



CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
Department of Toxic Substances Control

NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**California Department of Toxic Substances Control Cautions Consumers to
Be Aware of Toys Contaminated With Lead Paint**

SACRAMENTO – The California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) today warned California consumers to be aware of a major recall of Chinese-made toys contaminated with lead paint. Mattel Inc. today announced a voluntary recall of about 253,000 die-cast cars in the U.S. which features the Sarge character from the “CARS” vehicle line. Excessive levels of lead paint can be toxic if ingested by young children and can pose a health hazard. This issue is similar to concerns about toxics in packaging and lead in children’s jewelry, both of which the legislature has given DTSC authority to address. The lead in jewelry standards go into effect September 2007. This type of concern illustrates the need to find different approaches to protect consumers and the environment.

“The California Green Chemistry Initiative explores a different approach to environmental protection – transitioning away from managing toxic chemicals at the end of the lifecycle, to reducing or eliminating their use altogether,” said Maureen Gorsen, director of the California Department of Toxic Substances Control, who is leading the California Green Chemistry Initiative team representing various agencies from the State of California. “This new approach is particularly timely in view of the string of recalled products imported into the U.S. from foreign countries, such as potentially tainted pet food, toothpaste manufactured with a toxic chemical, and lead paint on toys.”

The creation of a viable list of options to advance green chemistry is expected to be submitted to California Environmental Protection Secretary Linda Adams by January 2008. From that list, proposed recommendations for a final policy are due by July 1, 2008.

The California Green Chemistry Initiative has created a green chemistry blog for the public to contribute their ideas online to address the challenges of green chemistry (<http://californiagreenchemistry.squarespace.com/journal/>). A series of public meetings throughout the state are being held to help establish a blueprint for keeping California in the forefront of protecting health and the environment, and gather public comment on ways to explore green chemistry as a different approach to environmental protection. The next public meeting is scheduled on August 17 in San Jose. For more information, visit <http://www.dtsc.ca.gov> and click on “Pollution Prevention” for the link to the California Green Chemistry Initiative.

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. FOR GENERAL INQUIRIES: Contact the Department of Toxic Substances Control phone: (800) 728-6942 or visit www.dtsc.ca.gov.

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