

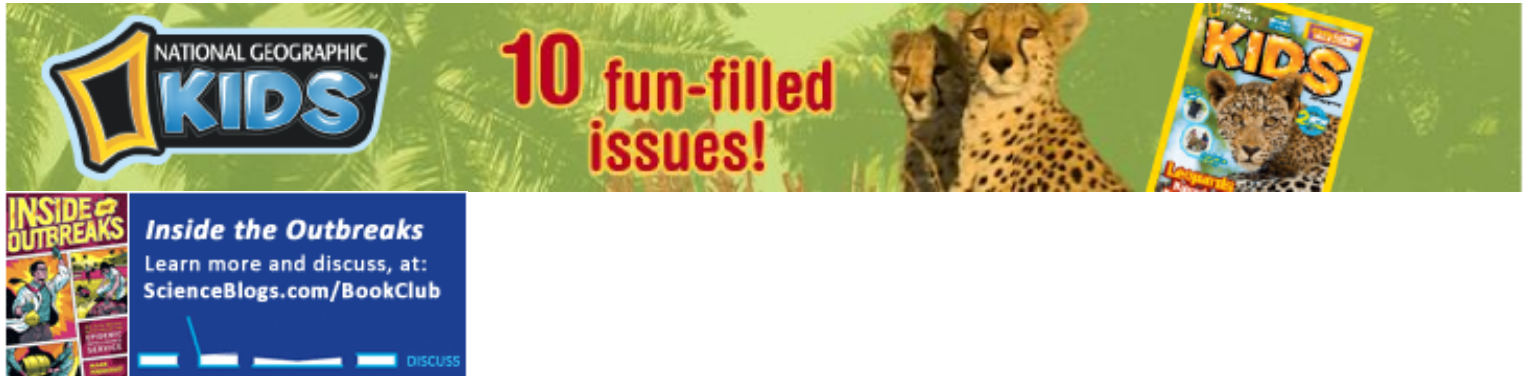


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Now on ScienceBlogs: [update: The Dr. Oz show on plant genetics will air Tuesday Dec 7.](#)



The advertisement features the National Geographic Kids logo on the left, with the text "10 fun-filled issues!" in large red font in the center. To the right is a cover of a National Geographic Kids magazine featuring cheetahs. Below the main text is a blue box with the text "Inside the Outbreaks" and "Learn more and discuss, at: ScienceBlogs.com/BookClub". At the bottom of the blue box is a "DISCUSS" button.

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### Profile



Liz Borkowski is a Research Associate at the George Washington University School of Public Health's Department of Environmental and Occupational Health. She lives in Washington, DC and loves public transportation and pumpkin empanadas.



Celeste Monforton, DrPH, MPH is a Professorial Lecturer at the George Washington University School of Public Health's Department of Environmental and Occupational Health. She also spent a decade working for the US Department of Labor, served on the team investigating the Sago Mine Disaster for the state of West Virginia, and is currently on the state's team investigating the Upper Big Branch Mine Disaster.

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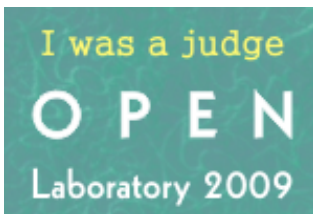
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## Occupational Health News Roundup

Category: [Confined Space @ TPH](#) • [Occupational Health & Safety](#)

Posted on: October 25, 2010 4:55 PM, by [Liz Borkowski](#)

The "Brazilian Blowout" is a popular treatment administered by salons to smooth their clients' hair. [The Oregonian's Katy Muldoon](#) explores the experience of one hairstylist who worried about the effects of the chemicals contained in the treatment.

After a few months of administering Brazilian Blowouts, Portland hairstylist Molly Scrutton began experiencing throat and chest pain. When she and salon owner Pauline Steiner called the treatment's distributor, the company refused to tell them what the ingredients were -- so Scrutton decided to stop offering the service. She wrote a memo to her salon co-workers about her concerns, and they all stopped providing Brazilian Blowout treatment, too. Muldoon explains how Scrutton went on to investigate what was in the products -- which resulted in both US and Canadian officials getting involved:

Concerned for stylists elsewhere, who are exposed to the product far more often than customers, Scrutton didn't stop. She asked a client who researches formaldehyde at Oregon Health & Science University for advice. The client put her in touch with Dede Montgomery, an occupational safety and health specialist and certified industrial hygienist at OHSU's Center for Research on Occupational and Environmental Toxicology.

Montgomery visited the salon where Scrutton works, collected a sample of Brazilian Blowout, and delivered it to OSHA's Portland lab. A couple weeks later, Montgomery collected a sample from a second salon; OSHA gathered a third sample in September.

OSHA, the agency responsible for workplace safety and health, issued an alert warning Sept. 30 that samples of Brazilian Blowout and Acai Professional Smoothing Solution, which is sold by the same company, contained high levels of formaldehyde. A variety of testing methods showed samples containing between 4.85 percent and 10.6 percent formaldehyde. When Canada's health agency tested Brazilian Blowout, it found 12 percent formaldehyde.

OSHA requires manufacturers whose products are used in workplaces and that contain more than 0.1 percent formaldehyde to list the chemical and to address safe work practices on the material safety data sheet with the product.

Muldoon explains that Brazilian Blowout "blasted OSHA's test results" and ran its own tests that found formaldehyde air levels to be within OSHA's limits, but it failed to return The Oregonian's phone calls. The company's website had previously claimed the products were formaldehyde free -- and Scrutton says she's glad authorities are investigating after that claim deceived her and others.

In other news:

[Telegraph](#): In Zambia's Sinzongwe province, managers opened fire on Collum coal mine workers protesting poor pay and working conditions; 11 workers were hospitalized with injuries. The two supervisors arrested for the shooting were Chinese, and the incident has added strength to demands to restrict Chinese investment in Zambian mines.

[AOL News](#): Six months after the explosion of the Deepwater Horizon oil rig, the families of the eleven workers killed by the blast are still mourning.

[Fair Warning](#): In slightly more than two years, California authorities have investigated three workplace deaths in the solar installation industry. Solar installation work combines roofing, carpentry, and electrical work, all of which pose safety risks that must be addressed.

[The Coloradoan](#): Multiple employees of wind turbine manufacturer Vestas Wind Systems have complained that exposure to epoxy resin has caused them painful skin conditions, and some say the company fired them because they developed dermatitis. OSHA has cited the company's Windsor, Colorado plant for violations related to the chemicals.

[New York Times](#): A culture of self-sacrifice can discourage healthcare providers from taking sick days, but staying home can be the best option for the health of workers and patients.

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1

It's worth remembering that Formaldehyde also has a number of 'close relative' chemicals that can be used in hair straightening products manufactured in the USA.

I tracked down a bunch of them while I was researching a product to buy myself online. I posted them on my blog - [brazilfabulous.com](http://brazilfabulous.com) if anyone's interested.

It's a shame this issue came up and that the company in question flouted the law. The product itself, is fantastic, and it is possible to buy Formaldehyde free products that are just as good.

You just have to be careful...

Thanks for your advice.

BB

Posted by: [Bella Blu](#) | [October 26, 2010 1:40 AM](#)

2

There's a really great website; very informal and always up-to-date with the latest regarding the Brazilian Blowout.

<http://www.cleanairmadesimple.com>

I found it answered a lot of my questions and I think it will provide plenty answers for those who either perform or are interested in receiving the treatment.

Posted by: Lance | [October 27, 2010 5:03 PM](#)

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