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ABOUT FREE PINT

Free Pint is an online community of information researchers. Members receive this free newsletter every two weeks packed with tips on finding quality and reliable business information on the Internet.

Joining is free at <<http://www.freepint.com/>> and provides access to a substantial archive of articles, reviews, jobs & events, with answers to research questions and networking at the Free Pint Bar.

Please circulate this newsletter which is best read when printed out. To receive a fully formatted version as an attachment or a brief notification when it's online, visit <<http://www.freepint.com/member>>.

EDITORIAL

With all the travel difficulties we're experiencing here in London at the moment, I really did wonder how many people would make it to our Electronic Copyright Exchange last Thursday. The majority of the services we offer here at Free Pint don't require our patrons to physically move much more than their eyes and their hands (to read and possibly respond). So with 52 bookings for an afternoon workshop amid winter weather, tube delays, and with delegates coming from Europe by train and plane, I was a little concerned about how many would actually turn up.

As it turns out, the Free Pint community is a resilient and resourceful bunch of people. All but two made it to what was an extremely informative and enjoyable afternoon. It's a light, modern and airy venue, and from the feedback forms it was a timely topic. Thank you to the presenter and delegates for making it such an informative and interactive event.

Gary Price of ResourceShelf.com is over from the States in March for the Internet Librarian International conference and Total Library Solutions show in Birmingham. Since Free Pint is there too, we're nabbing him for a 'Search Tools Exchange' on March 27th in London. He'll cover the latest search engine news and features, will look at specialised research tools and gadgets, and share with us the forthcoming trends and developments he's picked up from his insider contacts at all the major search companies. It's going to be popular, so book early at <<http://www.freepint.com/exchange/st270303.htm>>.

It's also not too late to book a place on the forthcoming Exchanges on patent information, intranet management and governance, and deep linking and Website evaluation <<http://www.freepint.com/exchange/>>.

Today's Free Pint is as cosmopolitan as ever, with featured Web resources ranging from French business sites to toxicology and poisons databases. Don't forget to check out the fully formatted printable version of this edition which is freely available online at <<http://www.freepint.com/issues/200203.pdf>>.

Cheers
William

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ADVERTISERS -- post a vacancy and receive significant publicity and matching against 800+ stored job-seeker profiles.

Find out more today at [<http://www.freepint.com/jobs>](http://www.freepint.com/jobs)

As well as the selected listings below, check out the weekly Bar posting which lists the latest additions to Free Pint Jobs. This week's can be found at [<http://www.freepint.com/go/b22393>](http://www.freepint.com/go/b22393) and last week's at [<http://www.freepint.com/go/b22284>](http://www.freepint.com/go/b22284).

Here are some of the latest featured jobs:

Client Information Officer[<http://www.freepint.com/go/j2160>](http://www.freepint.com/go/j2160)

Records and people manager required by city law firm for varied and challenging role.

Recruiter: Recruit Media

Information Officer[<http://www.freepint.com/go/j2274>](http://www.freepint.com/go/j2274)

Take this opportunity to develop your online skills, especially using DataStream, as a member of this busy financial research team.

Recruiter: Sue Hill Recruitment

Research Executive[<http://www.freepint.com/go/j2295>](http://www.freepint.com/go/j2295)

Vacancy for information Research Exec to join award winning business information, research and tech company.

Recruiter: j4b plc

Senior Information Content Analyst[<http://www.freepint.com/go/j2296>](http://www.freepint.com/go/j2296)

Senior strategic role dealing with market data & content management for top financial services client. Very high neg. salary.

Recruiter: Glen Recruitment

Broadcast Media Co-ordinators x 2[<http://www.freepint.com/go/j2306>](http://www.freepint.com/go/j2306)

Records management, advice and guidance. Select material for retention in Document Archives to facilitate historical research.

