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DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, CITY COUNCIL AND OTHER CITY AGENCIES REMIND NEW YORKERS NOT TO BUY ILLEGAL IMITATION GUNS FOR THEIR HALLOWEEN COSTUMES

Since 2002, Consumer Affairs Has Removed More Than 7,500 Imitation Guns from Shelves, Levied \$1.7 Million in Fines

Consumer Affairs Commissioner Jonathan Mintz, City Council Speaker Christine Quinn, Police Department Commissioner Raymond Kelly and the Mayor's Chief Policy Advisor and Criminal Justice Coordinator John Feinblatt today reminded New Yorkers of all ages that imitation firearms are illegal to sell in New York City and encouraged them to avoid purchasing guns that look real as they accessorize their Halloween costumes.

"Fake guns that look real aren't toys; they're actually so dangerous that selling them is illegal," said Commissioner Mintz. "The Department is doing its part, and our inspectors have removed thousands of fake guns from shelves and so far we have levied close to two million dollars in fines; and we urge parents to do their part by protecting their kids from these seemingly harmless costume items."

"Halloween is supposed to be a fun time for parents and kids as they go out and trick or treat. The last thing anyone wants is to experience is a tragedy due to an imitation gun that looks real. Even though the City's toy and imitation gun law has been in existence for several years, many merchants continue to illegally sell items that resemble real guns," said Council Speaker Quinn. "We urge every store owner to abide by City law - and know that those who don't will be found and fined. Parents and consumers must also do their part in being aware of realistic looking toy guns and keeping them out of the hands of children."

"Toy guns made to look real can have grave consequences for the police and the public alike. They don't belong where they may be mistaken for actual weapons," said Police Commissioner Raymond W. Kelly.

"Halloween is for trick or treating – don't spoil the fun with a costume that has an illegal imitation gun," said John Feinblatt, the Mayor's Chief Policy Advisor. "Stores should know better than to sell illegal imitation guns; those that do will be fined by the Department of Consumer Affairs."

Under New York City's Public Safety Law, it is illegal to sell or offer to sell a fake or imitation firearm that can be reasonably perceived to be an actual firearm, unless the majority of the exterior surface of the illegal, fake or imitation firearm is brightly colored. The range of acceptable colors include: white, bright red, bright orange, bright yellow, bright green, bright blue, bright pink and bright purple. DCA aggressively enforces the City's sales ban on dark-colored fake guns and since 2002, DCA inspectors have removed more than 7,500 imitation guns from the shelves of more than 200 stores throughout the City, and levied \$1.76 million in fines.

To report a store or vendor selling fake guns that look real, call 311 or visit nyc.gov/consumers.

DCA enforces the Consumer Protection Law and other related business laws

throughout New York City. Ensuring a fair and vibrant marketplace for consumers and businesses, DCA licenses more than 71,000 businesses in 55 different industries. Through targeted outreach, partnerships with community and trade organizations, and informational materials, DCA educates consumers and businesses alike about their rights and responsibilities. DCA's Office of Financial Empowerment (OFE) is the first local government initiative in the nation with a mission to educate, empower, and protect New Yorkers with low incomes so they can build assets and make the most of their financial resources. Toward that end, OFE seeks to increase access to high-quality, low-cost financial education and counseling; improve access to income-boosting tax credits; connect households to safe and affordable banking and asset-building products and services; and enforce and improve consumer protections to enhance financial stability. For more information, call 311 or visit DCA online at nyc.gov/consumers.