COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

UPDATE: SEC commissioner Mike Slive to retire due to health reasons
Tuesday, October 14, 2014 | 1:45 p.m. CDT; updated 6:44 p.m. CDT, Tuesday, October 14, 2014

BY MICHAEL SHAW
This article has been updated to include comments from MU Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin and a statement from Missouri athletics director Mike Alden.

COLUMBIA — Southeastern Conference commissioner Mike Slive announced his plans to retire at the end of the academic year as he is beginning treatment for recurring prostate cancer. Slive, 74, has been commissioner of the conference since 2002. He worked as the first commissioner of Conference USA from 1995-2002, as well as the now-defunct Great Midwest Conference.

His medical condition was diagnosed following an August surgery, according to a news release from the SEC. Slive was first treated for prostate cancer in the late 1990s.

Slive notified SEC member school chancellors and presidents, including MU chancellor R. Bowen Loftin, during a conference leadership meeting Monday in Atlanta.

While the SEC says Slive's condition will allow him to continue working in the conference's Birmingham, Alabama, office, Slive's travel will be limited.

"I have been blessed in more ways than I can count, and I will have as much passion for this job on my last day as I did on my first," Slive said in a statement. "I consider my health situation a temporary detour in a remarkable road that has allowed me to meet amazing people, experience incredible events and celebrate historic victories. I will relish my final year in this position and look forward to being the biggest fan of the SEC for many years to come."
Slive flipped a ceremonial coin before Missouri's first conference football game against the Georgia Bulldogs on Sept. 8, 2012. This summer at a Mizzou Alumni Association event in suburban St. Louis, Slive praised Missouri's transition to the SEC.

"What I think I see, and I guess maybe the new master facilities plan is an example of it, that Mizzou, when they made the decision to come to the league, made a decision to be highly competitive in the league and to do what they needed to do to be there," Slive said. "That's been very impressive."

Slive said he will remain a consultant for the conference for four years following his retirement.

Slive's predecessor, former SEC commissioner Roy Kramer, is credited with changing the college football landscape when he added Arkansas and South Carolina to the conference in 1991 and subsequently created the first conference championship game in major college football. Slive was commissioner when Missouri and Texas A&M announced they were joining the conference in the fall of 2011. He came to MU on Nov. 6, 2011, for the official announcement with then-chancellor Brady Deaton.

Slive is the seventh commissioner in the conference's 81-year history. The SEC announced it will conduct a national search for Slive's successor this fall.

"I think the SEC is the premier athletic conference and anyone would want to be in charge of it, there's no doubt about that," Loftin said. "We need a commissioner to guide us through the use of images, concussions and other litigation minefields facing college athletics."

Loftin said he and Slive became close friends in spring 2010 when Texas A&M, then a member of the Big 12 Conference with Missouri, began to consider conference realignment. Loftin was the president of Texas A&M at the time and was introduced as MU chancellor on Dec. 4, 2013.

"Mike Slive is one of the top leaders in all of sport in the country. He is a visionary, a consensus builder, someone who is focused on the student-athlete and who represents college athletics with courage, character and dignity," Missouri athletics director Mike Alden said in a statement. "We have been fortunate to have his guiding hand with the Southeastern Conference and NCAA governance. Personally, he has been a special advisor, mentor, supporter and friend.

"He has made a historical impact on the SEC and college sports."
COLUMBIA, Mo. • Southeastern Conference commissioner Mike Slive will retire on July 31, 2015, the league announced Tuesday. Slive is beginning treatment for a recurrence of prostate cancer. He also underwent treatment for prostate cancer in the late 1990s.

“I have been blessed in more ways than I can count and I will have as much passion for this job on my last day as I did on my first,” Slive said. “I consider my health situation a temporary detour in a remarkable road that has allowed me to meet amazing people, experience incredible events and celebrate historic victories. I will relish my final year in this position and look forward to being the biggest fan of the SEC for many years to come.”

Missouri athletics director Mike Alden released a statement Tuesday about the SEC commissioner:

“Mike Slive is one of the top leaders in all of sport in the country. He is a visionary, a consensus builder, someone who is focused on the student-athlete and who represents college athletics with courage, character and dignity. We have been fortunate to have his guiding hand with the Southeastern Conference and NCAA governance. Personally, he has been a special advisor, mentor, supporter and friend. He has made a historical impact on the SEC and college sports. We all thank Mike and Liz for their tireless commitment and wish them all the best in this next chapter in their lives.”