Recruiter: BBC

[The above jobs are paid listings]

Find out more today at

[<http://www.freepint.com/jobs>](http://www.freepint.com/jobs)

10% Discount – World Retail Directory and Sourcebook

This month's feature title from Euromonitor, on which we've negotiated a 10% discount for Free Pinters, is the "World Retail Directory and Sourcebook":

[<http://www.freepint.com/shop/euromonitor>](http://www.freepint.com/shop/euromonitor)

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[<http://www.total-library.co.uk>](http://www.total-library.co.uk)

Free Pint Deep Linking & Website Evaluation Exchange

13th March 2003, Central London

"Looking at the question of how to measure the quality, credibility and trustworthiness of web sites; and minimizing the potential legal risks involved in 'deep linking'."

[<http://www.freepint.com/exchange>](http://www.freepint.com/exchange)

Free Pint Full Searchable

If you haven't tried the Free Pint search facility then it might be worth making a note it's available.

You can search the site (hundreds of articles and book reviews) or the Bar (thousands of research questions and answers):

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Keep up-to-date with the latest InfoPro news and resources

ResourceShelf is an invaluable tool for information professionals. It is free to access and is updated throughout the day, every day, with the latest resources and news of interest to infopros.

Sign up for the weekly Update email too and stay current: [<http://www.resourceshelf.com/>](http://www.resourceshelf.com/)

MY FAVOURITE TIPPLES from Susie Jones

Susie Jones is Marketing & Research Executive for At-Bristol
<<http://www.at-bristol.org.uk/>>, a science and natural history visitor attraction which also offers consultancy services.

Tell us about your favourite Web sites. Check out the guidelines at
<<http://www.freepint.com/author.htm>>, then email <penny@freepint.com>.

- BDS Sponsorship
<<http://www.sponsorship.co.uk/>> has a monthly online newsletter which keeps me up to date with corporate sponsorship activity UK and Europe-wide.
- The World Travel and Tourism Council
<<http://www.wttc.org/>> has detailed economic research on the tourism industry by country and by region.
- StarUK <<http://www.staruk.org.uk/>> has statistics and research on UK tourism.
- The Carlton Screen Advertising site
<http://www.carltonscreen.com/site/index.html> is a mine of information on the UK cinema industry and has a monthly email update.
- Museum Marketing Tips
<<http://www.museummarketingtips.com/>> is a friendly site with loads of great links for all people working in leisure industry marketing.

FREE PINT BAR In Association with Factiva a Dow Jones & Reuters Company

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<<http://www.freepint.com/bar>>.

If you're studying on an information-related course, then make the most of the Student Bar
<<http://www.freepint.com/student>>. Great for help with projects, career suggestions, etc. If you don't use it, you might lose it!

To get a digest of postings twice a week, modify your account online at
<<http://www.freepint.com/member>> or email
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Library + Information Show 2003 - Biggest + Best

LiS is the original, biggest + best event for all librarians and information professionals. Many of the 120+ exhibitors have chosen LiS to show case new products & services or demonstrate improvements to existing ones. Put this together with the comprehensive, free seminar programme and the opportunity for you to meet Roger McGough and Joanne Harris, spending a day at LiS will prove to be invaluable.
<<http://www.lishow.co.uk/pint>> 30th April + 1st May 2003, ExCeL, London

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<<http://www.factiva.com/infopro>>

EVENTS

<<http://www.freepint.com/events>>

Next week, Stephen Adams (Managing Director of Magister Ltd.) will be leading the Free Pint Patent Information Exchange
<<http://www.freepint.com/go/e173>>. The session aims to define some basic ideas about patents, demystify some of the legal jargon surrounding patent information, explain how patent documents come to be published and examine how some of the major databases process this information for the user.

Also at the new venue in London, the Free Pint Intranets Exchange will be presented by Paul Pedley on March 6th
<<http://www.freepint.com/go/e174>>. This session will look at "... planning a new intranet and implementing it in a global organisation; content management issues; using it for knowledge sharing and collaborative working; taxonomy/categorisation".

Practitioners, consultants, academics and government officials are invited along to the World eLearning Conference on the 9th - 12th February in Edinburgh.
<<http://www.freepint.com/go/e153>>.

