



**For Immediate Release**

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**Children's Bath Products Tainted with Cancer-Causing Chemicals**

*Lack of Regulatory Oversight Allows Toxic Products in Marketplace*

St. Paul, MN – Despite label claims like “gentle” and “pure,” dozens of top-selling children’s bath products are contaminated with the cancer-causing chemicals formaldehyde and 1,4-dioxane, according to new report and product tests released today by the Campaign for Safe Cosmetics and Minnesota-based Healthy Legacy.

This is the first report to document the widespread presence of both formaldehyde and 1,4-dioxane—contaminants that are exempt from labeling laws—in bath products for children.

Formaldehyde and 1,4-dioxane are known to cause cancer in animals, and are listed as probable human carcinogens by the Environmental Protection Agency. Formaldehyde can also trigger skin rashes in children who are sensitive to the chemical.

Many of the tested products, including baby shampoo, bubble bath and baby lotion—which could be used together in a single bath session—contained *both* formaldehyde and 1,4-dioxane, as well as other toxic chemicals. While industry frequently states that the levels found are “low,” children often receive multiple chemical exposures from various sources, and these are additional, preventable exposures.

Minnesota has introduced legislation—the Toxic-Free Kids Act (HF250/SF225)—to address some of these preventable exposures. The bill, championed by Sen. Linda Scheid (DFL-Brooklyn Park) and Rep. Kate Knuth (DFL- New Brighton), would allow the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency to gather information about toxic chemicals ending up in children’s products and prioritize those chemicals. If toxic chemicals were not used in children’s products in the first place, there would be less concern for contaminants such as 1,4 dioxane and formaldehyde.

**“The more reports that show chemicals in children’s products, the more apparent it becomes that we need to pass policies that will protect Minnesota’s children,”** said Rep. Kate Knuth (DFL-New Brighton). **“Minnesota has the opportunity to take meaningful steps forward to address this problem and I am increasingly confident we can do this in 2009.”**

For the product analysis, an independent laboratory tested 48 products for 1,4-dioxane; 28 of those products were also tested for formaldehyde. The findings include:

- **17 out of 28 products tested— 61 percent—contained both formaldehyde and 1,4-dioxane,** including: Johnson’s Baby Shampoo, Sesame Street Bubble Bath, Grins & Giggles Milk & Honey Baby Wash, and Huggies Naturally Refreshing Cucumber & Green Tea Baby Wash.

- **23 out of 28 products—82 percent—contained formaldehyde** at levels ranging from 79 parts per million (ppm) to 610 ppm. Baby Magic Baby Lotion had the highest levels. **Formaldehyde is banned from personal care products in Japan and Sweden.**
- **32 out of 48 products—67 percent—contained 1,4-dioxane** at levels ranging from 0.27 ppm to 35 ppm. American Girl shower products had the has recalled products found to contain the chemical. **The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission states that “the presence of 1,4-dioxane, even as a trace contaminant, is cause for concern.”**

Unlike many other countries, the United States does not limit formaldehyde, 1,4 dioxane, or most other hazardous substances in personal care products. Companies are allowed to use nearly any ingredient in personal care products with no required safety assessment.

**“If Japan has banned formaldehyde in personal care products and the E.U. doesn’t even allow trace amounts of 1,4 dioxane in cosmetics, I wonder what it is doing in my children’s bath soap?”** stated concerned parent Misty Winters. **“It is time for Minnesota and the U.S. to stop this double standard and ensure that our products are safe.”**

**“Children are exposed to toxic chemicals from multiple sources and we need to protect them from repeated, unnecessary exposures,”** said Dr. Jim Hart, president of the Minnesota Public Health Association . **“State and federal governments urgently need to reform policy to ensure that the products we use every day are free from harmful chemicals.”**

The full results of the study can be found at [www.safecosmetics.org/toxictub](http://www.safecosmetics.org/toxictub).

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*Healthy Legacy is a Minnesota-based public health coalition dedicated to safe products, made safely. We advocate for consumer education, business leadership and protective policies. For a list of our coalition partners, visit our Web site at [www.healthylegacy.org](http://www.healthylegacy.org).*