

Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> September 2007

### **TOXIC TOOTHPASTE LEAVES MORE THAN A BAD TASTE IN THE MOUTH**

Minister for Consumer Affairs, Jennifer Rankine, has banned the supply and sale of toothpaste containing more than 0.25% of diethylene glycol (DEG). Three brands of toothpaste have been recalled, including **Mr Cool, Excel and Tri-Leaf Spearmint**, which was 'batch specific'.

"To protect people from the risk of adverse health effects which result from ingesting toothpaste containing DEG, I have signed a Declaration of Dangerous Goods to stop the supply of toothpaste with more than 0.25% of the ingredient. The ban is in force now," Ms Rankine said

Diethylene glycol (DEG) can present a serious health risk of toxicity to people, in particular children and individuals with kidney or liver disease.

Although toothpaste is not meant to be swallowed, young children have been known to suck on tubes of toothpaste. Adults can also unintentionally swallow small amounts of toothpaste when brushing their teeth.

"People should double check the list of ingredients on their toothpaste. If they find it contains DEG, check the label to ensure it has less than 0.25% by weight. If it is more than this amount, do not buy it. If people have any of these three brands of toothpaste at home, they should return them to the store of purchase for a full refund.

Suppliers, including retailers, must ensure that toothpaste supplied here in South Australia does not contain greater than 0.25% by weight of DEG.

Any supplier who sells toothpaste containing illegal amounts of DEG would be in breach of the *Trade Standards Act 1979* which carries a maximum penalty of \$10 000," Ms Rankine said.

A list of banned and dangerous goods can be found on the Consumer Affairs website ([www.ocba.sa.gov.au](http://www.ocba.sa.gov.au)). People are encouraged to visit the website to check that particular products are safe, or telephone 8152 0732 if they have any concerns.