

**CITY OF BALTIMORE**

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For Immediate Release

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## **Baltimore Finds Lead Hazards Recalled in 2004 Still Sold to Children**

May 3, 2007 -- The Baltimore City Health Department is asking the Consumer Product Safety Commission why lead-tainted children's jewelry was found in city vending machines more than two years after the items were part of a national recall.

The Health Department is also ordering another item of children's jewelry ordered off of the market after testing high for lead.

On March 27, the Health Department announced that it had identified three rings sold in city vending machines that tested approximately 5% lead by weight. This is approximately 100 times the limit for lead in paint. The rings had designs of small dice and horseshoes. At the time, the Health Department ordered these products off of the market under the city's regulation prohibiting excess levels of lead in children's jewelry.

The Health Department alerted the Consumer Product Safety Commission about the findings. The Commission investigated and determined these items were previously subject to a recall in July 2004.

Yesterday, the Consumer Product Safety Commission announced a re-recall of the items. According to the Commission, "The rings contain high levels of lead. Lead is toxic if ingested by young children and can cause adverse health effects. These rings were subject to the July 2004 recall of 150 million pieces of children's metal jewelry. The firm placed the recalled rings that it had pulled from stores back into circulation."

"These rings were quite small and could pose a health risk if chewed or swallowed by small children," said Olivia Farrow, Assistant Commissioner for Environmental Health. "It is unacceptable for products that are known to be unsafe to be sold again to children in our city."

"This re-recall raises serious questions about the Consumer Product Safety Commission's voluntary approach to lead-tainted children's jewelry," said Dr. Joshua M. Sharfstein, Commissioner of Health. "If we cannot trust that unsafe products are off the market, what's the point of having a recall?"

Assistant Commissioner Farrow and Dr. Sharfstein plan to write the Consumer Product Safety Commission with the city's concerns. The Health Department is urging the Commission to adopt clear and enforceable rules that govern these products to protect children across the country.

The Health Department is also announcing another recall today of a turquoise ring sold, pictured below, at the Bi-Rite Grocery store on Belair Road in Baltimore City. The ring was purchased from a vending machine owned by Cardinal Novelty. This is the same company involved in the July 2004 recall and the Baltimore action of March 2007.



The ring contained 45,390 parts per million of lead.

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)

Related links:

CPSC re-recall:

<http://www.cpsc.gov/cpscpub/prere1/prhtml07/07174.html>

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