



Persatuan Pengguna Pulau Pinang Consumers Association of Penang

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Press Statement

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CAP Submits Memorandum Calling for Regulation on Lead in Paint

The Consumers' Association of Penang (CAP) submitted a memorandum dated 8 December 2020 to the Malaysian government calling for promulgation and enforcement of lead paint law.

It is widely known that lead has toxic effects on almost all body systems and is especially harmful to children and pregnant women. There is no safe level of lead exposure and hence it is vital to take steps to minimise exposure to lead.

Lead paint is an avoidable source of exposure to lead. One important way to prevent exposure is for countries to establish legally binding regulatory measures prohibiting the addition of lead to paint.

Studies of lead content in paint on the market in more than 60 countries show that where there is no enforced legal limitation on lead in paint, some lead paints with high levels of lead are on sale to consumers. CAP's analysis of lead in paint over the years has also found the presence of lead in paint, including some in high concentrations.

In Malaysia, there is currently no regulation in place limiting the amount of lead in paint for household, decorative use and industrial paint. Presently we only have mandatory safety standards stipulating maximum acceptable migration of lead in paint of not more than 90ppm in toys intended for children below 14 years old. This is not sufficient to avoid exposure to lead.

Reducing the adverse health effects from lead paints means we have to control exposures. A ban on the manufacture, import, sale, distribution, use, and trade of lead paints is much needed and would be far more cost-effective in reducing exposure risks than any future remediation programmes.

CAP's memorandum to the government, among others, to the Prime Minister, Ministry of Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs, Ministry of Health, and Department of Standards outlined the dangers of lead, findings of lead content in paints in Malaysia and compiled guidance documents drawn up by the Global Alliance to Eliminate Lead Paint (Lead Paint Alliance) for drafting lead paint law.

As lead paint elimination is gaining momentum globally, CAP urges the Malaysian government to expedite the development of a lead paint law, raise public awareness, facilitate the elimination of lead paint to ensure the paint industry make swift transitions to non-lead paint production and take necessary monitoring and enforcement action to ensure compliance.

Ban Lead Paint, For a Healthy Future!

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