Slive's condition was diagnosed after he underwent back surgery in August. He'll continue to carry out his duties as commissioner from the league headquarters in Birmingham, Ala., and his home office but his travel will be limited. Following his retirement, Slive will serve as consultant to the conference for four years.

The SEC will conduct a national search for his replacement, though SEC executive associate commissioners Mark Womack and Greg Sankey could be logical internal candidates.

Slive has been instrumental in the SEC's growth over the last 13 years, including the league's expansion to 14 members in 2012, when Missouri and Texas A&M joined the SEC from the Big 12.

Here's more from the SEC's official announcement:

As the seventh commissioner of the Southeastern Conference, Slive has overseen perhaps the greatest era of success since the league was founded in 1933 while helping shape the landscape of college sports as a national leader in intercollegiate athletics.
The SEC has enjoyed unprecedented championship success under Slive's leadership. He led the adoption of a new and effective league-wide NCAA compliance initiative, engineered landmark television contracts including the launch of a conference network, and guided the conference through expansion, welcoming two new institutions.

The hallmark of this golden age of the SEC remains a remarkable seven consecutive Bowl Championship Series national titles in football. In all, the SEC has won 67 national championships in 15 of its 21 sponsored sports during Slive's tenure as SEC Commissioner.

His impact has been felt far beyond the footprint of the SEC. The founding commissioner of two conferences, he was also the founder of a law firm which assisted NCAA institutions in compliance matters, a Director of Athletics and a member of numerous leadership committees during the course of his career. More recently, Slive has helped craft the new College Football Playoff and is a leader in the historic effort to reorganize the NCAA for the purpose of creating a governance structure that provides maximum opportunities for student-athletes.

In August, the league launched the SEC Network, a national network that brings more than 1000 events into the homes and to the mobile devices of college sports fans across the country. These agreements make the league the most widely distributed conference on television in the nation and also secures the financial health of the SEC and its member institutions for years to come.

Since joining the SEC, Slive has served as coordinator of the Bowl Championship Series (2006-08) and served as chair of the NCAA Division I Men's Basketball Committee (2008-09). In 2002-03, Slive served on the Commission of Athletics Opportunity, established by the United States Secretary of Education to review the workings of Title IX.

Slive served as chair of the first NCAA Infractions Appeals Committee and was chair of the National Letter of Intent Steering Committee. He served as president of the Collegiate Commissioners Association (CCA) from 2001-03, was also on the NCAA Management Council from 1997-2004 and is the former chair of the Board of Directors of NCAA Football USA.

Slive previously was the first commissioner of Conference USA from 1995-2002 and was the first commissioner of the Great Midwest Conference upon its founding in 1991.

A native of Utica, N.Y., Slive graduated from Dartmouth College with a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1962. He earned a Juris Doctor from the University of Virginia Law School in 1965 and an LLM from the Georgetown University Law Center in 1966.

Slive and his wife of 46 years, Liz, have a daughter, Anna; son-in-law, Judd Harwood; and granddaughter, Abigail who is two years old.
MU more than halfway to United Way goal

By Ashley Jost

Tuesday, October 14, 2014 at 12:02 pm Comments (1)

Administrators are trying to improve the University of Missouri’s Heart of Missouri United Way campaign despite strong early fundraising pledges.

Betsy Rodriguez, one of three people leading the campaign for MU and University of Missouri System vice president of human resources, said the campaign is on pace to exceed last year’s goal of $600,000 after just four weeks. The university has raised more than $350,000 between MU, the UM System and MU Health Care.

MU administrators set a 25 percent goal for the number of employee donors they hope to reach this year. Last year, they ended with 12 percent, Rodriguez said.

“People who are educated about what United Way does for our community almost always want to give,” Rodriguez said. “So we’re really putting more effort into educating everyone.”

Rodriguez said campaign leaders are putting extra emphasis on unit ambassadors, people in each department who are charged with educating their co-workers on the campaign.