On the 18th March the STN Chemical Biology Forum will be taking place in London
<<http://www.freepint.com/go/e176>>. "This event will provide an overview of STN's premier online databases including Chemical Abstracts, Derwent Drug File, Beilstein, FSTA and Agricola amongst others."

Submit details of your event today for free promotion. Simply complete the form at
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Penny <penny@freepint.com>

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TIPS ARTICLE

<<http://www.freepint.com/issues/200203.htm> - tips>

"France - Business and Economics Sources on the Web" By Michelle Romero

Michelle Romero is an independent business information specialist who has been living in Paris for the past three years. Her research specialties include, amongst other areas, the industries of wine, cheese, and skiing. She writes here in a personal capacity.

Business researchers seeking information about the business and economic climate in France are rewarded with a wealth of available information on the web, much of it free. This is due in part to an impressive public statistical system that provides access to data and analysis in both French and English across the spectrum of demographic, industrial, and regional information. Non-government sites, including those of major publishers, market research organizations and other information providers complete the picture.

But how many French resources contain documents in English? The answer is that it depends. Some sites link to a complete English version, some sites contain English versions of certain documents or datasets, or simply English titles and French full text. There are also French-only sites with buried documents in English. I've included some relevant sites here that are wholly in French. If your school French is not quite up to the challenge, the French/English Business Glossary <<http://www.e-anglais.com/ressources/glossary.html>> might come in handy. Adding to the research challenge is the French predilection for applying confusing acronyms to just about everything. So expect rewards and aggravation - not unlike life in the country itself! Herewith, a (non-exhaustive) survey of sites containing data or analysis relevant to researching French business and the economy.

Government information - Demographics and Economic Statistics

The French National Council for Statistical Information (CNIS) <<http://www.cnis.fr>> is the co-ordinating body for all government-produced and/or funded statistics in France. They are charged with the oversight of major projects like the census and other surveys, from conception to dissemination. They also guard against duplication of efforts across all the nation's statistics gathering bodies.

The main source for French statistics within the system is the National Institute for Statistics and Economic Studies (INSEE) <<http://www.insee.fr>>. They conduct the population census <<http://www.recensement.insee.fr>>, surveys of business, as well as the preparation of the consumer price index and National Accounts and other major indicators. Other searchable databases include France in Facts and Figures, and Profiles of French Regions. Many of the data series from INSEE are available in English, and historical series are available in PDF format.

Other major sources for economic and business statistics are the research units of relevant government ministries:

The Ministry of Social Affairs, Labour and Solidarity (DARES) <http://www.travail.gouv.fr/etranges/english_v.html> produces employment and labour market-related data

Free Pint Intranets Exchange

Central London, 6th March 2003

"Tips and issues in managing a global intranet, including planning a new intranet, implementing an intranet in a global organisation, content management issues, taxonomy and categorisation, and using the intranet for knowledge sharing and collaborative working."

<<http://www.freepint.com/exchange>>

<http://www.travail.gouv.fr/etudes/etudes_i.html> and offers articles from Work and Employment, a Ministry research journal.

The Ministry of Agriculture, Food, Fisheries and Rural Affairs (Agreste) <<http://www.agreste.agriculture.gouv.fr/>> provides statistics and research on agriculture, forestry, land use, facilities and the environment in rural areas.

The Ministry for the Infrastructure, Transport, Housing, Tourism and the Sea (DAEI-SES) <<http://www.equipement.gouv.fr/statistiques/>> includes downloadable data in spreadsheet format for a variety of data under its broad mandate. Search the drop-down menu under Domaines d'activite. This includes, for example, the tonnage of merchandise coming through France's ports, housing statistics by type in metres squared, airport usage statistics, and the holiday destinations of French tourists.

The Ministry of Economy, Finance and Industry (SESSI) <<http://www.minefi.gouv.fr>> features a Data and Surveys link to statistics for energy, commodities, and official foreign exchange reserves, among other data sets, and analyses of French industries.

