

OZONews

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1- Recycling Firm Admits CFC Blunder (Japan)

Osaka - Kansai Recycle System Corp., based in Hirakata, Osaka Prefecture, illegally released into the atmosphere 300 kg of chlorofluoro-carbon gas stored in used air conditioners and refrigerators, the company admitted during a news conference Thursday. The firm was established in April by Sharp Corp., Mitsubishi Material Corp. and other home appliance makers to recycle air conditioners, refrigerators, televisions and washing machines. The move followed the introduction of the Home Appliances Recycling Law, under which manufacturers are required to recycle their products. The CFC gas, which is blamed for depleting the ozone layer and causing global warming, is usually stored in cylinders at Kansai Recycle before being dispatched to another firm that specializes in discarding the gas. But Kansai Recycle employees released the gas into the atmosphere three times -- in July, August and September -- due to a shortage of cylinders. "We are sorry for the misconduct at a time when global environmental problems are drawing attention," said Akira Murai, president of the company. "We will review our operation process and re-educate our employees on environmental issues to prevent a recurrence."

Article @: <http://www.japantimes.co.jp/cgi-bin/getarticle.pl5?nn20020301b5.htm>

Source: The Japan Times: 01 March 2002

2- Chilean Links Ozone Loss to Skin Ailments

Punta Arenas, Chile - Jaime Abarca works alone at the end of the world. He is the only dermatologist in Patagonian Chile, a wind-swept landscape where trees grow sideways and penguins frolic in icy waters. Those rare spring days when the sun blazes can bring fishermen into Abarca's office with nasty burns on their cheeks... This month, Abarca and two Chilean climatologists published a paper in American academic journal that documents what they believe are the first cases of skin ailments directly connected to the thinning of the ozone layer... when the winds die down and the clouds disappear, people start to shed their sweaters and hats. They might forget about the danger of getting burned by ultraviolet rays, despite a public notice system that warns people on days when the ozone is thinner than usual... A recent study by Chilean dermatologist Juan Honeyman found a 28% increase in conditions such as cheilitis -fissures around the mouth- over a seven-year period in the Punta Arenas region... the study found that UV radiation in southern Chile increased as much as 2.3 times on some days, because of the shifting of the ozone hole, overall sun exposure increased only 1% a year. People in Punta Arenas are still exposed to less UV light than residents of Washington, D.C., even with the thinning ozone layer... Abarca's findings confirm what local doctors have said for years. "People burn because they live in a culture where the sunburn has never been an everyday concern," said Jorge Barrientos, a pediatrician. "What keeps it from being an even more serious problem is that people spend so much time indoors." ...

Article @: <http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/world/la-000014939feb27.story>

Source: Los Angeles Times, 27 February 2002, By Hector Tobar, Times Staff Writer

3- Canadian Science & Technology Uncovering Details of Ozone Depletion

Saint-Hubert, Quebec, CNW - Marking its first anniversary in space, Canada's OSIRIS (Optical Spectrograph and InfraRed Imager System) instrument is performing excellently and collecting significant data relating to ozone depletion. OSIRIS was launched on board the Odin satellite on February 20, 2001, as part of a joint astronomy/aeronomy mission led by Sweden and involving Canada, France and Finland. "The OSIRIS instrument is a prime example of collaboration by Canadian government, industry and scientists on an issue of major concern to Canadians," said Marc Garneau, President of the Canadian Space Agency (CSA). "This innovative made-in-Canada

technology is being used by a team of Canadian and other Odin scientists internationally to provide important insights into ozone depletion." ... OSIRIS is providing a unique data set by producing maps of concentrations of ozone every 1.5 km above the earth; other satellites yield maps of the total amount of ozone above any point. From these profiles, it will be possible to obtain insights into how the ozone depletion is occurring rather than just where over the earth. Moreover, these altitude maps are produced daily, providing greater and more detailed data than previously possible. Work is in progress to confirm the new maps through detailed comparison with data collected by other ground- or space-based sensors that yield partial coverage of the earth's atmosphere. A map of ozone produced from OSIRIS data is available @: <http://www.space.gc.ca/osiris-data>

For further information: Monique Billette, Media Relations Officer, Canadian Space Agency, Tel (450) 926-4370, Fax: (450) 926-4352,

Email: Monique.Billette@space.gc.ca

Full Text @: <http://www.newswire.ca/releases/February2002/26/c5227.html>

Source: Canada NewsWire Ltd, 26 February 2002

4- A time to Think Seriously about People's Health (Bangladesh)

... According to the London-based Environmental Investigation Agency (EIA), a non-governmental organisation, the European Union continues to chum out 35,000 tons of CFCs every year for export to developing countries and for essential domestic uses such as inhalers for asthma sufferers. There are five production facilities located in Britain, Spain, Netherlands, Italy and Greece. While supplies to the domestic pharma-ceutical industry remain profitable, sales to developing countries account for 80 percent of production. This substantial production is permitted through what the EIA calls a "derogation in the Montreal Protocol," which allows countries to produce up to 15 percent of their 1986 figure. Technically the EU can still legally produce up to 140,000 tons of CFC each year. "Continued EU production for developing country markets is a nonsense. Failure to shut the remaining EU plants could create the contradictory situation of multilateral funding being provided to developing countries to reduce CFC output, while at the same time allowing the import of these chemicals from the EU - clearly a self-defeating exercise," says an EIA report...

Full text @: <http://independent-bangladesh.com/news/mar/01/01032002pd.htm#A2>

Source: The Independent Internet Edition, Bangladesh, 01 March 2002, By: Shakeel Ahmed Ibne Mahmood

OzoNews is available on the OzonAction Programme web site @:

<http://www.uneptie.org/ozonaction/compliance/ozonews/main.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: samira.degobert@unep.fr

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