Department numbers vary widely. Rodriguez said on average, 20 to 40 percent of employees in a department donate, but she chalks up the lower overall average to departments that have zero donations. Rodriguez is convinced that those departments just aren’t getting the information, and she wants to change that. So far, this year’s donor rate is 10 percent.

Rodriguez said increasing donors will increase donations. MU fell short of last year’s $600,000 United Way goal by almost $75,000.

“We’re excited about our progress this year so far, but the tail end of the campaign is always harder,” she said.

The University of Missouri is the largest organization whose employees give to the local United Way, said Tim Rich, executive director of Heart of Missouri United Way.

Rich said the overall community campaign has raised more than $1.3 million toward the $4 million goal. The organization missed its $4 million goal last year by about $1 million, so Rich
stressed that he hopes to at least hit the $3 million benchmark so this year’s programs can operate the same way next year.

“We are always so humbled and honored by the incredible generosity and support from the community,” Rich said.

What can be done to combat sexual violence on college campuses

By JASON HOFFMAN - 21 HOURS AGO

Sexual assault and sexual violence on college campuses has been an issue for a long time, but it is now at the forefront of the national focus. While university administrators and federal lawmakers say they're trying to do what they think is best for the victims of sexual assault, some feel that's not always the case.

Kelsey Burns is the presentation coordinator for the relationship and sexual violence prevention center at MU. She says she was assaulted her first year as a student but did not report the incident. She now works to better educate the MU community about sexual violence.

I sat down with Burns and asked what steps need to be taken to continue to bring this issue to peoples attention.

Burns: I think that universities, not just Mizzou and not specifically Mizzou, but across the nation, universities a lot of times want to push these issues under the rug versus publicly discussing them. And that’s tough because of course there’s survivor confidentially and stuff like that, so there is two sides to that. And so when you have people coming into and environment then, that already you see on television has a history of pushing these things under the rug, giving victims a really hard time, always kind of not treating perpetrators as criminals, but as people whose futures might be ruined, you’ll already instill a lot of these ideals and reasons why people aren’t going to report when it actually happens to them.

Hoffman: But it seems that even with most people on campus aware of the new Title IX regulations existence and the continued discussion about sexual violence on campus, we aren’t necessarily seeing a decline in the numbers, in fact there were two Clerly releases from the beginning of the month. Does that concern you?
Burns: I think something important for people to keep in mind when it comes to Celery releases when they happen often, is a lot of people see it and are like, oh my god, things are getting worse, we’re seeing all these reports. When in actuality, I don’t enjoy seeing Celery releases, but it means that they were reported. These have always been happening, they’re not happening more or less then they have been for the past ten years. The difference is that people are reporting because things are changing, culture is changing, this is being talked about much more than it was in past years.

Hoffman: Well then what do you think is the biggest hurdle left in trying to curb sexual violence on campus?

Burns: I do feel that there are steps being taken in the right direction. Nothing’s perfect, nothing is gonna be perfect for a while, it’s a very hard topic to cover all your bases in. I’m confident that there is administration that cares about this, I am not confident that everybody is on the same page and has the same end goals for what they want this issue, the end solution to look like.

Hoffman: Could you explain what different groups goals are?

Burns: Yeah, I mean there’s always gonna be different opinions depending on what field you’re working in and what you’re studying and stuff like that and as far as administration goes, what field you’re working in. I’m on the sexual assault task force and it’s a really, really great place where we can all discuss this and talk about this stuff from people from all different areas. You know students like myself who are advocates and educators and then people from the woman’s center, RSVP. We have someone from ROTC, you know we have people from MSA, it’s a really good group. You can see how it’s hard with people who are in administration, people who are in student government and people that are working in advocacy all kind of struggle finding a middle ground where they can make the same goal happen. So you know people who are in student government or administration a lot of time think events, think how can we get people to think about this. They think social media campaigns which are all effective and important and need to happen. But there needs to be work also towards changing a culture, which events can do and social media can do. So definitely more needs to be done, I just wish I had that answer and maybe I would have told people about it. Sorry if that’s not super clear.