To access other units within the government, consult the Service-Public Portal <<http://www.service-public.fr>>, a well-structured civil service directory in English.

La Documentation Francaise <<http://www.ladocumentationfrancaise.fr/>> serves as an ordering platform for research, journals, and other publications produced by the government and quasi-government organizations, similar to the UK Stationery Office or US GPO.

Government Information - Intellectual Property

The Institut National de la Propriete Industrielle (INPI) <<http://www.inpi.fr>>, which is administered by the Ministry of Economics, Finance and Industry, controls the domain of French intellectual property. This site features four searchable databases of trademarks, patents, designs, and companies registered in France.

Related Free Pint links:

- Resources for France in the Free Pint Portal <<http://www.freepint.com/go/c75>>
- Post a message to the author, Michelle Romero, or suggest further resources at the Free Pint Bar <<http://www.freepint.com/bar>>
- Read this article online, with activated hyperlinks <<http://www.freepint.com/issues/200203.htm#feature>>
- Access the entire archive of Free Pint content <http://www.freepint.com/portal/content/>

Trademarks

Use the IciMarques database <<http://www.icimarques.com>> to search by trademark holder, trademark name, or number and generate a list of registered trademarks. Fee-based full-text visualization is available.

Patents (Brevets)

Two years' worth of French, European and international patent applications in France are available through <<http://www.inpi.fr/brevet>>. Search by description, holder, or patent number.

Designs and Models

Search <<http://dm.inpi.fr/inpidm/>> by description, classification, or registrant for designs from the latest Bulletin Officiel de la Propriété Industrielle (BOPI). Updated every 15 days.

Registered Companies

Euridile <<http://www.euridile.inpi.fr>> can be considered the French equivalent to the UK's Companies House, and this database of 3 million business enterprises is searchable by company name, director name, address or registration number. Fee-based reports are available for order.

Economic Development

Invest in France Agency <<http://www.ifana.org>> is the government agency which promotes investment in France. Included on this site is data on key industries in France, a "Doing Business" guide providing basic procedural information, and quarterly reports featuring specific cases of corporate foreign direct investment in France, organized by industry. There's also a database of North American companies with operations in France, searchable by parent or subsidiary details. While this site focuses on North America, IIFA sites targeted to other countries are searchable from <<http://www.afii.fr/France/>>.

Business-in-europe.com <<http://www.business-in-europe.com>> is designed to help companies establish operations in France, and arranges links to relevant chambers of commerce and economic development agencies, organized by region and industry. It includes useful data repackaged from INSEE and AFII Invest in France.

Major press (French only)

Les Echos <<http://www.lesechos.fr>> is one of the premiere business journals, and from the main page you can find links to industry group profiles that lead to the "classements", or searchable company rankings within industries. The data is provided by the Coface Group <<http://www.cofacerating.fr>>, a rating and analysis firm, and the additional searchable industry rankings they provide on their own site are impressive (See the section "Les Chaines Eco France"). L'Expansion <<http://www.lexpansion.com>> is a weekly which features the annual French company ranking, "Les 1000". L'Entreprise <<http://www.lentreprise.com>> includes the

Willco's 'Business Information Group'

Free Pint's sister company Willco now provides the technology to many information-related organisations and individuals.

See them all together at BiG <<http://www.digbig.com>>.

annual "Les 100 Plus Belles Entreprises de France", a ranking of private companies.

Weekly news and current affairs magazines such as L'Express <<http://www.lexpress.fr>>, Le Point <<http://www.lepoint.fr>>, and Le Nouvelle Observateur <<http://permanent.nouvelobs.com>> are also valuable sources of data and analysis.

Company press releases are available on Company News <<http://financier.companynews.fr/>>, a subsidiary of French newswire L'Agence France Presse <<http://www.afp.fr>>.

Public Opinion and Market Research

Three major polling organizations in France are BVA: Institut d'Etudes de Marche et d'Opinion <<http://www.bva.fr>>; IFOP <<http://www.ifop.com>>; and CSA/TMO <<http://www.csa-fr.com>>. All three feature searchable archives of public opinion surveys on a wide variety of economic, political and societal issues. The CSA/TMO site features English titles organized chronologically.

