



CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
Department of Toxic Substances Control

News Release

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State Asks Fairs & Festivals to be Alert for Lead-Tainted Jewelry

SACRAMENTO – Officials with the California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) have issued an alert to manufacturers and vendors – who supply jewelry for fairs and festivals being held in California this summer – to be on the lookout for lead-tainted items.

While federal law governing jewelry is limited to children's items, California has set limits for lead concentrations that are applicable to adult jewelry as well. Written certifications, based on third party testing, are now required for manufactures, retailers, and suppliers to demonstrate compliance with applicable laws.

"I cannot stress enough the importance of all vendors and suppliers of jewelry at California's festivals and fairs getting certification that their items do not have high lead levels," said DTSC Acting Director Maziar Movassaghi. "Lead is a toxic metal which does not belong in jewelry, particularly not in children's jewelry. Exposure to lead can cause serious health effects ranging from behavioral effects to death. Lead-containing jewelry poses a particular concern because children are prone to placing jewelry in their mouths, which can result in lead absorption at dangerous levels,"

"As the parent of a young child, I know how difficult it is to prevent young children from constantly putting things in their mouths, especially those shiny, attractive jewelry trinkets that are readily given away at fairs and festivals," Movassaghi continued.

Click here to see pictures of jewelry items:

http://www.dtsc.ca.gov/HazardousWaste/jewelry/lead_in_jewelry_2.cfm

On September 22, 2006, Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger signed California's Lead-Containing Jewelry Law (Assembly Bill 1681). It went into effect on September 1, 2007. The law limits the amount of lead in children's jewelry to either 200 ppm (0.02%) or 600 ppm (0.06%) depending on the materials used. The law has since been extended to limit lead in adult and body-piercing jewelry, as well as to include watches and detachable ornaments on shoes and clothing.

Movassaghi added, "Under Governor Schwarzenegger's leadership and commitment to public health, DTSC has been closely monitoring the amount of lead in jewelry sold and distributed in the state."

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Current law allows for authorized representatives to inspect factories, warehouses, or any establishment where jewelry is manufactured, packed, held or sold in order to enforce California's Lead-Containing Jewelry regulations.

Further information is available on DTSC's website at www.dtsc.ca.gov

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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 the Department of Toxic Substances Control is to protect public health, safety, and the environment from toxic harm.