To listen to the interview visit: http://cpa.ds.npr.org/kbia/audio/2014/10/interview.mp3

COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

MU rec complex faces overcrowding problem

Tuesday, October 14, 2014 | 2:17 p.m. CDT; updated 8:39 p.m. CDT, Tuesday, October 14, 2014

BY MICHAEL ALVEY
COLUMBIA — **As MU continues to increase its enrollment, campus space is becoming harder to come by. The MU Student Recreation Complex is no exception.**

"It's always crowded," Alex Rocos, a sophomore who exercises at the MU rec complex, said. "Every single time I come here, I have to wait to get on a treadmill."

**The MizzouRec Services and Facilities staff realizes there is an issue with overcrowding. In general, nearly all of its multiuse spaces are at maximum capacity, particularly Monday through Thursday, said Emily Bach, associate director of management, marketing and Team Mizzou at the MU rec complex.**

Bach said the Pump Room and the Jungle Gym — the MU rec complex's main weightlifting areas — are two of the most crowded areas. Several times during the first few weeks of school, both areas maxed out, and users were forced to go to a one-in, one-out policy.

The **MU rec complex was renovated in 2005** after students requested better facilities in 1996, and a referendum was approved by the student body in 2001 to increase fees by $75 per semester to fund the $49.2 million project. Sports Illustrated on Campus named it the best student rec facility in the nation when it was completed in 2005.

The overcrowding began soon after the renovation.

"We anticipated the space would be conducive to 25,000 students to, at max, 28,000 students at its current square footage," Bach said. "We tipped some of those enrollment scales very quickly after we opened the facility, when we had projected it being 15 to 20 years before we reached those numbers."

Bach said that the first few weeks of the semester is when the MU rec complex is most crowded. In the first three weeks this year, an average of about 4,600 people came to the MU rec, excluding the Aug. 30 home football game against South Dakota State.

Attendance dropped off to about 3,885 per day through the end of September, excluding the Sept. 20 home game against Indiana. The complex closes its facilities two hours before kickoff for home games and doesn't reopen until Sunday at noon.
Although there have been discussions of potentially taking down the climbing wall to expand the Pump Room, a major expansion would require a student-driven initiative calling for more space, Bach said.

"The students themselves would have to collectively rally through the right venues, such as Missouri Students Association and Graduate Professional Council, to work with the Student Fee Review Committee to gather the funds to expand spaces," Bach said. Although the complex sometimes receives complaints in the form of emails and phone calls, there hasn't been a united student movement, Bach said.

MSA isn't pursuing any expansion of the MU rec, Vice President Matt McKeown wrote in an email. McKeown wrote that if MSA were considering moving to expand the complex, it would gather as many student opinions as it could through avenues such as surveys, social media and going to the MU rec complex to talk to students directly.

"All students would be included in this process regardless if they are directly involved in MSA," McKeown wrote. "Our main priority would be to ensure that the expansion is what students want."

The MU rec complex needs students to be the driving force behind a rally for expansion because it doesn't receive general operating money from campus and is funded through the recreation facility fee and supplemental income that comes from hosting events.

Students taking more than six credit hours are automatically assessed the $140.67 recreation facility fee, and anyone taking fewer has the option to add the recreation facility fee to his or her student account. The fees are assessed and managed by the Student Fee Review Committee and the vice chancellor of student affairs. Bach said the MU rec complex has asked only for an inflationary increase to cover the growing costs of operation. She also said that the complex has to plan out projects well in advance and save money for them, as it has done in the past with upgrading Stankowski Field in 2013 and the track this past summer. The facility is scheduled to open a new fitness space in Downtown Brewer, an area in the complex, later this semester.

"It's always an ongoing discussion in terms of how to flex space and provide good opportunities for students within the facility," Bach said. "As a department, we can only do so much because we only have so much flexibility with the fees that we collect."
The MU rec complex sees a spike in attendance during peak hours, which are between 3:30 and 8:30 p.m. For example, on Sept. 15, a Monday during the fourth week of the semester, only 2,275 people came from opening at 5:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. From 3:30 to 8:30 p.m., 2,500 visited the MU rec, including 896 from 3:30 to 5:30 p.m.

Some students are aware of when the facility gets extremely crowded, and they adjust their schedules accordingly.

"I try to get up (to the MU rec complex) before my noon class because I know it will be too crowded if I go after," said junior Matt Yacovino.

Others work out at places other than the MU rec complex during peak hours to avoid the big crowds.

