

DCA CONTINUES AGGRESSIVE ENFORCEMENT OF ILLEGAL FAKE GUN SALES AND REMINDS PARENTS TO BE VIGILANT THIS HALLOWEEN

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
October 25, 2004

With ghosts and goblins lurking around the corner, kids throughout the City are gearing up for this year's Halloween festivities. In preparation, the New York City Department of Consumer Affairs today sent a strong message to stores citywide that agency inspectors are on the lookout for fake guns and urged parents that buying these illegal items could have dangerous consequences. Over the past two years the DCA has aggressively enforced the City's sales ban on dark-colored fake guns citing more than 60 stores, requiring stores to remove more than 5,000 fake guns citywide, and securing more than \$450,000 in fines.

"Halloween is fun and scary, but costumes with fake guns can turn it into a dangerous nightmare," said DCA Commissioner Gretchen Dykstra. "Fake guns can easily be mistaken as the real thing causing confusion and posing fatal risks. While we continue to work hard protecting consumers, we urge parents to think twice about buying them for their kids, and remind stores that choose to break the law that immediate action will be taken and maximum penalties imposed."

New York City Police Commissioner Raymond W. Kelly said: "Aside from the fact that certain toy guns may be illegal, common sense indicates that their use can lead to deadly consequences."

Under New York City's Public Safety Law, it is illegal to sell or offer to sell any toy or imitation firearm that can reasonably be perceived to be an actual firearm unless the exterior surface of the toy or imitation firearm is predominantly brightly colored. The range of acceptable colors include white, bright red, bright orange, bright yellow, bright green, bright blue, bright pink, or bright purple.

In addition to store inspections, the DCA subpoenas manufacturers to show which New York City stores have fake guns in stock. Over the past two years, the DCA has cited and reached agreements with independent and chain stores in all five boroughs including: The Sports Authority, Walgreen's, Party City, Jack's 99-Cent Store, Abracadabra, Bozo's Army and Navy Store, Party Fair, Ricky's, Party Fun, Inc., Children's Playworld-KTA, Forest Hills Party Goods, Inc., Dollar Store Express, R&L Bargain Centers, Twin Cards, and Village Paper, Inc. There are currently six additional stores under investigation.

To report a store that is selling dark-colored fake guns, call 311 or visit the Department of Consumer Affairs' web site at www.nyc.gov/consumers