

For Immediate Release
Call: (610) 253-6272
Tracey Muldoon Moran, ext. 4289

Maker of Crayola Products Responds to Article on Asbestos in Crayons

Easton, Pa. – May 23, 2000 – The maker of Crayola crayons, a trusted icon of childhood for nearly 100 years, says it is committed to consumer product safety, and the raw materials used to make its crayons have been evaluated by an independent toxicologist who confirms that they do not pose a health concern and are non-toxic.

The company is emphasizing its safety commitment in response to a report in the Seattle Post-Intelligencer, which indicated that asbestos fibers were found in four crayon brands including Crayola crayons. Talc, the strengthening agent in crayons, was cited as the potential source. The crayon maker uses talc in its formulation to ensure its crayons are strong and durable as children use them.

Suppliers of talc to Binney & Smith have certified that the talc is asbestos free. In addition, independent toxicologist Dr. Woodhall Stopford at Duke University Medical Center has evaluated the raw materials used in Crayola crayons using standards consistent with the Consumer Products Safety Commission, OSHA and the Department of the Interior Bureau of Mines. Dr. Stopford confirms that Crayola crayons are asbestos free.

The maker of Crayola products has requested the Seattle newspaper's lab test results to determine how and why its findings differ from other studies ensuring that Crayola crayons are asbestos free.

"We requested the newspaper's test results, as we are aware that there are different testing methods used by different research organizations when checking for the presence of asbestos," said Tracey Muldoon Moran, Crayola spokesperson. "Although we already adhere to all safety standards issued by regulatory agencies that govern our industry -- and based on those standards our crayons pose no health risk -- we've already begun a thorough review of the talc used in Crayola crayons and will use all information provided as part of our review.

"If the experts, regulators and evidence indicate a reason to modify ingredients used in making crayons, we will do so. We've been a trusted name in countless households across the United States for over 100 years, and we intend to continue to earn that trust every day."

All Crayola products, including crayons, have been certified non-toxic by an independent toxicologist and bear the AP and CP seals of the Art & Creative Materials Institute (ACMI). These seals are designations of non-toxicity and product quality under which Crayola products have been evaluated for 60 years.

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