

Environmental Health Coalition Launches National Resource for Lead-Free Candy

Environmental justice organization launches website providing important resources for parents, healthcare professionals, candy manufacturers and retailers

SAN DIEGO, September 12, 2014 – Today [Environmental Health Coalition](#) (EHC), an organization fighting toxic pollution in San Diego and Tijuana, launches the country's new resource for information pertaining to the struggle to remove lead from candy. A leader in the fight for lead-free candies for over a decade, EHC [now hosts a website](#) with updated information on lead-free candy for consumers, manufacturers, retailers, healthcare professionals, school teachers and the general public.

The website, www.leadfreecandy.org, provides everything people need to know about lead in candy. This includes information on the hazards of lead poisoning; how to keep children safe from all sources of lead, how EHC and partners took action to regulate contaminated candies in California and more. EHC's new website comes complete with downloadable fliers of frequently asked questions, lists of popular lead-free candies, educational materials, and more.

"We're honored to be the national resource for this social justice milestone," says Environmental Health Coalition Executive Director Diane Takvorian. "Before California implemented mandatory manufacturer audits and lead regulation levels, our children were at great risk. Establishing a California law to monitor candy-manufacturing processes for lead was one of biggest victories to protect children's health—and now anyone anywhere can access this information. " For more than thirty years, EHC has worked to prevent lead poisoning in children. Lead poisoning is a completely avoidable condition that children in the United States suffer from as a result of exposure to lead from various sources. In the early 2000s, lead was found in a variety of candy products sold in California.

After a thorough investigation, EHC, the California Attorney General's Office and several other parties filed a lawsuit to demand manufacturing processes eliminate lead in candy products. EHC then spearheaded an effort to enact a statewide law prohibiting the sale of candy contaminated with lead above a threshold level. To keep children safe, candy manufacturers now undergo regular audits to ensure compliance with the legal level and, ensure candies sold in California are safe to consume.

To continue protecting children from lead in candy, the new website posts alerts when candies are found to be contaminated with lead as a result of federal or state testing.

In San Diego, EHC works to eliminate all sources of lead at home and in the community, collaborating with the San Diego Housing Commission to offer resources for homeowners and renters to create a lead-safe home and to host free blood-lead testing events in low-income neighborhoods. These events identify children with elevated blood-lead levels, which can cause learning disabilities, behavioral problems hyperactivity and reduced IQ.

"Most manufacturers are now producing lead-free candy, but lead can still be found in paint, dirt and other areas of pre-1978 housing," says EHC Healthy Kids Campaign Director Leticia Ayala. "We encourage people to visit our website regularly for updated and useful information to keep children safe, healthy and happy – and that means not having to worry about getting brain damaged from candy."

While the law only pertains to candies sold in California, EHC hopes consumers across the country will use this resource to guide purchasing decisions. EHC encourages people outside of California to advocate for similar laws that require that candy is lead-free. [View the California law here.](#)

For more information on lead-free candy, please visit <http://www.leadfreecandy.org>. To learn more about Environmental Health Coalition and its mission to prevent lead poisoning in children, [click here.](#)

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Environmental Health Coalition (EHC) is a nonprofit organization that empowers residents to advocate for the environmental health of their children, families and neighborhoods. For more information on EHC, please visit www.environmentalhealth.org.