"When I want to work out and it's between 3 p.m. and 6 p.m., I usually work out at my apartment's weight room because I know I'll have to wait to get on machines," said senior Justin Cook, who lives at Midtown by Brookside.

Students have their own ideas of how make the MU rec complex less overcrowded.

"They should regulate the amount of people and enforce the one-in, one-out policy more quickly," sophomore Krista Dye said.

Overall, most agree that the main issue is space.

"They need more space and more weights because everyone needs enough space to work out in," sophomore Jacob Daugherty said. "Right now there's not enough of it."

Editorial: Student housing expansion must stop

Affordability and proximity to campus is what students care about.

Seeing as the majority of our editorial board are living off campus, we feel there is an issue which needs to be discussed.

The Odle family, who own and operate Brookside student apartments and townhomes, recently announced their decision to not build any more student housing complexes in Columbia. The decision came after a 14-page report published by the Columbia Heart Beat showed there are too
many student housing complexes in Columbia. The report found an oversupply of 902 beds in fall 2013 and estimated an oversupply of 2,270 beds this fall. The report also states while MU may grow to 38,000 students, that does not necessarily mean there will be an increase in demand for student housing.

First of all, we want to applaud the Odles in making this decision. Columbia already has enough, if not too much, student housing and we appreciate the fact that they are able to recognize this. We think they are making the right decision for local developers and for Columbia.

We think the rest of Columbia’s student housing developers (and national developers looking to come to Columbia) need to follow Brookside’s lead.

The rate at which new student housing complexes are being built is alarming to say the least. With too many unoccupied beds in Columbia, the housing bubble is set to burst very soon. The businesses who have built these student housing complexes would lose business and could potentially go bankrupt. Instead of constantly building new apartment complexes for students, why not fill all of the empty beds we have now?

What many developers have failed to understand is the majority of students on this campus do not care about the fancy amenities included in some of these complexes. Many students don’t care about swimming pools, tanning beds or huge, luxurious rooms. Many students simply want housing that is both close to campus and inexpensive. By adding all of these unnecessary additions, the price is driven up and students are less likely to sign leases for these apartments.

Where we have a surplus of student housing complexes, we have a limited amount of residence halls on campus. **So few, in fact, that some freshmen cannot even live in the residence halls their first year at MU.** Instead, some freshmen are forced to live off campus. Freshmen need to be able to live on campus so that they can form a sense of community in their residence halls and be close enough to campus to be able to explore it. The fact is that this problem would not exist if we had more housing on campus.

Due to this oversight, student housing complexes aimed at sophomores, juniors and seniors continue to spring up around campus and the downtown area. Our freshmen class, the class with the most potential to grow, is left out of the equation.

We do realize that a new residence hall, Virginia Avenue South, is in the process of being built. But we also know that Laws, Jones and Lathrop halls are planned to be torn down and replaced by two buildings, according to the Residential Life Master Plan. The two residential halls will have 1,350 beds, 350 more than the three halls have right now, said Frankie Minor, director of the Department of Residential Life, in a November 2013 Maneater article.

Although this is a small improvement, 350 new beds will not be enough if our freshmen classes continue to grow in size year after year. We want to see a change that is more beneficial to our students.
If we want to prevent this housing bubble from bursting, it’s time we focused on what’s important to students: affordability and proximity to campus. We can solve this problem, but it needs to start now and it needs to start with MU.

COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

MU junior Trey Makler wins composition prize for his piece, 'Elysium'

Tuesday, October 14, 2014 | 9:47 p.m. CDT; updated 12:23 a.m. CDT, Wednesday, October 15, 2014

BY ANNIE REES

CORRECTION: An earlier version of this story misstated Makler's hometown.

COLUMBIA — Trey Makler's chamber ensemble piece "Elysium," which just received the 2015 Sinquefield Composition Prize, is lavender in color.

"Or maybe dark blue," Makler said. "It's cool and relaxed."

But don't get him wrong. The idea of hearing colors in music is not a literal concept for Makler, an MU junior studying music composition.

Instead, "It's more of a quality of sound," he said. "You can have something that's wispy or something that's dark."

On Monday, the MU School of Music and the Mizzou New Music Initiative announced that Makler had won the 2015 Sinquefield Composition Prize, the top award for a composition student at MU.

