



Campaign for Safe Cosmetics finds lead in lipstick

Toys made in China aren't the only products laced with dangerous heavy metals: lipstick manufactured in the United States and used daily by millions of American women also contains surprisingly high levels of lead, according to an October 2007 report on lead in lipstick issued by the Campaign for Safe Cosmetics. The lead tests were conducted by an independent laboratory over the month of September on red lipsticks bought in Boston, Hartford, Conn., San Francisco and Minneapolis. The provocative report's top findings include:

- More than half of 33 brand-name lipsticks tested (61 percent) contained detectable levels of lead, with levels ranging from 0.03 to 0.65 parts per million (ppm) even though none of the lipsticks tested listed lead as an ingredient.
- One-third of the tested lipsticks exceeded the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's 0.1 ppm limit for lead in candy – a standard established to protect children from directly ingesting lead.
- 39 percent of lipsticks tested had no detectable levels of lead, proving it is possible to manufacture lipstick without lead.

The top brands testing positive for lead at levels 5 to 6 times higher the FDA allowable level of lead in candy were L'Oreal Colour Riche "True Red," Cover Girl Incredifull Lipcolor Maximum Red" and Dior Addict "Positive Red."

Lead is a proven neurotoxin that can cause learning, language and behavioral problems such as lowered IQ, reduced school performance and increased aggression. Pregnant women and young children are particularly vulnerable to lead exposure.

The Campaign for Safe Cosmetics' report called on the cosmetics industry to reformulate products to remove lead, to require its suppliers to guarantee that raw materials are free of lead and other contaminants, and to join the campaign in demanding that the FDA more strictly regulate personal care products.

The media response to the lead in lipstick report was off the charts including television, print and radio stories on *Good Morning America*, *National Public Radio*, *the Boston Globe*. Plus, it was the number one most actively searched news story on both Yahoo News and Google Health News on Friday, Oct. 12, 2007, the day after the report was released.

In reaction to the report, the FDA asked the Campaign for the lot numbers of the lipsticks it tested so they could confirm the results. This is an important announcement because when the FDA confirms the Campaign findings they will be forced to act to develop a more protective standard for lead in lipstick. In addition in a November 19 letter to the FDA, Democratic Senators John Kerry, Barbara Boxer and Dianne Feinstein called for a full investigation into the lead content of lipsticks accusing the FDA of lack of oversight on this issue.

The full report, "A Poison Kiss: The Problem of Lead in Lipstick," including complete test results, is posted at www.SafeCosmetics.org.

Founding members of the Campaign for Safe Cosmetics include Alliance for a Healthy Tomorrow, Breast Cancer Fund, Clean Water Fund, Commonweal, Friends of the Earth, Massachusetts Breast Cancer Coalition, Women's Voices for the Earth, Environmental Working Group, National Black Environmental Justice Network and the National Environmental Trust. For more information about the campaign, visit www.SafeCosmetics.org.