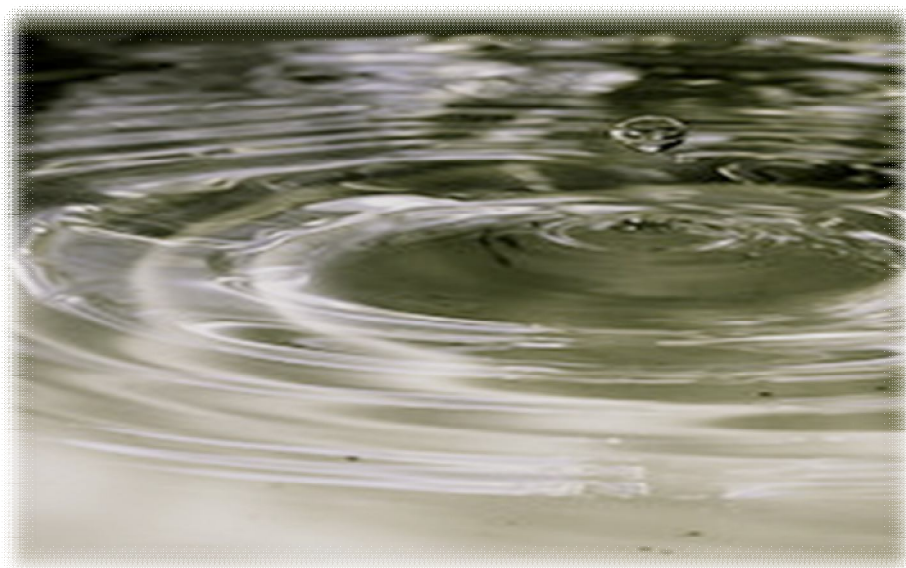


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## EDC-PPCP Newsletter



## 1 Preliminary results

Text analysis

Focus groups

## 2 Consumer surveys

Spring 2012

Logistics and recruitment

Contact:

gabriella.rundblad@kcl.ac.uk

## Well under way:

The research continues!

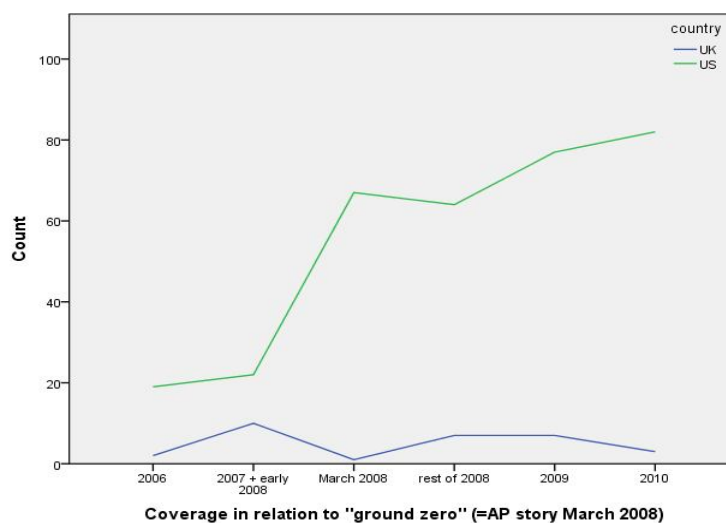
Analysis of over 400 news items from the UK and the US has been completed.

Analysis of 126 texts on EDCs and PPCPs from UK and US water, public health and environmental organisations.

In the UK, two consumer and two expert focus groups have taken place in London, Norwich and Peterborough. The analysis of the data is currently underway.

## Media reporting on EDCs and PPCPs

Overall, strong similarities were evident across UK and US media reporting on EDC/PPCPs. However, the number of articles in the UK has remained relatively stable since 2006, while in the US there was a sharp rise in March 2008 when the AP reports were published.



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## Coming soon

Consumer surveys. Two types are planned.

1. Perception
2. Language

These surveys will be in Spring 2012 (!). But to make this happen, we need your help to:

- Decide on target areas**
- Identify Consumer Recruitment strategies**

Find out more about the project at:  
[www.PublicHealthCommunication.org.uk](http://www.PublicHealthCommunication.org.uk)

## Preliminary results from analysis of UK and US media texts

### Contaminants

The most common terms used are generic ones like *drugs* and *pharmaceuticals* or types of compounds like *pesticides* and *antibiotics*. More technical terms like *EDC* and *PPCP* are hardly used at all. Consumers may not see EDCs and PPCPs as distinct categories of contaminants, and may not be aware of technical terminology or the names of specific compounds.

### Water sources

A wide range of terms are used to refer to various water sources and drinking water. Direct links between source water and drinking water are rare. Consumers may not see the two as connected in the context of EDC and PPCP contamination. Alternatively, they may assume that water type makes little difference in determining the risk of contamination.

### Authorities

While there are frequent references to *scientists*, *experts* and *research*, the *DWI* has a comparatively low profile. The high salience of unknown authorities reduces the visibility of the actual authorities. Readers may not be aware of who is responsible for the research and who regulates the UK water companies.

### Contamination as a threat

There is a strong indication that media reporting presents the detection of EDC and PPCP contaminants as a matter of concern for consumers. Although terms like *low levels* and *traces* are frequently used to describe the quantity of contaminants in the water, they are still perceived as a threat to human health and the environment. There is also a high salience of terms likely to inspire fear or worry like *contamination*, *exposure* and *intersex fish*. Taken at face value, media articles are likely to inspire worry or fear in water consumers, with the level of risk communicated as greater than it actually is.

**These initial assessments of how the media might affect consumer perceptions will be tested and explored in the focus groups and surveys.**

### Next newsletter:

Results from our analysis of outreach texts

# Focus Groups

## At a glance: UK consumer focus groups

The UK focus groups are now finished and ready for transcription and analysis. Here are a few initial impressions.

### Regulation

No knowledge of DWI – consumers assume there is no independent /government regulator

Surprised there is no EDC/PPCP regulation

More concerned about lack of regulation than potential health risks from EDC/PPCPs

### Consumer organisations

Not sure of Ofwat's role

No mention of CCWater or WaterUK

### Treatment

Poor knowledge of current water treatments

Strong focus on aesthetics

### EDC/PPCP

Poor knowledge of EDC/PPCPs , especially EDCs and pharmaceuticals

Measurements and terminology are confusing and hard to conceptualise

Confusion over distinction between water sources and treated tap water

### Money

Money should be spent on scientific studies of EDC/PPCPs – not on treatment

### Media

Little recollection of media stories on EDC/PPCPs

Media stories do not impact behaviour but can raise awareness and cause concern

### Prevention

Very positive towards take-back initiatives

### Consumer Focus Groups

Two consumer groups were held in London and in Norwich

### Expert Focus Groups

DWI

Water UK

Consumer Council for Water  
Ofwat

HPA

Anglian Water

Veolia Water

Cambridge Water

South East Water

Essex and Suffolk Water

### Questions about methods? Terms?

Let us know and we will answer them in the next update.

## Perception survey

Have your say!

We are interested in hearing from you about:

- How you think we should approach the issue of EDCs and PPCPs with consumers
- What you need to learn from consumers