

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** Thursday, June 18, 2009

CONTACT: Loretta Kane (202) 657-4159

## **CVS Stores in Newark Area Fail to Adequately Address Expired Products, According to a New Study by Cure CVS**

*Newark, New Jersey* – Consumer advocates rallied outside an East Orange CVS store today, calling on the pharmacy chain to stop selling expired products. A new study, released today, found that Newark-area CVS stores have failed to adequately address the issue since a survey conducted in May found 47% of stores visited in the Newark area were selling expired dairy, medication or infant formula. Surveyors returned to the same CVS stores where they saw expired products for sale in May and found many are still selling expired goods.

The California Attorney General announced last week that CVS will pay almost \$1 million to settle allegations of misleading customers and unfair business practices stemming from the sale of expired products and that it failed to adequately protect and dispose of customers' confidential personal and medical information. CVS agreed to require bimonthly removal of expired products and improve employee training in its more than 800 California stores; however that agreement only applies to California.

Protesters outside a CVS in East Orange today called on CVS to adopt those stipulations nationally, as CVS has been caught selling expired products in numerous states, including New Jersey.

"If CVS can clean up its act in California, surely the company can make improvements at all its stores," said Bob Russo, President of the New Jersey Consumers League. "The fact that CVS has to be strong-armed into doing the right thing is a shame, but consumers need protecting everywhere, not just in California."

### **Expired Products in Newark Part of a National Problem**

Surveys in the Newark area in May found expired infant formula or over-the-counter medications at 47% of stores surveyed. Follow-up visits to the same CVS stores in June found expired goods still for sale at 37% of stores surveyed.

These findings are part of a survey of more than 2,200 CVS stores in 21 markets across the country looking for expired goods. Among the products surveyors found were expired milk, eggs, infant formula and over-the-counter medications, including medicine meant for children. Health experts have warned against using products past their expiration date.

"As a company serving this community, CVS should put the health of its consumers above anything else," said Ruth Kleiman, Director of the New Community Corporation. "But the company's record of selling expired goods

implies that it doesn't respect the consumers living here, and that's just not the way a responsible corporation should behave."

### **Regulators Across the Country Take Action Against CVS's Expired Goods**

New York State Attorney General Andrew Cuomo sued CVS in late 2008 for selling expired goods in New York, saying that his office's investigation "uncovered a shameful disregard for public health in these stores."

In addition, the Philadelphia City Council is currently reviewing legislation which would clamp down on the sale of expired products in the city. Frustrated by CVS's ongoing problem with expired goods in its Philadelphia stores, the City Council seeks to "prohibit the sale of expired non-prescription drugs, infant formula, baby food, milk, milk products and eggs."

Advocates are calling for CVS to adopt the stipulations of the California settlement in a new nationwide policy. Today's rally in Newark is part of a national movement calling on CVS to stop selling expired products in all its stores. Activists also spoke out against CVS's retail practices in Boston; Dallas; Detroit; Houston; Indianapolis; Los Angeles; Philadelphia; Pittsburgh; San Diego; Stamford, Connecticut and Washington, D.C. today.

For more information visit [www.CureCVSNow.org](http://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.

###