

I live with my family in an almost 200-year-old house on the coast of Maine. He went on, "Your biggest exposure is in the shower," via inhalation and dermal absorption. I had a visceral moment of panic when he said those words: I was already keeping our food as clean as I could by buying from local farms and cooking from scratch. I was filtering our drinking water through the Berkey. The idea that the water we were bathing in at home and drinking out in the world might be laden with what my older son used to call "invisible monsters" got under my skin. Chemical pesticides, fertilizers and industrial chemicals -- whole cocktails of them -- are making their way into sloughs, rivers, lakes, streams, aquifers, wells and even rain. Our water comes from a well under an old, grandmotherly spruce tree that presides over our front lawn.