

# A Minnesota Cross-Agency Partnership:

Health

Pollution  
Control  
Agency

Chemicals in  
Products  
Interagency  
Team (CPIT)

Commerce

Goal: To reduce the amount of chemical hazards in products, their dispersion into Minnesota's environment, and their presence in the bodies of Minnesota citizens, especially our most vulnerable communities.



## Toy Safety Act

### Enforcement Action and Consumer Tips

November 2017

#### Background

Minnesota has enacted several laws that restrict and regulate toxic chemicals in children's products, including the Safe Toys Act. To enforce these laws and encourage industry compliance, the Minnesota Department of Commerce, Minnesota Department of Health and Minnesota Pollution Control Agency established the Chemicals in Products Interagency Team.

Earlier this year, under Minnesota's Safe Toys Act, the Interagency Team launched a pilot investigation to identify children's jewelry sold in Minnesota that may pose a health hazard due to toxic chemicals. The Pollution Control Agency bought 89 children's jewelry products, both in-store and online. Laboratory testing identified three products with high levels of cadmium, a toxic metal. The Department of Health determined that these levels represented a hazard to children. The Commerce Department then conducted an investigation under the Safe Toys Act.

Some companies now use cadmium as a low-cost substitute for lead, which is highly restricted in children's products. But cadmium exposure has been associated with delayed brain development, kidney and bone damage, and cancer. Babies and young children are at particular risk because they often bite, chew or suck on toys and other objects — and may swallow them.

#### Enforcement Action

The three children's jewelry products were purchased from independent retailers on Amazon.com.

The Minnesota Commerce Department formally notified the retailers that these products posed a toxic hazard to children and violated Minnesota law. In response, the retailers voluntarily issued recalls and provided refunds to Minnesota consumers who had purchased the products. Amazon removed the online product listings and cooperated with the investigation.

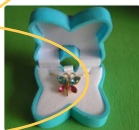
The investigation is continuing to gather information about the product manufacturers and other retailers that may be selling these products in Minnesota.

#### Butterfly necklace

Description: Butterfly necklace with aqua and hot pink jewel wings; gold-colored metal wing frames and back, in butterfly gift box

Seller: NYBK Group

Test results: Cadmium – 89%

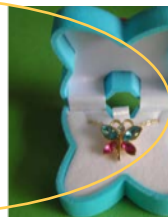


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Above: Part of an Enforcement Action and Consumer Tips handout

Stay connected with Minnesota's Toxic Free Kids listserv for children's environmental health announcements.

## Below left: Part of a *Lead and Cadmium in Children's Jewelry* handout

Do not allow children to put jewelry in their mouth.



### How can I protect my children from lead and cadmium in children's jewelry products?

- Do not allow your child to mouth, bite, or swallow children's jewelry
- Wash hands often, such as after touching children's jewelry
- Avoid shopping in-store or on-line for jewelry when no information is provided of where the jewelry was made
- Be cautious about inexpensive jewelry

### How do I safely dispose of jewelry items that may contain lead or cadmium?

Call your area [household hazardous waste collection program](#) for disposal advice, but they may not accept jewelry if it hasn't been tested. If you have doubts or concerns about jewelry items that have not been tested, they should be disposed of in household trash. The jewelry items should not be donated to charity or otherwise reused. Store the jewelry items away from children until you have the opportunity to dispose of them.

Like these educational materials? **Stay connected** with **Minnesota's Toxic Free Kids** listserv for children's environmental health announcements:

[www.health.state.mn.us/divs/eh/hazardous/topics/toxfreekids/](http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/eh/hazardous/topics/toxfreekids/)

Below: A *Lead Infographic*

## For more information

- Toy and children's product compliance: Minnesota Department of Commerce  
Email: [consumer.protection@state.mn.us](mailto:consumer.protection@state.mn.us)  
Phone: 651-539-1600
- Product testing and safer product chemistry  
Minnesota Pollution Control Agency  
Email: [p2.pca@state.mn.us](mailto:p2.pca@state.mn.us)  
Phone: 651-296-6300 or 800-657-3864
- Chemicals of high concern to children; risks: Minnesota Department of Health  
Email: [health.risk@state.mn.us](mailto:health.risk@state.mn.us)  
Phone: 651-201-4899
- Michelle Gin, MPH  
Toxic Free Kids Communications Planner  
Minnesota Department of Health  
Email: [michelle.gin@state.mn.us](mailto:michelle.gin@state.mn.us)  
Phone: 651-201-4825

## Lead Awareness

Remember:

- 1 Children are most at risk.
- 2 No level of lead is safe.
- 3 Lead impacts learning and behavior.



84%

of children with a high blood lead level had hazardous lead paint in their home.\*

\*EPA 2004 National Lead Research Report

### Minnesota lead sources:

Paint/paint dust	Products (jewelry, beauty products, toys, ceramics, antiques)
Spices and medication, especially from outside of the U.S.	
Parent occupation or hobbies (remodeling, construction, smelting, firearm use, pottery)	
Water	

What you can do:

**1 in 3** homes in Minnesota may have lead paint. Older homes are more likely to have sources of lead.

Lead in drinking water is still a common source of elevated blood lead levels in Minnesota.

If you have a private well, it is recommended you test your tap water for lead.

Children should be screened for blood lead levels at ages 1 and 2 years old.

Do not disturb paint if your house was built before 1978.

Let water run for 30 seconds if you have not used the tap in more than six hours. Use cold water for cooking and drinking.

Clean surfaces regularly with soapy water and a rag.

If your work or hobbies involve lead, do not wear work clothes or shoes into the home and wash clothes separately.

Call Minnesota Department of Health if you are concerned about lead in paint, products, or drinking water. Phone: 651-201-4620

**1 in 100** Minnesota children have an elevated blood level.

Lead may be found in inexpensive jewelry, craft charms, toys, keys, and beauty products.

Do not let children put jewelry or keys in their mouth.

Avoid painted antique items such as furniture, lamps, and toys.

Ask your health care provider about blood lead screening guidelines for your child.