A fee-based catalogue of market research reports concerning the French market and elsewhere can be found at PlusDetudes <<http://www.plusdetudes.com>>.

Company Directories

There are several searchable directories of French businesses. The Bottin directory <<http://www.bottin.fr>> provides basic contact details, company sales, trademarks, and a web address. Societe.com <<http://www.societe.com>> is searchable by name, address, director name, and trademark. It provides free key annual financials, corporate events and directors' names, and offers fee-based reports. The data is taken from Registre National du Commerce et des Societes (see Euridile, Intellectual Property.) France Telexport <<http://www.telexport.tm.fr>> is an importers and exporters directory produced by the French Chambers of Commerce and Industry. It is searchable by product category and activity, and provides contact details. ABC France <<http://www.abc-d.fr>> is a business-to-business directory, and is searchable by region and controlled product vocabulary in English. ABC also offers an export directory at <<http://www.france.abcxports.com>>.

Financial Markets

The Stock Exchange Commission (COB) <<http://www.cob.fr/cobgb/>> administers the Paris Stock Exchange (La Bourse) and provides

access in PDF format to its operational statistics, amongst other data. Paris Europlace <<http://www.paris-europlace.net>> is an organization that serves to promote Paris as a financial center. The site includes analysis and data relating to equity markets, fixed income markets, asset management, insurance and the economy in France and the Eurozone. Sites like Boursorama <<http://www.boursorama.com>> and Ramibourse <<http://www.ramibourse.fr>> offer up-to-the-minute quotes, indices and news.

Other Sources

Find French trade shows at Foires & Salons de France <<http://www.foiresalon.com>>.

Annual reports can be found at <<http://www.rapport-annuel.com>>, a site administered by CompanyNews.

For French law-related information, use the governmental portal Legifrance <<http://www.legifrance.gouv.fr>> for the constitution, codes, treaties and courts information.

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FREE PINT GOLD

Last year John Garside's tips article took a look at finding up-to-the-minute news stories and Helen Clegg's feature covered some useful US and UK Web resources with regards to setting up your own business.

- Free Pint No.106 21st February 2002. "Searching for 'The Daily Me'" and "So you want to start your own business? Web resources that every budding entrepreneur should consult before taking the plunge" <http://www.freepint.com/issues/210202.htm>

Paul Pedley covered economics sources two years ago, looking at: economics news, regional & international organisations and portals. Coincidentally, Helen Clegg "evaluated some useful websites aimed at promoting an understanding of Australia's indigenous people, their history and culture".

- * Free Pint No.81, 15th February 2001. "Economics sources" and "Aboriginal Australia on the World Wide Web" <http://www.freepint.com/issues/150201.htm>

In 2000 James Hatts wrote about politics and government on the Internet and Susan L. Gerhart "distinguished collecting from searching".

- Free Pint No.57, 17th February 2000. "UK Political & Government Web Sites" and "Topics and Collections: An Alternative Metaphor for Using the Web" <http://www.freepint.com/issues/170200.htm>

Four years ago, Micky Allen pointed us to some sites on environmental information, and Tim Owen "explained how the vision of a wired public library service turned into a fully costed blueprint".

- Free Pint No.32, 18th February 1999. "Environmental Information on the Internet" and "New Library: now comes the action" <http://www.freepint.com/issues/180299.htm>

In 1998, Tracy Griffin looked at a new type of search engine and Alison McNab's feature explained how to "manage the vast amount of data that crosses our desks and arrives in our mailboxes".

- Free Pint No.8, 19th February 1998. "A New Light on the Horizon" and "Current Awareness Research on the Internet" <http://www.freepint.com/issues/190298.htm>

Penny <penny@freepint.com>

FREE PINT BOOKSHELF<<http://www.freepint.com/bookshelf>>**"Getting and Staying Noticed on the Web:
Your Web Promotion Questions Answered"****Written by Phil Bradley****Reviewed by Sophie Graham**

Sophie Graham is
Manager of the
Information Centre at
Pfizer Pharmaceuticals
Group in Surrey,
responsible for setting
up and developing the
Information Centre
within the UK.

