

Poison in clothes from China

The Sun – Monday, August 20, 2007. New researchers have found dangerous levels of poison in children's clothing imported from China. Formaldehyde, a chemical used to give a permanent-press effect to clothes, was found in wool and cotton garments at levels 500 times higher than deemed safe by World Health Organization (WHO), the *Sunday Star-Times* reported.

Dr. John Fountain, spokes for National Poisons Centre, told the newspaper the international research supported by WHO showed exposure to formaldehyde in concentrations of 20ppm could cause eye, skin and nasal irritations, respiratory problems, asthma and cancer. He said the European Union limits formaldehyde residues in children's clothes to a maximum of 30ppm and bans 22 aromatic mine dyes, which are known carcinogens. The results showing levels of formaldehyde ranging from 230ppm to 18000ppm were so elevated that the research scientists thought they had made a mistake.

The paper said that the buyers were advised to wash and air all clothes before wearing them for the first time.