



## Kentucky Hospital Research & Education Foundation Emergency Preparedness Update for January 1, 2020

### **EPA scientific panel says some rollbacks of key air, water rules at odds with science**

(Reuters) A panel of scientific advisers, including several appointed by President Donald Trump, says some rollbacks of clean-air and vehicle rules proposed by the Environmental Protection Agency are based on weak scientific analysis and should be revised, according to draft reports published on Tuesday. The EPA's Science Advisory Board (SAB), which is tasked with providing independent input for agency policy, published four draft reports on the last day of the year analyzing the scientific underpinnings to the agency's proposed changes to clean-water, mercury, vehicle fuel-efficiency and scientific transparency regulations.

Read full story for details: <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-epa-science/epa-scientific-panel-says-some-rollbacks-of-key-air-water-rules-at-odds-with-science-idUSKBN1YZ1FA>

### **Woman gets \$10.5M after UofL Hospital left sponge inside her, leading to amputation**

(USA Today & Courier-Journal) A [jury has awarded \\$10.5 million](#) to a woman who had to have her leg amputated after University of Louisville Hospital personnel left a sponge inside her during heart surgery years earlier. The verdict included \$1 million in punitive damages and about \$8 million for pain and suffering for Carolyn Boerste, who was 54 when she underwent bypass surgery in 2011 and nurses left an 18-by-18-inch sponge inside her. James "Bo" Bolus and Nick Mudd, who represented Boerste, called the case a "tragedy of errors" by five medical providers.

Full story: <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/health/2019/12/31/verdict-against-university-of-louisville-hospital-sponge/2784610001/>

### **Pharmacies leave customers hanging when it comes to disposing of antibiotics and opioids**

Proper disposal of leftover medication, particularly antibiotics and opioids, can help reduce antibiotic resistance, prevent children from being poisoned and stop the misuse of addiction-forming drugs. But a [telephone survey](#) conducted by researchers at UC San Francisco found that fewer than half of California pharmacies provided disposal instructions meeting U.S. Food and Drug Administration guidelines, and just 10 percent followed the FDA's preferred recommendation to take back unused medications from their customers.

In the absence of a takeback program, the FDA says antibiotics should be mixed with an unpalatable substance, such as coffee grounds or kitty litter, and disposed of in a sealed container in the trash to keep them from getting into the water supply or inadvertently ingested. The FDA recommends that opioids be flushed down a toilet, since people may otherwise find and accidentally ingest or intentionally abuse them, even when they've been mixed with an unpalatable substance and thrown into the trash.

Overall, just 47 percent of pharmacies gave the correct instructions on how to dispose of antibiotics, and only 34 percent gave correct instructions for opioids.

Read story: <https://news360.com/article/516661905>

### **Secretary of State Grimes launches new notary portal to conform with new 2019 legislation**

(KyForward News) Secretary of State Alison Lundergan Grimes has announced the launch of a new online notary portal on [sos.ky.gov](https://sos.ky.gov). The announcement follows passage of 2019 legislation championed by Grimes and sponsored by Sen. Morgan McGarvey (D-Louisville) to bring Kentucky's notary laws into conformity with the Revised Uniform Law on Notarial Acts ("RULONA").

The new law ([Senate Bill 114](#)) allows county clerks to record real estate deeds, mortgages and other documents electronically and notarize documents electronically and remotely via audio visual technology.

The Secretary of State's Office will continue to process all notary applications both on paper and online and will continue to notify notary applicants of their appointment by postcard. Postcards will no

longer be mailed to county clerks, eliminating the need for county clerks to return certificates that are not issued. The new law will go into effect on January 1.

Full story: <https://www.kyforward.com/secretary-of-state-grimes-launches-new-notary-portal-to-conform-with-2019-passage-of-legislation/>

Link to SB 114: <https://apps.legislature.ky.gov/recorddocuments/bill/19RS/sb114/bill.pdf>

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**Trump signs bill to help eliminate backlog in rape kit testing**

Read more: <https://abcn.ws/37nKEfL>  
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**Eye injuries from laundry pods rising in U.S.**

A growing number of kids are getting chemicals from laundry detergent pods in their eyes, even as ocular injuries from other types of household cleaners steadily decline, a U.S. study suggests. Nationwide, poison control centers received 319,508 calls from 2000 to 2016 about people getting household cleaning products in their eyes, an average of 18,795 calls a year, researchers report in the journal Eye.

