



December 16, 2008

Ms. Lisa Archer
National Coordinator
The Campaign for Safe Cosmetics
Breast Cancer Fund
1388 Sutter Street #400
San Francisco, California 94109

Dear Ms. Archer:

Thank you for your letter dated December 4, 2008, in which you urged FDA to make public our findings with respect to lead in lipstick.

As you note in your letter, we have stated publicly that we intended to conduct independent testing of a selection of lipsticks on the market, and that we were adapting a previously validated, state-of-the-art method to do the analyses. FDA scientists have developed and validated a method for determining total lead in lipstick using microwave assisted digestion and analysis using inductively coupled plasma-mass spectrometry (ICP-MS). To obtain reliable results, it is essential that the method used be validated for analyzing lipstick, a complex matrix that may contain fats, oils, pigments, dyes, and minerals. We intend to publish this work in a scientific journal subject to rigorous peer review, consistent with our responsibility to provide objective, credible information to the public.

This effort has involved a considerable investment in time and expertise by FDA scientists, as well as access to sophisticated equipment. We appreciate and share your concern for the safety of cosmetics marketed in this country. As always, we take seriously our commitment to develop and implement policies that will promote consumer safety and enhance public health.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Linda M. Katz", is positioned above the typed name.

Linda M. Katz, M.D., M.P.H.
Director, Office of Cosmetics and Colors
Center for Food Safety
and Applied Nutrition
Food and Drug Administration