

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release:
June 14, 2007

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Massive Toy Recall Points to the Need for Greater Protections Against Lead in Children's Products

On Wednesday, the federal Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) ordered a massive recall of the popular Thomas the Tank Engine toys due to lead paint hazards. The toys are made in China and can present a health risk for children who are exposed.

The CPSC and RC2 Corp., the manufacturer of the products, warned parents to take immediate action to protect their children from exposure to the toys.

“This recall is further evidence that toxic lead is an ongoing threat in many products sold every day in this country, despite the fact that most people think the problem was eliminated decades ago,” said Paul Burns, executive director of the Vermont Public Interest Research Group.

Vermont is at the forefront of states grappling with lead hazards. Earlier this year, a report called “Get the Lead Out of Vermont” was released by the Attorney General and acting Commissioner of Health that identified lead hazards in the state and made recommendations for action.

Among the recommendations contained in the report was a call to “Prohibit the marketing or sale of children’s products containing any amount of lead.”

A bill (S.152) to carry out that recommendation and others was introduced by state Sen. Ginny Lyons and is expected to be taken up by the legislature next year.

“It’s high time that Vermont banned lead in children’s products. It’s a completely unnecessary threat to children’s health considering the fact that there are many thousands of safe alternatives available today,” Burns added.

The toy train recall follows a CPSC recall earlier this year of 500,000 pieces of children's jewelry that contained dangerously high levels of lead. Other recent recalls of products tainted with lead include bibs and lunch boxes.