

**Media Statement**

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For Immediate Release

**Ohio Lead Contamination Story**

Any case of a dental patient getting sick from contaminated dental restorations would confirm the worst fears of the National Association of Dental Laboratories, which for years has urged federal and state regulators to implement more stringent regulation to protect patients.

Dental restorations – the porcelain crowns, dentures and bridges that millions of American dental patients have permanently seated in their mouths each year -- are currently under-regulated, with few legal requirements for technicians to be certified and no mandates for dentists to document or disclose the source of dental work to patients.

Although dentists prescribe the type of device they need for a dental patient, the product is actually manufactured by a dental technician employed by a dental laboratory, which could be located in the United States or anywhere in the world. As more and more Americans seek dental restorative treatment and some dentists face growing pressure to cut costs, a growing percentage of the dental work Americans carry in their mouths is now imported from countries such as China, Pakistan, the Philippines and India.

The National Association of Dental Laboratories has been on record since 2003 supporting federal and state regulation to assure patients their restorations are safe for use, regardless of where they are manufactured. Through public advocacy and outreach, the Association has worked with the U.S. Food & Drug Administration, state health officials and the dental industry to support:

- Mandatory certification and continuing education for dental technicians who manufacture restorations;
- Mandatory registration of all dental laboratories with the U.S. Food & Drug Administration or appropriate state government agencies;
- Mandatory documentation of all materials included in a restoration, as well as the point of origin (country and laboratory) where the restoration was manufactured; and
- Mandatory documentation of all these items in a patient's dental records.

Such common-sense regulations are critical, and we support them 100 percent. We believe that every dental patient deserves to expect that their dental restoration is safe, wherever it was manufactured, and even a single case of someone getting sick is unacceptable.

The National Association of Dental Laboratories has formally asked the Food & Drug Administration to protect patient safety and require labeling and disclosure of the source of dental devices to patients, ensuring all such products can be traced back to the laboratory that made them. The Association has also supported pending legislative efforts to implement such regulation in the states of Florida and South Carolina.

In 2007, the Association testified before the Presidential Interagency Working Group on Import Safety to urge the federal government to recognize the need for more stringent oversight, including promoting certification of dental technicians employed at both domestic and foreign laboratories, mandating that dental laboratories register with the Food & Drug Administration or with state health departments, as well as increasing inspections of the content and quality of imported dental-restoration products.

The National Association of Dental Labs is a trade association with 43 affiliated state and regional commercial dental laboratory associations representing more than 1,600 members. For more information, please visit [www.nadl.org](http://www.nadl.org).

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