

## CITY OF BALTIMORE

SHEILA DIXON, Mayor



## HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Children's Earrings Found to Have 45% Lead by Weight Highest Lead Level Ever Found in Health Department Testing**

**BALTIMORE, MD (October 31, 2008)** — The Baltimore City Health Department has issued a violation notice to a business prohibiting the sale of a children's jewelry product that was identified with a lead level in metal components above 600 parts per million (ppm). The Consumer Product Safety Commission has been alerted to the most recent findings.

The 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.

Under a regulation adopted on December 7, 2006, children's jewelry containing more than 1,200 ppm were not to be offered for retail sale in Baltimore City. As of September 1, 2007, children's jewelry with metal components containing in excess of 600 ppm of total lead are banned.

The item identified was sold at Street Accessories, 1401 E. Fayette Street, and is listed below:



Fashion earrings – large earrings contained 450,000 ppm and the smaller earrings contained 481,000 ppm

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 of lead. The Consumer Product Safety Commission is reviewing {the comment period ended} comments about a proposal to create a rule establishing a legal limit of 600 parts per million for lead in children's jewelry. Such a standard is not in effect at the federal level.

The Health Department tested 5 children's jewelry products in October 2008. The above product was the only product 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](http://www.baltimorehealth.org/press/2006_12_07_lead_regs.pdf).

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