



Tom Barrett
Mayor

Bevan K. Baker, CHE
Acting Commissioner of Health

Administration



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HEALTH COMMISSIONER TO ISSUE ORDER FOR THE REMOVAL OF CERTAIN CANDY FROM STORE SHELVES

Dangerous lead levels found in Mexican candy sold in Southside stores

The City of Milwaukee Health Department (MHD) will issue an order under the authority of Health Commissioner Bevan K. Baker, CHE for the removal of Lucas Limon brand candy from retail grocery stores. This action is a result of a recent analysis by the City of Milwaukee Laboratory, which found that of 6 tests conducted of the Lucas Limon brand, 3 were found to be above the FDA limit of .5 ppm (parts per million). **Lucas Limon brand was detected to have as much as .85 ppm.**

MHD Lead and Food inspectors are scheduled to visit grocery stores known for selling the candy product starting July 30, 2004 and order the removal from store shelves and request that the product be shipped back to the distributor. In addition, risk communication in both English and Spanish will be developed to provide guidance and information to parents regarding these popular but tainted candies.

"This action taken is simply good public health practice to safeguard those individuals most vulnerable, the children of our community," said Mayor Tom Barrett.

The MHD continues to work closely with the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), Department of Agriculture Trade and Consumer Protection, local retailers and community health centers partners to build awareness of this newfound source of toxic lead levels in candy. The FDA has compiled information and issued an import alert on candies and related products that contain significant amounts of chili powder may contain higher lead levels than other types of candy, such as candy that contains predominantly sugar. Examples of chili containing products include lollipops coated with chili and powdery mixtures of salt, lemon flavor and chili seasoning sold as a snack item.

"Lead is a poison with no useful purpose in the human body," said Health Commissioner Bevan K. Baker. "Lead poisoning in children is preventable, therefore we must take proactive measures to eliminate the sources of this toxic element from our environment."

Lead-based paint continues to be a source of lead poisoning in our community. Nationally, 2.2% of children have lead levels above the threshold of concerns of 10 ug/dL (micrograms per deciliter). In Milwaukee, the rate is 11.4% impacting 2,136 children.

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Impact of lead poisoning include:

- Decreased intelligence/ability to learn.
- Increased behavior problems.
- Increased childhood health problems, such as speech and language delays, hearing problems, kidney damage, seizure, and in rare cases, even death.
- Decreased school performance.
- Increased juvenile delinquency.
- Decreased health and economic status of the future adult population.

There are often no signs or symptoms. Children can have lead poisoning and not look or act sick. Sometimes children feel sick to their stomachs and feel tired or irritable.

Screening is the only way to tell if your child is being affected by lead. The Milwaukee Health Department recommends that all children be screened three times before age three, at around 12, 18, and 24 months of age.

For more information about lead poisoning, please visit the MHD's Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention web site at www.milwaukee.gov/health or call the MHD at 225-LEAD.

Health Commissioner Bevan K. Baker along with elected officials and community leaders will hold a press conference tomorrow July 30, 2004 to increase awareness of this serious health concern.

WHAT: Press Conference
WHEN: Friday, July 30, 2004
WHERE: El Rey Mexican Products
1023 South 16 Street
Milwaukee

TIME: 10:30 a.m.

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