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Oregon OSHA Confirms: Exposure to Cosmetologists and Clients is well below OSHA's Air Level Requirements.

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OSHA's Action Level of 0.5 parts per million is the most stringent level of exposure set by the Federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration.

On October 29, 2010, Oregon OSHA released results of a comprehensive air monitoring study conducted across seven salons. Each case yielded formaldehyde exposure levels well beneath OSHA's Action Level, Permissible Exposure Level (PEL), and Short-Term Exposure Level.

The average Formaldehyde gas exposure level for the seven salons tested by Oregon OSHA was 0.079 parts per million; well beneath the OSHA Action Level of 0.5 parts per million.

Sample Case Study #7 (cited directly from Oregon OSHA's recent report entitled "Keratin Based" Hair Smoothing Products And the Presence of Formaldehyde):

Case 7: The seventh salon had four stations with a false ceiling. No doors or window were left open and the stylist did not use any fans during the treatment. She did not wear gloves.

Breathing zone samples were placed on the stylist during the process, which took 94 minutes. The samples were changed every 15 minutes. Samples were also placed to the right of the stylist, near the stylist's sink and to the left of the stylist. The stylist's peak exposure was 0.471 ppm, while applying the solution. Her average exposure during the procedure was 0.255 ppm and the 8 hour average was 0.050 ppm.

The results did not exceed the 8-hour limit and it is unlikely that multiple treatments would have done so.

In referencing Brazilian Blowouts recently released air sample test results, Oregon OSHA confirms the following:

"The company released air monitoring results on October 15, 2010, taken from two stylists performing two treatments each in a single salon. The only results reported were for the eight-hour average exposure, which came to 0.064 ppm for one stylist and 0.073 ppm for the other. The middle of the salon also was tested, providing an eight-hour average of 0.016.58

In general, these results – although less detailed – are not inconsistent with Oregon OSHA's air monitoring results, which included both results that were higher and results that were lower than those reported by the company."

CONCLUSION: Air sample tests conducted by Oregon OSHA and HSA (those published by Brazilian Blowout) yield remarkably consistent results; both demonstrating that formaldehyde exposure levels are safely below OSHA's Action Level.