



CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
Department of Toxic Substances Control

News Release

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Barbara A. Lee, Director

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DTSC Issues Guidelines for Healthy Nail Salon Recognition Program

SACRAMENTO – The Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) today issued guidelines to help local government agencies in California voluntarily establish and implement a program to make salons healthier for nail care workers, who are exposed to toxic chemicals in some nail care products.

DTSC's Healthy Nail Salon Recognition Program encourages a safer environment for workers, owners and customers. Workers are often exposed to toxic chemicals such as toluene, formaldehyde, and dibutyl phthalate. Exposure to these and other chemicals present in nail salon products is associated with higher risks of cancer and developmental and reproductive harm.

"DTSC is committed to the safety of California consumers and to the workers who provide nail care services," DTSC Director Barbara A. Lee said. "We are proud to present statewide guidelines that help local governments and businesses promote safer work environments, safer products, and healthier communities."

Nail salon workers are especially vulnerable to chemical exposure because salons often have inadequate ventilation. They are exposed throughout their work days, which often exceed eight hours. Many are low-income immigrants with limited English proficiency and are generally women of childbearing age. If they become pregnant, their fetuses are also exposed, *in utero*, to the chemicals present in their workplaces.

DTSC's Safer Consumer Products Program has been working with stakeholders, consumers, and local jurisdictions for more than seven years to promote workplace safety that ensures nail salon workers and customers are not exposed to toxic chemicals. These guidelines fulfill the mandate outlined in AB 2125, signed into law in 2016.

"It is important to provide the tools to reduce harmful exposures and increase worker safety," said Dr. Meredith Williams, Safer Products and Workplaces Program Deputy Director. "I'm proud that we can support the development of this Healthy Nail Salon Recognition program so that local governments can support their business communities to keep their workers and residents safe."

The guidelines help local agencies establish a Healthy Nail Salon Recognition Program.

Consumers can look for salons that display gold or silver certificates. Salons that qualify for silver status agree to comply with health and safety requirements for their workers, offer training, use safer products, follow safe work practices and, when providing acrylic nail services, install a local exhaust ventilation system. To acquire gold status, salons would also need to install a mechanical ventilation system. The guidelines recommend ergonomic and environmentally friendly practices for salons certified under the gold tier.

“We’re grateful for the opportunity to promote safer workplaces through the development of these guidelines,” said Ana Mascareñas, Assistant Director for Environmental Justice and Tribal Affairs. “DTSC looks forward to developing materials this year, in partnership with communities, that local governments can use to adopt the program. The many people who provide this service deserve safer and healthier environments to work in.”

California has an estimated 48,000 nail salons. According to the California Healthy Nail Salon Collaborative, consumers can choose from about 200 healthy nail salons in the five local jurisdictions that already offer a healthy nail salon program: Alameda, San Mateo and Santa Clara counties, the city of Santa Monica, and the city and county of San Francisco, the first to offer a program.

See the guidelines [here](#).

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FOR GENERAL INQUIRIES: Contact the Department of Toxic Substances Control by phone at (800) 728-6942 or visit www.dtsc.ca.gov. To report illegal handling, discharge, or disposal of hazardous waste, call the Waste Alert Hotline at (800) 698-6942.

The Mission of DTSC is to protect California’s people and environment from harmful effects of toxic substances by restoring contaminated properties, enforcing hazardous waste law, reducing hazardous waste generation, and encouraging the manufacture of chemically safer products.