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To propose an information-related book for review, send details to
<bookshelf@freepint.com>.

This new book by Phil Bradley promises to answer all your web promotion questions, and in many ways, it does just that. In only fourteen chapters the author covers first steps, design issues, search engines, use of images, and much more to help develop and maintain an Internet site.

The style of the book is very informal, almost conversational and occasionally humorous. Reading it sequentially is not recommended and there is a tendency by the author to overuse! Exclamation!! Marks!!! which grated a little on this particular reader. Stylistic differences aside, there is lot to recommend the book: a clear and straightforward table of contents, suitable for dipping in and out of, and minimal use of jargon. However, a glossary would be a useful addition for complete novices.

The book is well laid out in a 'question and answer' format with helpful use of screen dumps and many references to relevant library or information professional sites. They would certainly prompt any reader to go and have a look at them to get some further ideas for their own projects. There is also a brief paragraph on the use of themes, such as Christmas, which is interesting and fun.

The author treats practical issues such as picture sizes on websites or deep linking with common sense (keep picture sizes small to keep download speeds of your site high). Useful references to search engine simulators (to check how a search engine might index your site) and other varied resources (such as the holiday themes website) would be very useful to follow up on. As the

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author is also an independent Internet consultant, there are a number of inevitable small plugs of his own work or website. The book concludes with a case study on the Free Pint Website, which rounds the text off well.

This book is useful for anyone thinking of setting up an Internet site and also for those of you who might like to revamp or know how to maintain your existing Internet site. Although it is very externally focused, many of the tips and guidance given by the author could equally be used for an intranet site.

Free Pint Forthcoming Articles

* Vendors * Selecting a Content Management System * Prospect Research * Scenario Planning * Children and the Internet * * Military History * Information Literacy in a Corporate Environment * Internet Resources on IT * Alternative Search Strategies * Systems Librarian * Charities * Radio *

If you have a suggestion for an article topic or would like to write for Free Pint then please contact
<penny@freepint.com> or sign up for the Author Update at <<http://www.freepint.com/author.htm>>.

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FEATURE ARTICLE

<<http://www.freepint.com/issues/200203.htm> - feature>

"Poisons, Potions and Toxins - Toxicology Sources on the Web"

By Teresa Loughbrough

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The book "Walkabout" is the story of 2 young American children stranded in the Australian outback after a plane crash. It quickly becomes clear to them that they need food in order to survive but wherever they look they can't find anything edible. Their luck changes when they meet a 13-year-old Aboriginal boy who is on a six month initiation test for manhood called a Walkabout. He of course knows what to eat and where to find it and how to survive in these seemingly harsh conditions. This story illustrates that it is crucial to have the right information on what is safe and what isn't. And that is the subject of this article, information on the toxicology and safety of substances.

"Toxicology is the study of the adverse effects of chemicals on living organisms" (Ref: "You and Toxicology" by H Bruno Schiefer, D Irvine & S Buzik 1986 Toxicology Research Centre, University of Saskatoon, Sask ISBN 0-88880-195-5).

This definition of toxicology helps us to focus on the 3 main concepts of a toxicology search. The first concept is Adverse Effects: the harmful effects caused by a substance can occur in many forms, ranging from immediate death to subtle changes not realised until months or even years later. They can also occur at various levels within the body, such as an organ, a type of cell or even a specific biochemical.

The second concept is Chemicals: people usually look for toxic effects caused by a particular chemical, family of chemicals, natural product or extract.

"All substances are poisons - the difference is in the dose". This quote is originally attributed to Paracelsus (1500 AD) who determined that specific chemicals were actually responsible for the toxicity of a plant or animal poison. Most substances are only considered to be poisonous or harmful depending on the dose received and the body's response to it. Small doses can be harmless or even beneficial whereas larger doses can be toxic and this dose-response relationship is an important aspect of the toxicity of a chemical. Physical agents such as radiation, noise, pressure and dust can cause toxic effects as well.

