



# The Alliance for a **HEALTHY TOMORROW**

262 Washington St. #301 • Boston, MA 02108 • ph 617.338.8131 • fax 617.338.6449  
info@healthytomorrow.org • www.healthytomorrow.org

**For Immediate Release MAY 12, 2010**

**Contacts:** Namasha Schelling, Clean Water Action, (617) 338-8131 ext. 204,  
nschelling@cleanwater.org  
Elizabeth Saunders, Clean Water Action, (617) 338-8131 ext. 203,  
esaunders@cleanwater.org

## **DPH proposed regulation on Bisphenol-A (BPA) would still allow the toxic chemical in infant formula**

**Boston**—Today the Massachusetts Department of Public Health’s (DPH) Public Health Council (PHC) met to discuss a proposal to phase out certain children’s products containing the toxic chemical bisphenol A (BPA). The Alliance for a Healthy Tomorrow coalition (AHT) praised the DPH for moving forward with a BPA regulation, **but urged that the regulation as proposed will not adequately protect children’s health.**

Today’s meeting followed a March announcement by Governor Deval Patrick in which he directed the DPH to issue a regulation on bisphenol-A (BPA), a toxic chemical that leaches from polycarbonate plastics and the linings of food and beverage cans into children’s products. The DPH staff presentation made it clear that the proposal to cover only baby bottles and cups is based on direction from Governor Deval Patrick.

“This limited scope of products does not protect the developing fetus and babies because it allows BPA in infant formula and containers that pregnant women utilize,” said Lee Ketelsen Co-Director of Clean Water Action. “We call on Governor Patrick to support a regulation that takes real measures to protect developing children.”

“We have *unnecessary exposure* of vulnerable fetuses and infants to a hormone disrupting chemical,” said Cheryl-Durr Patry a member of Medfield Green. “It is imperative action be taken to phase out BPA from a *wide scope of products* to begin to protect our developing children”

BPA mimics the hormone estrogen and disrupts the body's endocrine system. Estrogen is an important chemical messenger and when disrupted, many systems in the body can be affected. BPA exposure during critical windows of development, such as in the womb and during infancy, is associated with serious, long term health impacts, even at very low doses. BPA was detected in the urine of 93% of the American population in a 2003-2004

study and children were found to have the highest levels. In animal studies, BPA exposure is linked to early onset of puberty, increased diabetes risk, hyperactivity, and certain cancers, including breast cancer.

"The body of evidence on the health effects of bisphenol A is more than sufficient to justify preventative measures to reduce exposure, especially to infants and the developing fetus," said Julia G. Brody, PhD, Executive Director of Silent Spring.

Last year, Connecticut (CT) passed a law to phase the toxic chemical out of infant formula and baby food cans and jars, as well as the full range of reusable food and beverage containers. Recently, Vermont (VT) passed a similar bill to the one in CT in both houses and the Governor has indicated that he will most likely sign the bill. This follows legislation in Canada, Minnesota, Suffolk County New York, and Chicago which prevents the chemical from use in baby bottles.

"Hundreds of government-funded studies have linked BPA with hyperactivity, impaired learning and delayed development," said Leo Sarkissian of the Arc of Massachusetts. "BPA-free food packaging already exists in the marketplace, such as HDPE, PET and PP plastics, but as long as BPA is used in packaging baby food, infant formula and reusable containers, we risk increasing developmental conditions in children."

AHT's citizen activists made more than 600 calls during the week of April 5<sup>th</sup> to Governor Patrick, asking him to phase-out BPA from products for which there are safer alternatives, which include infant formula and baby food packaging and reusable beverage and food containers. In addition this week dozens of scientists, doctors, nurses, and health care professionals signed letters in support of a broader phase out than what has been proposed.

"Studies have linked BPA exposures, especially exposures in utero and to young children and adolescents, to a variety of diseases, including breast cancer," said Deborah Shields, Executive Director of Massachusetts Breast Cancer Coalition. "BPA is especially dangerous for women with breast cancer because it blocks the uptake of certain chemotherapies. This chemical is ubiquitous and must be banned in as many uses as possible. MDPH should follow the lead of VT and CT and ban BPA from infant formula and baby food cans and jars, as well as the full range of reusable food and beverage containers."