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## ***Harper Government Takes Action to Reduce Children's Exposure to Phthalates***

January 18, 2011, Oakville – Today, the Honourable Leona Aglukkaq, Minister of Health, announced new regulations that will restrict the use of six phthalates in toys and child care articles in order to limit exposure to children and infants.

Phthalates are a family of chemicals commonly used to make vinyl plastic, otherwise known as polyvinyl chloride or PVC, soft and flexible. Research suggests that certain phthalates may cause health effects in young children when soft vinyl toys and child care articles are sucked or chewed.

"When the Consumer Product Safety Act comes into force in June, the Harper Government will begin a new era of consumer product safety for Canadians," said Minister Aglukkaq. "Today, we are again acting to make the toys and products that young Canadians use even safer. New regulations will ensure products that are imported, sold or advertised in Canada do not present a risk of phthalate exposure to children and infants."

Since 1998, phthalates have voluntarily not been used by industry in soft vinyl pacifiers, teething rattles, baby bottle nipples and other products intended to be mouthed by children and infants.

"I applaud the government's actions to limit the presence of this chemical in children's products," said Rick Smith, Executive Director of Environmental Defence Canada. "Canada's Phthalates Regulations are now aligned with measures taken in the United States and the European Union and will ensure our children receive the same high level of protection."

"Our Government has demonstrated a commitment to consumer product safety through new regulations on lead, cribs and cradles, and surface coating materials," says Oakville MP, Terence Young. "As many parents know, children will chew on almost any item -- vinyl bibs and bath, squeeze or inflatable toys. This is part of our Food and Consumer Safety Action Plan, which I am very proud of."

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