

Press Releases

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STATE HEALTH DEPARTMENT WARNS CONSUMERS NOT TO EAT TWO BRANDS OF LEAD-CONTAMINATED CANDY FROM MEXICO

SACRAMENTO ? Based on tests conducted by the California Department of Health Services (CDHS), two candy products imported from Mexico may contain high levels of lead that could cause serious health problems, Interim State Public Health Officer Dr. Howard Backer warned today. Consumers, particularly infants, young children and pregnant women, should not eat Dulmex Rollito De Tamarindo, a tamarind candy, and Vero Vagabundo, a hard candy lollipop with a chili dipping powder.

"Lead is toxic to humans, especially infants, young children and developing fetuses," Backer said. "Due to CDHS' ongoing concern that imported candy from Mexico may have high levels of lead, we conduct regular random testing of various brands."

Recent analysis of Dulmex Rollito de Tamarindo candy by CDHS identified that the candy may contain as much as 0.59 micrograms of lead per gram of product (parts per million). Similar analysis of Vero Vagabundo candy revealed that the powder portion of the candy may contain as much as 0.72 micrograms of lead per gram of product. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration and CDHS have alerted consumers and taken enforcement actions against candies exceeding 0.5 micrograms of lead per gram of product.

Pregnant women and parents of children who may have consumed these products should consult with their physician or health care provider to determine if further medical testing is warranted. For more information about lead poisoning, parents should contact their local childhood lead poisoning prevention program or local public health department. Additional information on lead poisoning and a list of local childhood lead poisoning prevention programs are available at the following CDHS Web site: <http://www.dhs.ca.gov/childlead>. The California Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Branch can also be reached at (510) 622-5000 for a list of these programs.

Consumers in possession of Dulmex Rollito De Tamarindo candy or Vagabundo candy should dispose of the product or return it to the place of purchase for a refund. The public is encouraged to report any sellers of the candy by calling the CDHS hot line at 1-800-495-3232. A list of candies and test results can be found at the following Web site (<http://www.dhs.ca.gov/fdb>).

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