Overall, the annual frequency of these calls declined by 29% during the study period. But annual calls related to laundry detergent pods surged 1,960% from 2012, when they first hit the market, through the end of 2016.

Despite decades of efforts to improve child-resistant packaging, kids made up the vast majority of eye injuries from things like laundry pods, dish soap, glass cleaners, bleach and disinfectants. For every 100,000 U.S. residents, 28.4 kids under age 6 got household cleaning products in their eyes each year, compared with 4.2 teens and adults. The highest exposure was among 2-year-olds, with 62.8 cases for every 100,000 residents.

Full story: <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-eyes-poison/eye-injuries-from-laundry-pods-rising-in-u-s-idUSKBN1YY1AW>

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**A plateful of plastic: Visualizing the microplastic we consume**

Microscopic pieces of plastic have been discovered in the most remote locations, from the depths of the ocean to Arctic ice - and in our bodies as we breathe in and eat microplastic, and drink plastic-infused water every day. *People could be ingesting the equivalent of a credit card of plastic a week*, a recent study by WWF International concluded, mainly in drinking water but also via food like shellfish, which tend to be eaten whole so the plastic in their digestive systems is also consumed.

Full story: <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-environment-plastic-diet-graphic/a-plateful-of-plastic-visualizing-the-microplastic-we-consume-idUSKBN1YZ08H>

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**Ramen noodles recalled due to listeria concerns**

learn more: <https://www.lex18.com/news/national/ramen-noodles-recalled-due-to-listeria-concerns>  
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**Cell Phone-Linked Head and Neck Injury Spike Is Cause for Concern**

*Education about dangers of using a cell phone while performing other activities is key, experts say*

Full story: <https://www.medpagetoday.org/emergencymedicine/emergencymedicine/84150>  
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**Shaping the 2020 National Vaccine Plan**

*(Health Affairs blog)* The National Vaccine Plan is intended to be a comprehensive framework that guides national efforts of federal, state, local, multinational, and non-governmental partners to improve access to and increase uptake of vaccines, as well as continued development of new and improved vaccines.

Read more: <https://www.healthaffairs.org/doi/10.1377/hblog20191212.484779/full/>  
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**Widespread Blood Shortages Threaten Global Public Health**

*(JAMA)* More than 100 countries worldwide lack adequate blood supplies to meet medical needs, according to a modeling study by scientists from the University of Washington. The scientists estimated a worldwide demand of about 305 million units but only about 272 million units were available in 2017. Among 195 countries studied, 119 countries with inadequate blood supplies had a collective shortage of about 102 million units.

The need for blood varied greatly from country to country. Higher income countries with more transfusions for injuries or chronic diseases had greater demands for blood than lower income countries where infectious diseases, respiratory illness, or nutritional deficiencies were more common reasons for transfusions. Even so, most high-income countries had sufficient supplies while many lower-income countries fell short. South Sudan had the smallest supply with only 46 blood products per 100 000 despite an estimated need of 3537 per 100 000, according to a [news release](#).

To meet the estimated demand for blood, all countries would have to exceed the current WHO recommendations of 10 to 20 donations per 1000 people assuming 1.5 units per donation. In fact, the authors found that 40 countries would need 30 donations per 1000 and 4 Eastern European countries would require 40 per 1000.

Full story: <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jama/fullarticle/2757592>

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**U.S. Army Bans Soldiers from Using TikTok**

The Chinese app “is considered a cyber threat,” an Army spokeswoman said Monday. The Army’s decision follows similar action by the U.S. Navy earlier this month. Senior leaders there ordered the removal of TikTok from government-issued phones as part of an effort to “address existing and emerging threats.”

