

CITY OF BALTIMORE

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HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Testing Reveals Items of Children’s Jewelry with Excess Lead

BALTIMORE, MD (December 7, 2009) – The Baltimore City Health Department has issued violation notices under Baltimore City regulations to two businesses prohibiting the sale of two children’s jewelry products determined to have metal components with a lead level in excess of the 600 parts per million (ppm). The Consumer Product Safety Commission has been alerted to the most recent findings.

The Interim Health Commissioner is deeming all products of the same style and manufacturer of these items to be a nuisance to public health. These products may not be offered for retail sale in Baltimore City.

“These products were found to be extremely high in lead content. Excess lead levels in children can severely impair development and can even cause death,” said Interim Commissioner Farrow. “As the holiday season approaches, the Health Department will continue to look for children’s products with high lead levels so parents can shop with confidence, knowing toys sold in the city are safe.”

The items identified were sold at the below businesses:

A. Beauty Zone, 231 N. Eutaw Street



Gymnastics bracelet:

- a) bracelet contained 260,000 ppm of lead
- b) charm contained 176,000 ppm of lead
- c) clasp contained 632,000 ppm of lead

B. Choice Corner Accessories & Fine Gifts, 400 W. Lexington Street



“Dora” bracelet and earring set:

- a) “Dora” charm contained 679,000 ppm of lead
- b) heart charm contained 835 ppm of lead

Lead is a neurotoxin that can cause severe illness and even death at high doses and cognitive impairment and other neurological problems at lower doses. The standard for lead in paint is 600 parts per million.

On August 14, 2008, the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) published new, more stringent federal standards on permissible lead content in children’s products. The permissible lead content for children’s products was set at 600 ppm starting February 10, 2009. On August 14, 2009, the level dropped to 300 ppm. And on Aug. 14, 2011, the level will be reduced to 100 ppm.

The Health Department tested four children’s jewelry products in November 2009. The above products were the only products found to be in excess of 600 parts per million. A full report of the testing and results will be released later today.

Baltimore’s regulation on lead in children’s jewelry can be found online at http://www.baltimorehealth.org/press/2006_12_07_lead_regs.pdf

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