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San Diego-area CVS Drugstores Selling Expired Products and Locking up Condoms

Warning to Consumers Issued by Community Advocates

San Diego, Calif. – Community activists and faith leaders gathered outside a local CVS pharmacy today to warn consumers about expired products found on the shelves at CVS. The community leaders were reacting to the results of a survey, announced today, that found 77 percent of Greater San Diego CVS stores surveyed had expired goods for sale and that CVS stores operating in communities with higher concentrations of residents of color are more likely to lock condoms, creating a deterrent in communities most at risk of HIV/AIDS.

Standing before a display of expired infant formula, baby food, medication and other products that were recently purchased at area CVS stores, community leaders called on the nation’s largest drugstore chain to show respect for the community by removing all expired products and remove condoms from locked displays.

"Everyone wants to live in a safe and healthy neighborhood. But in San Diego, one of the largest and most prominent drugstores – CVS – is proving itself to be a poor corporate neighbor by stocking its shelves with merchandise, including baby formula, that is well beyond its designated sell date. We urge CVS to correct this practice immediately!" said Pastor Wayne Riggs of the Plymouth Congregational Church of San Diego.

Expired Products for Sale in 77% of CVS Stores Surveyed in Greater San Diego

In late February 2009, surveyors observed expired products for sale in over three-fourths of the CVS stores visited in Greater San Diego. The expired goods included infant formula, dairy goods and child and adult medications. Over 40 percent of visited stores had expired milk or eggs in their dairy coolers; the same number of stores stocked expired infant formula. One-third of CVS stores had expired child and/or adult medications available for sale.

"I have a senior citizen in my congregation who unknowingly bought Ensure from CVS and drank it before she noticed it was expired, which brought on further complications for her. I am surprised to find CVS selling expired products in so many of its stores here in San Diego. CVS, for all the ways that you say you care, put some action to that model. Stop selling expired products," said Chaplain Johnson, President of the North County NAACP.

This is not the first time expired products have been found at CVS. Surveyors found expired infant formula, milk or eggs on CVS shelves in 666 stores across the country – representing more than 42 percent of the stores surveyed, according to a [report](#) released last year. Last June, Attorney General Brown criticized CVS for selling expired products at dozens of stores in Southern California, including San Diego County. The Attorney General said the practice violated laws against deceptive advertising and unfair business practices.

Locked Condoms Found in CVS Stores Operating in Communities of Color

Condoms were observed under lock and key in one-quarter (7 stores) of the 27 CVS stores visited. Despite CVS's claim that all stores have some unlocked packages available, surveyors found all the condoms were inaccessible without staff assistance at all seven stores.

Moreover, the stores with locked up condoms are more likely located in areas with the greatest concentration of residents of color than in CVS stores located in more white areas of Greater San Diego. In communities where people of color compose at least 40 percent of the population, a majority of the stores visited (5 of 9) have condoms under lock and key. In the communities with fewer people of color, less than 15 percent of the visited stores (2 of 18) had locked up condoms.

HIV/AIDS is a leading cause of death for Latinos. The rate of new HIV infections among Latinos is three times the rate among whites. San Diego is among the top 10 cities in the U.S. with the highest number of Hispanic adults/adolescents living with AIDS. Blacks have the highest rate of AIDS in the County of San Diego and blacks have the highest proportion of cases diagnosed in women. HIV/AIDS is the number one killer of black American women between the ages of 25 and 34.

The Greater San Diego findings reflect a nationwide pattern—the proportion of CVS stores with locked up condoms increases with the percentage of residents of color in a given neighborhood, according to a [HYPERLINK "http://curecvsnow.org/index.php?id=29"](http://curecvsnow.org/index.php?id=29) survey of CVS stores and demographic data from the U.S. Census Bureau.

For more information visit www.CureCVSNow.org

Cure CVS is an initiative by Change to Win and partner organizations to reform the drugstore industry, starting with CVS, the country's leading provider of prescription drugs and largest drugstore chain. By joining concerned citizen groups with the six million members of Change to Win unions, Cure CVS aims to ensure that CVS provides equal access across all communities and income levels to its stores and services, offers fair and accurate prices, provides quality products and services, protects customers' privacy and puts quality pharmacy care first.

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