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PERSONAL CARE PRODUCTS COUNCIL

HALLOWEEN FACE PAINTS ARE REGULATED BY FDA AND CAN BE USED SAFELY

On Oct. 27, 2009, the Campaign for Safe Cosmetics (CSC) issued a news release and report alleging that the levels of various heavy metals the group found in theatrical and Halloween face paints could lead to skin allergies in children.

"Face paints are novelty products that are applied infrequently and sold for use on special occasions or in theatrical settings. Like cosmetics, these products are regulated by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), and the color additives used in them must be approved and listed by FDA. Although the report does not identify the specific color ingredients in the products tested, the trace levels of naturally occurring heavy metals reportedly found in the products are well below the allowable levels set by FDA for approved colors as not presenting a safety concern.

"Although the report alleges that FDA does little to ensure the safety of these products, the agency does monitor face paints and has twice worked with manufacturers on recalls of face paint items when they were found to cause skin irritation and rashes.

"Parents are advised to follow all directions on how to use and remove face paints, avoid products that indicate they are not to be used on children, and test products on your child's arm a couple of days in advance to check for any potential allergic reaction. For more information on face paint safety and tips for safe use, parents should consult the FDA Web site at: <http://www.fda.gov/Cosmetics/ProductandIngredientSafety/ProductInformation/ucm143055.htm>. Parents may also read face paint product labels and consult this site to ensure that the color ingredients in the product they intend to buy are approved by FDA.

"If they follow these basic guidelines, parents can enjoy Halloween festivities with their children without unnecessary worry about the safety of these novelty products.

"Although CSC is recommending to parents that they should mix up their own children's face paints, parents should note that since heavy metals are ubiquitous in food, water, air and other consumer products, there is no guarantee that homemade face paints are safer or as safe as those that may be purchased in stores."

For more information on cosmetic and personal care products, visit www.CosmeticsInfo.org.

Based in Washington, D.C., the Personal Care Products Council is the leading national trade association representing the global cosmetic and personal care products industry. Founded in 1894, the Council's more than 600 member companies manufacture, distribute, and supply the vast majority of finished personal care products marketed in the U.S. As the makers of a diverse range of products millions of consumers rely on everyday, from sunscreens, toothpaste and shampoo to moisturizer, lipstick and fragrance, personal care products companies are global leaders committed to product safety, quality and innovation.