The third concept is Living Organisms: most of the time people are interested in the response of the human body to a particular chemical but scientific study on the response of other animals or in vitro studies can be useful in developing an understanding of the toxic profile of a substance.

So with these concepts in mind we can focus on particular websites in the area of toxicology.

General Toxicology and Hazardous Substances

If you need an introduction to Toxicology there is a good tutorial from the US National Library of

Medicine (NLM)

<<http://sis.nlm.nih.gov/Tox/ToxTutor.html>>. A number of American agencies also have toxicology information on their websites. The National Toxicology Program <<http://ntp-server.niehs.nih.gov/>> has factsheets about specific aspects of toxicology and results of the toxicity studies it undertakes for specific chemicals. The EPA has a Pollutants/Toxic topics page <<http://www.epa.gov/ebtpages/pollutants.html>>, which includes information on toxic substances. The ATSDR (Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry) has a CERCLA list <<http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/clist.html>>, which is published on a biannual basis. This list contains substances which are considered to be a threat to human health due to their frequency, toxicity and potential for human exposure. The Carcinogenic Potency Project <<http://potency.berkeley.edu/cpdb.html>> is a database on the results of chronic, long-term animal cancer tests.

Toxicology Databases

TOXNET <<http://toxnet.nlm.nih.gov/>> is one of the best toxicology web sources. The databases have good and regularly updated search interfaces covering toxicology, hazardous chemicals and the environment. In TOXNET you can find TOXLINE which is one of the most well known toxicology databases containing bibliographic information on the biochemical, pharmacological, physiological and toxicological effects of drugs and other chemicals. It contains over 3 million citations, most of which have abstracts and CAS Registry numbers. The database is divided into two parts: TOXLINE Core, which covers the standard journal literature for toxicology and continues to be updated as a subset in MEDLINE (available on the Internet as PubMed <<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/entrez/query.fcgi>>), and TOXLINE Special, which is a historical backfile of closed specialised sources. You can search the individual parts or both together on TOXNET.

I have searched toxicology sources for a number of years and it was a puzzle to me when in 2000 the US National Library of Medicine (NLM) stopped TOXLINE as an independent database. So for those of you not familiar with TOXLINE and those like me who wondered why, here is brief summary of the main reasons behind the decision. TOXLINE has developed as a separate collection since 1972 and a lot of diverse sources have been included over time. These secondary sources were not owned by NLM and caused them a lot of expense. Also MEDLINE, NLM's bibliographic medical information source, has included toxicology information which led to confusion in choosing which source to search. If you need further information see the article "Next Generation TOXLINE"

<http://www.nlm.nih.gov/pubs/techbull/jf01/jf01_toxline.html>.

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REPROTOX <<http://www.reprotox.org/>> has current assessment information on the potentially harmful effects of environmental exposure to chemicals and physical agents on human pregnancy, reproduction, and development. If you need information on poisonous plants then two good websites are FDA/CFSAN Poisonous Plant Database
<<http://vm.cfsan.fda.gov/~djw/readme.html>> and the Veterinary Toxic plant list
<<http://gateway.library.uiuc.edu/vex/toxic/comlist.htm>>.

Professional Organisations

There are a number of professional organisations and bodies who work in the area of toxicology. These are some, which might be of interest: British Toxicology Society <<http://www.thebts.org/>>; Society of Toxicology <<http://www.toxicology.org/>>; The Canadian Network of Toxicology Centres <<http://www.uoguelph.ca/cntc/>>; American College of Toxicology <<http://actox.org/>>; American College of Medical Toxicology <<http://www.acmt.net/default.htm>>; Society of Environmental Toxicology and Chemistry <<http://www.setac.org/>>; Society of Forensic Toxicologists <<http://www.soft-tox.org/>>; International Society of Exposure Analysis (ISEA) <<http://www.iseaweb.org/>>; Society for Risk Analysis <<http://www.sra.org/>>.