Read more: [https://www.huffpost.com/entry/us-army-bans-tiktok-security-threat\\_n\\_5e0a6ec5c5b6b5a713b2c401?ncid=APPLENEWS00001](https://www.huffpost.com/entry/us-army-bans-tiktok-security-threat_n_5e0a6ec5c5b6b5a713b2c401?ncid=APPLENEWS00001)

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**[FBI says Russian FaceApp is 'potential counterintelligence threat'](#)**

The Federal Bureau of Investigation considers any mobile app developed in Russia to be a "potential counterintelligence threat," it said on Monday, responding to a U.S. lawmaker's query about face-editing photo app FaceApp.

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**[Microsoft says North Korea-linked hackers stole sensitive information](#)**

Microsoft Corp said on Monday it has taken control of web domains which were used by a hacking group called "Thallium" to steal information.

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**California Rings In The New Year With A New Data Privacy Law**

(KQED & NPR) On Jan. 1, the toughest data privacy law in the U.S. goes into effect: the California Consumer Privacy Act, or CCPA. That's why you're seeing a host of emails pop up in your inbox from various companies announcing updates to their terms of service, particularly their privacy policies. With no similar federal law on the horizon, this one is expected to set the standard nationally for some time to come. So what does it mandate? Listen to podcast or read full story:

<https://www.npr.org/2019/12/30/791190150/california-rings-in-the-new-year-with-a-new-data-privacy-law>

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**Rigid Structures, Evolving Threat:**

**Preventing the Proliferation and Use of Chemical Weapons**

(CSIS) Chemical weapons (CW) are back. Since 2012, the growing number and types of CW uses have increasingly challenged the anti-CW regime. Furthermore, the shifting security environment has revealed emerging challenges to and increased pressure points on the system of restraint, which shapes nations’ behavior and encourages restraint through several different, often mutually reinforcing mechanisms: taboos, lack of benefit, norms, and deterrence.

This [Center for Strategic and international Studies](#) report examines the evolving and changing nature of chemical weapons and how the system of restraint must adapt to ensure that the proliferation and use of chemical weapons do not reemerge as endemic features of the global security landscape. The study provides a framework for structuring the problem, identifies gaps and challenges, and puts forward options for improving the global effort to prevent the proliferation and use of these weapons.

Link to summary and report download: [https://csis-prod.s3.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/publication/191218\\_Hersman\\_RigidStructures\\_WEB.pdf?LHDLRedZ2X3eEhGwYz7Ko8IXzSs1hEEO](https://csis-prod.s3.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/publication/191218_Hersman_RigidStructures_WEB.pdf?LHDLRedZ2X3eEhGwYz7Ko8IXzSs1hEEO)

**ASSESSMENT 2020**

**TAKE THE ASSESSMENT  
JUNE - SEPTEMBER 2020**

**PedsReady.org**

Supported by:

**Will your ED be Ped-Ready in 2020?  
New survey coming June, 2020**

Resources \* info: <https://emscimprovement.center/domains/hospital-based-care/pediatric-readiness-project/readiness-toolkit/guidelines-equipment-supplies-and-medications-care-pediatric-patients-ed/>

Here are the Guidelines from AAP:

<https://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/pediatrics/142/5/e20182459.full.pdf>

Checklist to refer to: <https://emscimprovement.center/documents/61/checklist2125.pdf>

Here is the Survey Assessment Tool - to help you get ready:

[https://emscimprovement.center/documents/699/NPRP\\_Assessment\\_Sept\\_17\\_2019.pdf](https://emscimprovement.center/documents/699/NPRP_Assessment_Sept_17_2019.pdf)

The KHREF Emergency Preparedness Update is assembled several times a week. When events make it necessary, the Update may be sent out several times a day to keep our hospital and the healthcare community advised on preparedness news and information. Most of this information is compiled from open sources, and where possible reference links will be provided. There is an archive of [Emergency Preparedness Updates available here](#). If you would like to added or deleted, or have something you would like to contribute to a future edition of the Emergency Preparedness Update, please contact [rbartlett@kyha.com](mailto:rbartlett@kyha.com) (include your current email address). The preparedness program for the Kentucky Hospital Association (KHA) and KHREF are supported by US DHHS ASPR HPP funds through a contract with Kentucky Public Health.