offers barely any protection at all for the human body. However, there is currently no national standard for ultraviolet protection products. In Europe, only textiles with a UPF above 30 are allowed to claim that they offer protection from ultraviolet rays. In the test, only 17 samples, accounting for 46 per cent of the total, met the European standard. Chinese parasol manufacturers need to improve their products if they are going to enter the European market, the association suggested.

Source: China Daily, 20 July 2001, By: JIN BAICHENG and ZHANG FENG, @: <http://www.chinadaily.net/cndy/2001-07-20/21341.html>

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If you have questions, comments, ideas for future articles, or you want to discontinue receiving this update, please contact: Mrs. Samira de Gobert, Tel. (+33) 1 44371452 Email: sami.degobert@unep.fr

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