

TITLE: *STATE OF THE EVIDENCE 2005-2006: What is the Connection Between the Environment and Breast Cancer?*

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INSTITUTIONS: The Breast Cancer Fund with Breast Cancer Action

WORK PERFORMED:

*State of the Evidence 2005-2006* summarizes the scientific evidence suggesting that exposure to radiation and synthetic chemicals in the environment are contributing to the breast cancer epidemic. This landmark document, now in its fourth edition, also:

- Highlights recent research linking chemical and radiation exposure to increased breast cancer risk.
- Recommends new directions for future research.
- Outlines a 10-part plan to act on the evidence and reduce the burden of chemicals in our environment and in our bodies, and reduce our exposure to radiation.

Since initial publication in 2002, *State of the Evidence* has been widely distributed to scientists, advocates, policy makers, the public and the media in the United States and Europe. This report served as a core document for participants at the first International Summit on Breast Cancer and the Environment, convened May 22-25, 2002 in Santa Cruz, California. Sponsored by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the University of California Berkeley School of Public Health, the Summit brought together more than 100 scientists, advocates and community representatives to create a new agenda for breast cancer research and public policy.

The policy recommendations in this document also led to three successful legislative campaigns in California. The legislation put forward as a result of the findings in *State of the Evidence* include quality assurance standards for radiologic equipment as a means to reduce radiation, disclosure of carcinogens and reproductive toxins in personal care products and a state-wide, community-based biomonitoring program. All three of these bills have been approved by the California State Legislature and are awaiting the governor's signature.

CONCLUSIONS:

It is not only possible but also essential, based on the existing scientific evidence, to initiate policy changes that will reduce exposure to chemicals and radiation.

At the same time, research into possible environmental causes of breast cancer must continue and expand, including studies on

- Timing of exposures to cancer causing chemicals and radiation (when are the periods that humans are most vulnerable to these exposures)
- The effect of multiple exposures and the synergistic effects of multiple exposures
- Chronic exposures (such as occupational exposures and secondhand smoke)
- Disparities in health outcomes and differences in exposures