Environmental Toxicology

Environmental issues have become much more important over the past few years as we all take more responsibility for what happens to the environment around us. Information on the environmental fate and environmental breakdown of individual chemicals can be found in the Syracuse databases
<<http://esc.syrres.com/interkow/onlineedb.htm>>. EXTOWNET <<http://ace.orst.edu/info/extownet/>> has information on pesticides and an environmental toxicology newsletter. The University of Minnesota has a database on the biocatalysis and biodegradation of chemicals <<http://umbdb.ahc.umn.edu/index.html>>. The ECOTOXicology database <<http://www.epa.gov/ecotox/>> is a useful tool for examining the impact of a chemical on the environment. It has toxicity information on single chemicals for aquatic and terrestrial life. There are several places where you can get information on environmental contaminants
<<http://www.pwrc.usgs.gov/research/ecr/>> and <<http://www1.nature.nps.gov/toxic/index.html>>. The US Department of Energy Oak Ridge National Laboratory has a set of Ecological Risk Analysis tools and applications
<<http://www.esd.ornl.gov/programs/ecorisk/ecorisk.html>> which contain information that can be used to conduct ecological screening and risk assessments.

Food Toxicology

There are a number of sources that have information on pesticides and pesticide residues. These are some that I found: Pesticide Tolerances

<<http://www.epa.gov/opprd001/tolerance/tisinfo/>>; FDA Pesticide Program Residue Monitoring <<http://www.cfsan.fda.gov/~dms/pesrpts.html>>; AMS at USDA Pesticide Data Program <<http://www.ams.usda.gov/science/pdp/index.htm>>; Pesticides and the Environment <<http://www.ace.orst.edu/info/extownet/faqs/pesticide/pesthome.htm>>; EPA Pesticide Reregistration - Chemical Status <<http://www.epa.gov/pesticides/reregistration/status.htm>>.

Food additives and food allergies are important topics and there are a number of useful websites in this area: The Food Allergy & Anaphylaxis Network <<http://www.foodallergy.org/>>; the US Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition (CFSAN) has a food allergy site <<http://www.cfsan.fda.gov/~dms/whalrgy.html>> and also a site on food ingredients and packaging <<http://www.cfsan.fda.gov/~lrd/foodadd.html>>. EXTOWNET also has some food additive information <<http://www.ace.orst.edu/info/extownet/faqs/additive/fapage1a.htm>> and the FAO/WHO have a joint expert committee that has evaluated over 1500 additives <http://apps3.fao.org/jecfa/additive_specs/foodad-q.jsp>.

Mycotoxins are compounds produced by fungi that are harmful to human and animal health and so cause a problem for food safety. The CFSAN has information as part of the Food Compliance program on Mycotoxins in Imported Foods <<http://www.cfsan.fda.gov/~comm/cp07002.html>> and in Domestic Foods <<http://www.cfsan.fda.gov/~comm/cp07001.html>>. The Medical Research Council of South Africa has the PROMEC unit, which works on Mycotoxins, and their reports and publications are on their website
<<http://www.mrc.ac.za/promec/contents.htm>>.

Chemical Identification

If you are focusing on a particular chemical it is important that you define and identify your substance adequately and correctly. There are some very useful sources for this on the web. Two that I find particularly useful are: Chemfinder <<http://chemfinder.cambridgesoft.com/>> and ChemIDplus <<http://chem.sis.nlm.nih.gov/chemidplus/>>.

And if after all these sources you still can't find what you need then there are some excellent online science and technology databases on hosts such as STN <<http://www.stn-international.de/>>.

Finally ... a quote that I found, which serves as a reminder that the dose is important and leaves us with something to think about when we next reach for the coffee cup! "On learning that coffee was considered to be a slow poison I think that it must be so for I have been drinking it for 65 years and I am not dead yet" (Francois-Marie Arouet Voltaire, French writer & philosopher, 1694-1778).