

CONTENTS

EDITOR
Sheldon Novick

CONSULTING EDITOR
Virginia Brodine

SCIENTIFIC DIRECTOR
Kevin P. Shea

ASSOCIATE EDITOR
Julian McCaull

ASSISTANT EDITOR
Judith G. Meyer

BUSINESS MANAGER
Nancy Shea

ART DIRECTOR
Robert Charles Smith

NEWS EDITOR
Terri Aaronson

PHOTOGRAPH RESEARCH
Dianne Hocner

STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER
Daniel T. Magidson

ENVIRONMENT is published monthly except bimonthly January/February and July/August by the Committee for Environmental Information, 438 N. Skinker Boulevard, St. Louis, Missouri 63130.

An official publication of Scientists' Institute for Public Information.

Subscription rates are as follows: 1 year \$8.50, 2 years \$14.50, 3 years \$20.00, student \$6.00, foreign subscriptions \$1.50 per year additional. Additional information regarding bulk rates and overseas and air mail rates may be obtained from the Circulation Manager. Contributions are tax deductible. Checks may be made payable to ENVIRONMENT or Committee for Environmental Information. Subscription and change-of-address information should be addressed to Circulation Department, ENVIRONMENT, Post Office Box 755, Bridgeton, Missouri 63044. Allow two months for changes of address.

Indexed in Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature beginning January 1968. Entitled SCIENTIST AND CITIZEN previous to the January-February 1969 issue. Microfilm copies available from Xerox University Microfilms, 300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48106. Back volumes (\$15.00 each) and back issues are available from Maxwell Reprint Company, Fairview Park, Elmsford, New York 10523.

Copyright 1971 Committee for Environmental Information. No portion of this magazine may be reproduced in any form without the express permission of the publishers. Editorial correspondence and manuscripts should be addressed to The Editor, ENVIRONMENT, 438 N. Skinker Blvd., St. Louis, Missouri 63130. Second-class postage paid at St. Louis, Missouri.

THE NEW-CAR SMELL

2

By Kevin P. Shea

Phthalates, a class of chemicals generically related to thalidomide, are used to make common plastics soft and flexible. These "plasticizers" evaporate from the plastic interiors of cars, creating the familiar "new-car smell." They and other plastic components have been implicated in the sometimes fatal shock-lung syndrome that follows massive blood transfusions; in laboratory experiments they have affected the nervous system and fetal development of animals; and, as usual, no one knows the effects of exposing millions of people to their vapors.

THE POLLUTION OF ASIA

10

By M. Taghi Farvar, Margaret L. Thomas, Howard Boksenbaum, and Theodore N. Soule

Asian students recently met with Western scientists and found serious disagreements over environmental problems and their causes in Asia. Westerners recommend slowing population and even economic growth, while Asian students and officials emphasize the need for development; a few question the Western technology which lies at the crux of the dilemma.

METALS IN THE AIR

18

By Henry A. Schroeder

Twenty-two metals found in the air are derived principally from the burning of coal and oil; cadmium, nickel, and lead present real public health hazards. Nickel is present in coal, but is also added to gasoline, a practice which substantially increases the hazard from this toxic metal, which has been implicated in cancer of the lungs and respiratory tract.

ALDRIN AND DIELDRIN

33

By Charles F. Wurster

Two closely related pesticides which present a greater hazard to man and animals than DDT, which they resemble, are under consideration for removal from the market. They are highly resistant to breakdown, are distributed throughout the world, and are increasingly concentrated in food chains. Their effects range from the inhibition of photosynthesis at extremely low concentrations to induction of cancer in experimental animals.

DEPARTMENTS

SPECTRUM

25

LETTERS

46

REVIEWS

50

THE JAUNDICED EYE

53