"This is a prize that has traditionally gone to an older student — a senior or graduate student," said Stefan Freund, associate professor of composition and music theory at MU. "This is a great opportunity for him."

Makler learned he had won during the week of Oct. 6 but couldn't share the news with friends until Monday. The well-wishes came flooding in.

"Every time I touch my phone, I have some kind of congratulations text," Makler said, laughing. "Every time I open Facebook, it's like 10 notifications or 40,000 emails."
Makler composed "Elysium" because the composition faculty at MU commissioned four students to write pieces about Forest Park in St. Louis. Makler’s category was trees, plants and forests in the park. Clicking through photos online, he found one image of whitewashed light streaming through Forest Park’s trees.

"Whenever I was composing, I kept going back to this specific picture," Makler said. "It was that one image that really inspired the whole piece. ... I wasn’t so interested in what was happening but how it was happening."

While the piece has a lyrical evolutionary quality, the process to achieve this effect was more technical.

"If you obscure the attack of an instrument, you're a whole lot less likely to be able to tell what it is," Makler said. "In this piece, I had a lot of instruments enter at niente, (meaning nothing) so that they start silent and grow in. So every sound has that effect of growing out of one another."

Freund agreed. "Even though it's primarily tonal, it has a really interesting use of harmony. It's very lush," he said.

Experimentation and being open to change are some of the goals of any music composition major, Freund said.

"You want the composer to find his or her voice, but you also want them to be open to new things and broaden their horizons," he said. Makler, who is from Farmington, has been involved in music since the sixth grade, when he picked up the saxophone at a school open house. He later transitioned to the oboe, which he still plays.

"Music was really important for me because growing up, I wasn't interested in sports and didn't have a real interest in my classes," he said. "Music was different because I was good at it."

The Sinquefield Composition Prize, part of the Mizzou New Music Initiative, confirms for Makler that he is succeeding. As an oboe student, he said, he knows where he stands with the other students because everyone is placed into ensembles that reflect their ability. But with composition, "there is no set idea of what needs to be done. It is up to us to trail blaze and decide our own voice, our own future, and how we want our art to be part of the world."
As part of the prize, Makler is now at work writing an original piece for MU’s University Philharmonic Orchestra that will receive its world premiere on April 13 at the annual Chancellor’s Concert. With the commission, he also receives a cash prize for the production of the score and will have his work recorded.

Using lessons he learned composing "Elysium," Makler said he is furthering his interests in tonalities and colors.

"I’m really focusing on these colors for an entire orchestra now," he said.

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**Binge Drinking Can Change Your Genes in a Scary Way**

Too much alcohol can make your liver a "cluster bomb" of damage to your body.

_Sure, you know that doing the fifth keg stand of the night is probably not good for you. But new research from the University of Missouri finds that it can give you way more than just a beer belly – it can change your genes for good._

In the study, published in the journal _Hepatology International_, researchers fed rats "binge" levels of alcohol and then checked their liver levels. They found that drinking too much alcohol can mess up the genes in your cells, which then can cause serious damage to your liver that can't be reversed.

Here's the science: Binge drinking alters proteins called histones in your liver. Histones organize the strands of your DNA, so once alcohol changes them, your body changes how it reads and interprets your DNA. This causes irreversible damage to your liver, because your body doesn't recognize your liver cells correctly. The liver, they say, then becomes a "cluster bomb," which damages other organs in your body.

And you don't have to constantly do shots to be considered binge drinking. When men have five or more drinks within two hours, and when women have only four during that period, they're reaching blood alcohol levels associated with binge drinking, according to The National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism. Something to think about before you head out for bottomless brunch.
Suspected Hormone-Changing Chemical Found in Air Near Factories

As concerns mount over people’s exposure to the plasticizer bisphenol A in everyday products, it’s also contaminating the air near facilities that make it.

As concerns mount over people’s exposure to the plasticizer bisphenol A in everyday products, it’s also contaminating the air near manufacturing plants: U.S. companies emitted about 26 tons of the hormone-disrupting compound in 2013.

Although research is sparse, experts warn that airborne BPA could be a potentially dangerous route of exposure for some people. Of the 72 factories reporting BPA emissions, the largest sources are in Ohio, Indiana and Texas, according to the Environmental Protection Agency’s Toxics Release Inventory.

