



## News Release

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Maziar Movassaghi, Acting Director

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Contact: Charlotte Fadipe (916) 956-2838  
Claudia Loomis (916) 255-6578

### **Cal/EPA's DTSC Screens for Toxic Toys and Jewelry to keep Bay Area Kids Safe from Lead**

OAKLAND, Calif. – Cal/EPA's Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) screened toxic toys and jewelry as part of a Bay Area Health fair on Saturday aimed at keeping hundreds of kids safe from the dangers of lead. DTSC staff members were on hand with a mobile laboratory and a specialized lead-detecting device to screen kids' toys and jewelry for lead.

The event, sponsored by Alameda County Lead Poisoning Prevention Program and Futures Elementary School in East Oakland, was part of DTSC's ongoing effort to highlight the dangers of lead - a toxic metal that can cause serious health problems and even death, especially in young children.

"We take our role in helping to reduce the risk of lead poisoning in children seriously," said DTSC Acting Director Maziar Movassaghi. "With the California Green Chemistry Initiative underway, we are moving toward eliminating toxic chemicals in products from the beginning design phase rather than managing the toxic waste at the end. This approach is especially timely given the frequency of product recalls, many of which involve lead paint on children's toys imported into the U.S. from foreign countries."

Today's activities were part of DTSC's Environmental Justice Initiative, a program designed to address the often increased toxic risk and exposure found in low-income communities throughout California. As part of this program, shortly before Christmas 2008, DTSC checked children's toys for lead content in Pacoima in Southern California. Nearly five dozen toys were found to contain excessive levels of lead during that event.

Movassaghi added, "It is extremely unfortunate that many toys still contain lead which is known to be a danger to our children. As a father of a young child I know how easily and readily kids put things in their mouths and how vulnerable they are. 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."

For more on California's lead- containing jewelry law click here  
<http://www.dtsc.ca.gov/HazardousWaste/Jewelry/upload/jewelry-fact-sheet-May-09.pdf>

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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](http://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 provide the highest level of safety, and to protect public health and the environment from toxic harm.***