

Lead recalls and proper management



Millions of imported toys, jewelry, vinyl lunch boxes, and clothing clasps containing unsafe levels of lead are currently being sold in stores across the U.S. Even some imported children's candy has been found to contain high levels of lead. So you need to be aware of every item you buy, no matter where you buy it.

Children are most vulnerable to the toxic effects of lead. If a child happens to ingest lead, the adverse health effects can include reduced IQ, learning disabilities, behavioral problems, stunted growth, impaired hearing, or even kidney damage. The National Safety Council reports that with high levels

of lead exposure, a child may become mentally retarded, fall into a coma, and possibly die from lead poisoning. For a list of recalled toys, and toys to avoid, information about screening for lead exposure in children, and guidelines for parents on toy safety, visit the American Academy of Pediatrics: www.aap.org/new/toyrecall.htm.

What you can do

There are currently no reliable, yet affordable lead test kits available for consumers. Instead, you need to protect your family by checking for past and current recalls listed on the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) website: www.cpsc.gov. These notices show pictures of the recalled items and give clear directions on how to return each product. You can also sign up for immediate alerts about lead recalls (select both "child products" and "toys" categories).

If you discover an unsafe item

1. Follow the Consumer Products Safety Commission directions on where and how to return the item to the manufacturer. This gives a clear message that products with lead won't be tolerated. **Or**
2. Return the item to the retail store where it was bought for a possible refund. **Or**
3. If this is not possible, bag the item and place it in the trash. (Although the amount of lead in these toys is a serious health concern for children, it's minimal as a waste concern.)

If you suspect that your child has been exposed to excessive levels of lead, immediately contact a physician.

For more information

- **Toys:** American Academy of Pediatrics: www.aap.org/new/toyrecall.htm
- **Specific recalled products:** Consumer Product Safety Commission: www.cpsc.gov
- **Lead in the home:** Minnesota Department of Health: 651-201-4620; www.health.state.mn.us/divs/eh/lead



Minnesota Pollution Control Agency

www.pca.state.mn.us