No one has measured what people in nearby communities are exposed to. But the exposures are likely to be localized and smaller than other sources of BPA.

BPA breaks down quickly in the environment. But it also can attach to particles that infiltrate lungs, said Bruce Blumberg, a University of California, Irvine, biology professor.

“Inhalation of compounds is a big exposure route that most people do not usually consider for BPA,” he said.

BPA, used to make polycarbonate plastic, food can linings and some paper receipts, is found in almost all people tested. Low doses can alter hormones, according to animal tests, and exposure has been linked to a wide range of health effects in people, including infertility, cardiovascular disease, obesity and cancer.

In the only study of its kind, Japanese researchers reported that BPA was ubiquitous in the atmosphere worldwide. They suspected the emissions came from the manufacturing and burning of plastics.

In the United States, chemical manufacturing accounted for 54 percent of the BPA air emissions, while metal manufacturing and metal fabricating accounted for 21 and 20 percent, respectively, according to the EPA database. In addition, U.S. companies in 2013 reported releasing 3,313 pounds of BPA to surface waters, the EPA database shows.
The amount of BPA emitted into the air has been dropping in recent years. Although the number of companies reporting BPA emissions has remained about the same over the past decade, in 2013 the total tons declined 41 percent from 2012 and almost 66 percent from 10 years ago.

Kathryn St. John, a spokesperson for the American Chemistry Council, which represents chemical manufacturers, said the data don’t reflect what people in surrounding communities might be exposed to. Factors such as the proximity of people to the plants and whether the emissions are continuous or intermittent are important when determining people’s exposures.

St. John added that there is “no evidence that inhalation exposures are of concern.” Studies have not provided any information on what happens to BPA if inhaled, such as whether it is absorbed in the lungs and if absorbed, whether it is metabolized.

But Wade Welshons, an associate professor at the University of Missouri who studies endocrine-disrupting compounds, said airborne BPA could be absorbed through the lungs as well as the skin.

Both and inhalation and skin absorption “would deliver more BPA to the blood than an oral exposure,” he said.

Blumberg and Welshons said since these routes would bypass metabolizing organs such as the intestines and liver, airborne exposures may be more dangerous than food exposures.

“The liver is a great organ for metabolizing substances, lungs are for absorbing, not for metabolizing,” Welshons said.

No one has investigated the potential health effects of inhaling BPA. Regulatory agencies only consider oral doses when analyzing potential effects, Blumberg said.

Several communities with the biggest BPA emitters are also home to large volumes of other toxics from industrial plants.

Deer Park, Texas, had 4,100 pounds of BPA and 2.8 million pounds of other air toxics in 2013, while Defiance, Ohio, had 6,600 pounds of BPA and 387,454 pounds of others, according to the industry reports filed with the EPA. Freeport, Texas, home to a Dow Chemical plant, had 905 pounds of reported BPA air emissions last year and an additional 1.74 million pounds of other toxics.

Compared with exposure from consumer products such as polycarbonate plastic and food cans, there has been little concern about airborne BPA. “But this lower concern level is based on relatively little data,” said Laura Vandenberg, an assistant professor of environmental health at the University of Massachusetts Amherst who studies health effects of BPA. “This is something I would say is not discussed in-depth on our field but it should be.”

There isn’t a lot of research on what happens to BPA when it’s released into the air. BPA degrades fairly quickly, but it also can attach to dust particles, Vandenberg said.
Researchers tested for BPA in the dust of homes, dorms and labs at and around Murray State University and the University at Albany in 2011. They estimated that, while diet is still the major exposure route, people’s BPA exposures through dust are about the same as the low concentrations that cause health problems in lab animals. It’s not clear how the BPA got into the dust; it could have been from indoor sources.

Sudan Loganathan, who led the study while a student at Murray State University, said the estimated daily exposure for people through dust was low compared with food exposure. But, she added, “when you look at the average dust intake for adults and then infants, this is more of a concern for infants. They are on the floor, and there’s more hand-to-mouth contact.”

Blumberg said air quality monitoring should expand to test for BPA.

“There are a lot of people studying inhalation exposure with things like particulate pollution, ozone and other major components of exhaust, but not much at all when it comes to chemical exposure like BPA,” Blumberg said. “That’s a big open area right now.”