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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Health Department Finalizes Regulation on Lead in Children's Jewelry

BALTIMORE, MD (December 7, 2006) – The Baltimore City Health Department is releasing its final regulation on lead in children's jewelry today.

The regulation states that the Commissioner of Health has determined that any piece of children's jewelry with a metal component part containing lead in excess of 600 parts per million is a threat to public health. 600 parts per million is the same standard as lead in paint.

The regulation provides a timeline for manufacturers and distributors to meet the new standard. Effective immediately, the regulation prohibits the sale and distribution in Baltimore City of children's jewelry with metal components containing lead in excess of 1200 parts per million. As of September 1, 2007, this limit will drop to 600 parts per million, in concert with legislation taking effect in California.

Earlier this week, the staff of the Consumer Product Safety Commission staff announced their support for a federal limit of 600 parts per million of lead in metal children's jewelry. However, the federal regulatory process could take many months or years before such a standard is established, and no end result is guaranteed.

"Baltimore is far too familiar with the detrimental results of our children being exposed to dangerous levels of lead," said City Council President and Mayor-Designate Sheila Dixon. "We are making significant progress with lead paint. There's no excuse for not protecting our children from lead exposure across the board. I applaud today's announcement."

"Children's jewelry does not need to contain dangerous amounts of lead," said Dr. Joshua M. Sharfstein, Commissioner of Health. "In addition to taking action in Baltimore today, we support a strong federal standard that protects children everywhere."

A copy of the final regulation, which incorporates several changes suggested by those who commented during the public comment period, is attached.

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