

**CITY OF BALTIMORE**

SHEILA DIXON, Mayor



**HEALTH DEPARTMENT**

Olivia D. Farrow, Esq., R.S.  
Interim Commissioner  
1001 E. Fayette Street  
Baltimore, MD 21202

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**MEDIA CONTACT: Brian Schleiter**

**PHONE: 443-984-2623**

**[Mediahealth@baltimorecity.gov](mailto:Mediahealth@baltimorecity.gov)**

## Baltimore City Health Department Announces Start of Trans Fat Prohibition For Food Facilities

**BALTIMORE, MD** (September 18, 2009) – Beginning Sunday, September 20, 2009, all City food establishments will be prohibited from serving and selling foods, which are not prepackaged, that contain 0.5 grams or greater of trans fat. Interim Commissioner Olivia D. Farrow today announced details of the ban, the enforcement strategy and new resources available to affected businesses.

In March 2008, Mayor Sheila Dixon signed legislation prohibiting food facilities from preparing and cooking foods with ingredients that contain 0.5 grams or greater of trans fat. Businesses were given several months to substitute healthier alternatives.

“I applaud the restaurant and baking industry in Baltimore for embracing this transition away from artery-clogging trans fats to recipes with healthier ingredients,” said Mayor Dixon. “The implementation of this legislation will greatly assist our progress in making Baltimore a healthier city.”

Most trans fats are artificial fats that are created when manufacturers add hydrogen to vegetable oil. Trans fats both elevate LDL (“bad”) cholesterol that causes heart disease and lower HDL (“good”) cholesterol that works to clear arteries. The National Institutes of Health has found that more than 12.5 million Americans have congestive heart disease and more than 500,000 die each year from the disease. Studies have indicated that trans fats are responsible for as many as 30,000 premature deaths in the United States each year.

By simply replacing the use of partially hydrogenated vegetable oil with a healthier alternative, restaurant operators will be assisting their customers in living a healthier life.

“The Baltimore City Health Department strongly believes that such a prohibition is necessary,” said Interim Commissioner Farrow. “This is another step towards a healthier Baltimore.”

Since the law was passed, the Baltimore City Health Department has encouraged local bakers to consider alternative recipes that are equally delicious but trans-fat free. Environmental Health sanitarians have reached out to local bakeries in an effort to learn how they will transition and have provided them with resources to alternatives – trans fat-free ingredients.

Moderate and high priority food service facilities found to be using vegetable shortening, margarine or any kind of partially hydrogenated vegetable oil or ingredients containing such will receive a violation. Repeat offenders could face closure. More information about how the trans fat ban will be enforced is available on the Health Department's Website, [www.baltimorehealth.org/transfat](http://www.baltimorehealth.org/transfat).

For advice on eating healthy and reducing trans fat in your diet, visit [www.fda.gov](http://www.fda.gov) or [www.AskInspectorO.org](http://www.AskInspectorO.org).

###