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Dear Colleague:

If you weren't able to join us at **Annual Session** in Philadelphia, you missed one of the ADA's better meetings in recent years. Registration was just shy of 30,000 attendees at 29,812, of whom 9,114 were dentists. We also were successful in attracting non-members. In 2004, we had only 59 non-members register for Orlando, but that soared to 908 in Philly. Also, the exhibition hall was completely sold out, with 629 companies exhibiting in 1,580 booths. The Distinguished Speaker Series on Friday and Saturday of the meeting was especially well-received, with Colin Powell speaking the first day and Katie Couric the second. Plan to join us in Las Vegas next Oct. 16–19 for the world's best dental exhibits and another slate of inspiring speakers.

The *Time* magazine article on **fluoridation of public water** that we noted last month appeared in the magazine's Oct. 24 issue. The story is available on [Time's Web site](#). We alerted dentists about the article via an e-Gram last month listing ADA resources. The story focuses on and addresses the pros and cons of recent controversies, including the ongoing battle for community water fluoridation in Bellingham, WA. We also developed a response to the magazine's "Letters" section.

When state or local authorities move to regulate **dental wastewater**, the ADA always tries to avoid regulations with numeric limits on how much mercury may be discharged to a sewer system. The problem with numeric limits is they require sampling to confirm compliance or noncompliance. But as we've repeatedly said to EPA, sampling is expensive and, given how episodic dental office discharges are, unreliable for us. While EPA recognizes these problems, they recently amended some rules to make explicit that best management practices may be used by local authorities instead of numeric limits (and sampling). One example of a situation for which BMPs would be appropriate instead of numeric limits, according to EPA, is dental offices and discharges of amalgam. The recent EPA action confirms prior informal guidance and should help dispel confusion by local wastewater

authorities, which may have believed numeric limits were the only regulatory option. EPA's action isn't mandatory; state and local authorities are merely being informed of options. Further, state and local authorities are free to define BMPs in a variety of ways. For example, while the ADA wastewater BMPs don't include separators, a state or local wastewater agency could include separators in its BMPs.

ADA staff attended an "**environmental roundtable**" discussion last month hosted by the SBA and attended by representatives of the EPA. We've tried in recent years to establish a working partnership with the EPA on wastewater issues and this meeting gave us another opportunity to make our case. We focused on our request for a common-sense national guidance on regulation of dental office wastewater.

Science in the News is a new ADA.org feature that provides timely information on scientific articles in the popular press. Recent topics include [Confirmed Cases of Avian Influenza in Europe](#) and [Study Suggests Link between Amoxicillin in Use During Infancy and Dental Fluorosis](#). Science in the News features offer a balanced analysis of recently published articles (in print and online), how the science may affect dentistry and how dentists can use the information. Each feature provides valuable informational resources, including links to relevant ADA.org pages, *JADA* and *ADA News* articles and external Web sites. The reviews will help ADA members keep up to date on what patients may be reading, provide dentists with a better understanding of the issues and enable them to address patient concerns or questions. Visit Science in the News on [ADA.org](#) to review the most recent features.

Disaster-related **SBA financial resources and information** are now on [ADA.org](#). The posting includes information on small business recovery loans and assistance. The SBA offers three types of financial assistance for individual or business recovery from a declared disaster: home and personal property disaster loans, physical disaster business loans and economic injury disaster loans. The SBA resources also include deadlines for the various forms of aid, which vary depending on the state, type of loan and storm. The SBA is working toward an across-the-board Jan. 11 application deadline but hasn't yet consolidated the various deadlines. The agency did recently extend the deadline to Jan. 11 for Louisiana and Mississippi businesses to apply for Physical Disaster Business Loans.

The Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection recently rejected an effort by the anti-amalgam group, Consumers for Dental Choice, to construe the state's **mercury reduction law** as a ban on dental amalgam. The same group has filed an administrative appeal from that decision. The ADA Legal Division is working closely with the Connecticut State Dental Assn. and our local counsel on this administrative appeal. A ruling is expected sometime next year.

ADA Past-President Richard Haught testified last month in Washington, DC, at NERB's meeting on the national **licensure exam** and its possible effect on access to care. He stressed that improving access to oral health care for populations in need is one of our top priorities and pointed out that we've begun to identify model programs and ideas that can serve as a blueprint to assist states and communities. He also cited that some 30 states now accept the results of more than one testing agency and that states are considering national clinical licensure exams. Instead of the 16 different exams that we had for so many years, we may have a minimum of three.

The ADA recently joined 57 of the nation's leading medical and scientific nonprofit publishers in a proposal to NIH Director Elias Zerhouni, MD, that would allow NIH to bring vast amounts of research findings to the public efficiently and at no cost. In a letter to Dr. Zerhouni, the group detailed a plan

that would allow NIH to provide online access to articles on their journal websites using the existing system of links from abstracts indexed on **NIH's Medline**. The transparent linking system would make it easier for the public to view more than one million research articles and avoid the need to create a new taxpayer-funded NIH publishing infrastructure. For the full story: http://www.eurekalert.org/pub_releases/2005-10/dp-lgo102505.php.

Health Volunteers Overseas tells us to watch for a six-part PBS series "**Rx for Survival—A Global Health Challenge**," premiering Nov. 1–3, which examines the most important emerging threats to public health. The series anchors the Rx for Survival Project, a global health media education project focusing on child survival. For the past 20 years, HVO has implemented clinical education and training programs in developing countries around the world, mentoring and fostering the potential of health care providers in less-developed nations. The ADA sponsors HVO and supports dental education programs in Cambodia, Moldova, Nicaragua and Vietnam to make a difference in the lives of others. In every country where HVO works, it also promotes and nurtures the health of children. To learn more about improving global health and promoting child survival, visit the [HVO Web site](#) or contact info@hvousa.org.

Sincerely,



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James B. Bramson, DDS, executive director

ADA. Update

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