

For Immediate Release

9th June 2015

"Move towards lead safe and earthquake resilient reconstruction in Nepal"

EU-Funded Study finds Nepalese paints with lead level above 90 ppm Standard openly sold in market.

9th June, Kathmandu A new study on lead in decorative paints in Nepal released today by Center for Public Health and Environmental Development finds that 89% of the paints that were sampled had lead level above the standard of 90 ppm lead in paint.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), "Lead has no essential role in the human body, and lead poisoning accounts for about 0.6% of the global burden of disease. Evidence of reduced intelligence caused by childhood exposure to lead has led WHO to list **"lead-caused mental retardation"** as a recognized disease. Children, ages 0-6, engaging in normal hand-to-mouth behaviors are most at risk of damage to their intelligence and mental development from exposure to lead dust and soil.

"The health impacts of lead exposure on young children's brains are lifelong, irreversible and untreatable, said Ram Charitra Sah, Executive Director, Center for Public Health and Environmental Development. He continued, "Nearly 500000 buildings are to be reconstructed and renovate after this tragic earthquake of 25th April, 2015. We urge government to effectively implement the gazette standard by monitoring the lead content in paints sold in the Nepalese market to protect the human health as well as environment. We urge everyone to unite for the lead safe and earthquake resilient structure in Nepal."

"Ministry of Science, Technology and Environment (MOSTE) gazette a standard of 90 ppm lead in paint that will take effect from 20th June 2015. Similarly, Department of Education published a public notice regarding the use of paints only complying the Government of Nepal 90 ppm standard in the entire household, private and public school buildings and furniture's throughout the country.", Ram Charitra Sah, CEPHED.

The paint study released today was conducted as a part the IPEN Asian Lead Paint Elimination Project, which has been working with government, the paint industry and the public over the last 3 years to raise awareness of the dangers associated with high lead levels in paint. The Asian Lead Paint Elimination project is being implemented in seven countries (Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Nepal, Philippines, Sri Lanka, and Thailand) with a total European Union funding of EUR 1.4 million (NRs. 16 Crore) over a period of 2012-2015. Center for Public Health and Environmental Development is an implementing partner for the project in Nepal.

Earlier studies, conducted by CEPHED and others had demonstrated that most multinational paint companies (Asian Paints, Berger Jonson and Nicolson paints, Kansai Nepal Paints), with approximately 70 percent of market share in Nepal, had already made the shift to paints with lead levels below 90 ppm. The current study was conducted to determine whether other paint companies with high lead levels in the past, mostly small and mid-size business, had begun to shift away from high lead paints.

Key findings of the study include:

- Nearly 9 out 10 (89 percent) of all paints in the study exceed Nepal's recently gazette standard of 90 ppm and will be illegal after June 20, when the new law takes effect.
- There has been only a small improvement in lead reduction in paints since CEPHED last tested paints in 2013.
- A substantial number of paint manufacturers will need to need to shift to lead safe paints in order to be compliant with the new law.



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- Green, yellow and red color paints are the most likely to contain dangerously high levels of lead above 10,000 ppm.
- Paint can labels with Nepal Standard Mark can be misleading.

CEPHED recommends the following actions to continue the efforts to protect the Nepalese children:

❖ **Government should:**

- Inform each and every concerned government agencies, paint companies, importers, dealers, retailers and general public about newly enacted mandatory standard of 90 ppm of lead in paint and labeling provision.
- Establish strong and efficient monitoring mechanism to ensure the compliance of 90 ppm standard by paint manufacturer.
- Monitor the proper labeling of paints including lead content, list of other compounds, date of manufacture and date of expiry and labeling to alert users to the hazards of lead-contaminated dust and other materials when previously painted surfaces are scraped or sanded in preparation for repainting.
- Immediately take the decisions of Green Public Procurement Policy (GPPP), i.e., only purchase non-lead paints, and effectively implement it.

❖ **Paint Industry, Nepal Paint Manufacturers Associations and Chamber of Commerce Organizations** should comply the 90 ppm standard of lead in paint during paint manufacturing stage by discontinuing the use of leaded driers, leaded pigments, leaded fillers and other purposes in paint formulations and shift with non-lead substitutes

❖ **Paints Dealers and Retailers** should only import, sale and distribute paints complying with the government mandatory standard of 90 ppm lead in paints.

❖ **Consumers** should be aware and inspect labeling on paint products when purchasing paint and demand for paint cans with information about lead and other hazardous chemicals.

END

For More information

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IPEN is an international organization promoting safe chemical practices that protect human health and the environment



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Ministry of Science, Technology and Environment

Notice No. 3

(Part 64, Number 30, Nepal Gazette, Part 5, dated December 22, 2014)

In exercise of the power conferred by Rules 15 of the Environment Protection Regulation, 1997 shall come into effect from 181 days from the date of publication of the notice by the Government of Nepal has set the standard limiting maximum Lead in paints imported and produced in Nepal to Ninety (90) parts per million (ppm) or Ninety (90) milligram per liter (mg/L), label paints can with lead content and protective precautionary message to prevent the occupational exposure by the publication of the notice.

With permission
Mahendra Man Gurung
Acting Secretary, Government of Nepal

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२०१५ साल चैत १ गे अइवसर
2015 March 15 Sunday



नेपाल सरकार
शिक्षा मन्त्रालय
शिक्षा विभाग

विद्यालय शिक्षासम्बन्धी गतिविधि-१३१

घर तथा विद्यालय पूर्वाधारहरू रङ्गाउँदा नेपाल सरकारद्वारा तोकिएको लेडको मापदण्ड
१० पि.पि.ए.एम अनुसारको रङ्गाहल मात्र प्रयोग गरौं

सबै उमेरका मानिसहरू एवम् खासगरी बालबालिकाहरू लेड (मिमा) को सम्पर्कमा आएको खण्डमा घट्टे लेक्ने क्षमता घट्न सक्ने, अर्निबानी तथा हाडमाउमा परिवर्तन आउने, स्नायु प्रणाली, प्रजनन प्रणालीमा गडबडी, मानसिक सन्तुलन बिग्रन सक्ने, आदि हुनसक्छ। लेडले बालबालिकाको शारीरिक, मानसिक तथा बौद्धिक विकासमा निकै नकारात्मक प्रभाव पुऱ्याउँछ। सर्वसाधारणको घर तथा विद्यालय भवन, फर्निचर, खेलौना, खेल सामग्री, खेलमैदान तथा अन्य मौलिकपूर्वाधारहरू रङ्गाउने रङ्गाहरूमा पाइने लेड (मिमा) को असरलाई न्यूनिकरण गर्नका निम्ति नेपाल सरकारद्वारा रङ्गामा लेडको मापदण्ड १० पि.पि.एम तोकिएको हुँदा सम्पूर्ण सामुदायिक तथा संस्थागत विद्यालयहरूले बजारमा उपलब्ध लेड नमिसावटको रङ्गाहल मात्र खरिद गरी प्रयोग गर्नु गराउनु हुन सबै सरोकारवालाको जानकारीको लागि यो सूचना प्रकाशन गरिएको छ।

Public Notice from Department of Education, Ministry of Education, Government of Nepal.



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