

SUFFOLK COUNTY LEGISLATOR KARA HAHN



FIFTH LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT

PRESS RELEASE

CONTACT: [Seth Squicciarino](#)

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[Zach Baum](#)

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631-854-1650

NEW REPORT SHOWS TOXIC TOYS IN LONG ISLAND STORES

Toxic Substances Found in Dangerous Amounts in Common Holiday Gift Items

HAUPPAUGE, NY – Health and environmental advocates today unveiled a report, "Toxic Toys on Long Island," detailing the presence of toxic chemicals like mercury and cadmium in children's toys and products.

The dangerous chemicals have been linked to cancer, cognitive impairments, hyperactivity and genetic disorders in children. All of the toys and products tested were purchased on Long Island during the past several weeks. The report is a joint project of Clean and Healthy New York and the New York League of Conservation Voters Education Fund.

"As this report shows, while Federal guidelines on toy safety serve as a good basis for consumer protection, they do not fully protect children from the dangerous toxins found in many toys," said Legislator Kara Hahn, who is sponsoring a bill to ban the use of seven toxic chemicals in toys and children's products. "These toxins hinder cognitive development, and are linked to organ failure and even death. It makes no sense to me as Chair of the Legislature's Environment, Planning and Agriculture Committee to

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promote policies that reduce these toxins in our drinking water, only to have them reintroduced to our residents at the toy store checkout counter. "

"As the mother of an eight-year-old girl, I am disturbed by the idea that a well-intentioned holiday gift could lead to dangerous health consequences down the road for my daughter and thousands of other vulnerable children in Suffolk County," added Legislator Hahn.

"Toxic Toys on Long Island" identified several hazardous substances in numerous products:

- Arsenic in one product, a jewelry making set.
- Antimony in four products: a doll and jewelry.
- Cadmium in four products: a jewelry making set, toy cars, and clothing.
- Cobalt in seven products: a keychain, jewelry, clothing and accessories.
- Lead in five products: jewelry, accessories, and jewelry making kits.
- Mercury in four products: jewelry and jewelry making kits.

Researchers visited Target, Party City, Walmart, The Children's Place, Macy's, Ocean State Job Lot and Dollar Tree stores on Long Island in November and December 2014.

"No parent wants to find out that the clothes, jewelry or toys they give their children contain chemicals that could hurt them. Yet our testing confirms this reality. Companies are able to make children's products without toxic chemicals - that means they have no excuse for not doing so, and the law should require it," said Bobbi Chase Wilding, Deputy Director for Clean and Healthy New York, who tested the products in the report.

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“This report confirms that action is needed to protect the health of families in Long Island,” said Marcia Bystryn, President of the New York League of Conservation Voters Education Fund. “It’s horrifying to consider that a well-intended gift might contain secret toxins. Toxic chemicals have no place in children's toys, and they should not be on store shelves for sale. Parents deserve the right to know what dangers are lurking in the products they bring home.”

“As a mom of two young kids, I struggle to safeguard their health. Seeing the kinds of toys that contain dangerous chemicals makes me realize there’s no way I can tell just by looking at them,” said Rachel Friedman, a parent in East Northport. “County legislators can make my job easier by taking action to eliminate these toxic chemicals in toys and more. It’s what moms want for the holidays.”

[Click here](#) to download the full report “Toxic Toys on Long Island.”

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*306 Main Street
Port Jefferson, New York 11777*

kara.hahn@suffolkcountyny.gov

*Telephone: (631) 854-1650
Fax: (631) 854-1653*