



Republic of the Philippines
Department of Health
FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION



29 May 2014

FDA Advisory
No. **2014-044**

**SUBJECT: Warning Against the Use of Unregistered Watercolor Paints
Containing High Levels of Lead (Pb)**

The FDA collected samples of unregistered watercolor paints in the market and tested them for possible violative levels of lead (Pb), a toxic heavy metals found in paints. The samples of products were collected from Merriam Webster Bookstore located at Carvajal St., Binondo, Manila and VMZ Bookstore at Guadalupe Shopping Center in Makati.

The FDA Laboratory findings revealed the presence of lead (Pb) beyond the maximum tolerable limit of 90 ppm. The sample of Artex Fine Water Color manufactured by Venus Commercial Co. located at 10 Univeristy Ave. Malabon City, collected from Merriam Webster Bookstore outlet showed that the yellow water color paints contained 3,342.41 ppm, while those from the VMZ Bookstore showed 5,089.42 ppm. Upon verification, the FDA database revealed that the watercolor paint products do not have market authorization from the FDA.

The laboratory tests were done by the FDA Central Laboratory in collaboration with the Department of Trade Industry (DTI) and a non-governmental organization (NGO), which performed initial screening for lead using a handheld X-Ray Fluorescence (XRF) device.

Lead has tendency to accumulate slowly in the body when ingested over prolonged period of time. Lead may be deposited in the bones and teeth, and can be found in blood. Chronic lead poisoning can cause nervous system toxicity and renal tubular dysfunction leading to irreversible interstitial nephrosis with progressive renal impairment and hypertension. Lead can also depress blood synthesis and shortens the life span of erythrocytes or red blood cells, causing a hypochromic microcytic anaemia.

The public is strongly advised to buy watercolor paints, among other school supplies and do-it-yourself products that are registered/notified with the FDA, supplied or distributed by FDA-licensed establishments and sold by legitimate outlets.

Republic Act No. 9711, otherwise known as the FDA Act of 2009, as well as Republic Act No. 7394, otherwise known as the Consumer Act of the Philippines, prohibit the manufacture, distribution, sale or offering for sale or use, advertisement,

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promotion, and transport, among others, of health products that are unregistered, adulterated or misbranded.

All FDA Field Officers are hereby ordered seized the said products and close down the unlicensed supplier, further to continue monitoring unregistered school supplies and do-it-yourself products that may pose risks to the health of children.

All government units and enforcement units are urged to close down outlets selling unregistered products. Likewise, the Bureau of Customs is requested to remain vigilant in guarding the Philippine borders against the entry of toxic, unregistered, counterfeit or smuggled products from other countries.

For more information and clarification, please email us via info@fda.gov.ph. To report unregistered, counterfeit or smuggled products, kindly email us at report@fda.gov.ph.


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