

Study Finds lead in Many of Every-day Items, Toys, Spices

messenger.com.ge/issues/4367_april_3_2019/4367_gvanca.html

The Messenger Online

By Gvantsa Gabekhadze

Wednesday, April 3

A group of NGOs and specialists released the results of a study on Tuesday, which revealed that many samples taken by them were polluted with lead.

The study, which was initiated in January of the last year, aimed to determine the source of lead particles in Tbilisi.

The group had taken samples from 268 everyday items from 17 families living in Tbilisi.

Those families were involved where children were confirmed to have lead in their blood.

The study detected a high concentration of lead in construction materials, everyday items, toys, and food.

“Spices were polluted with lead, especially a yellow flower,” Guranda Arkopashvili from the Institute of Physics stated.

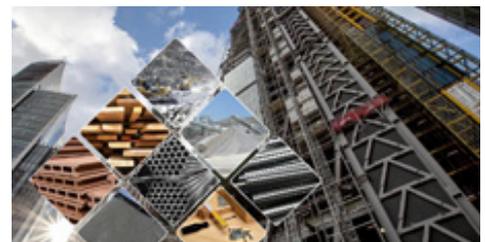
“Cubes of bullion also included lead and many of the samples included lead,” she said.

Lead can harm the production of blood cells and bones and causes brain and kidney problems. It complicates the absorption of calcium needed for strong bones.

The Georgia Alliance for Safe Roads, Green Alternative, Partnership for Road Safety, Center for Strategic Research and Development of Georgia and Quality Lab were involved in the study.

This initiative was supported by the government of Sweden through the Orbeliani platform.

Last month Georgian Prime Minister Mamuka Bakhtadze held a meeting with the Intersectoral Coordination Council, where the topics concerning the monitoring of lead levels in children and water quality were discussed.



Bakhtadze spoke about the importance of the provision of clean water in the Georgian regions and to address the issue of lead in a timely manner.

"I am aware that various measures have been taken and international projects implemented in this direction. We must focus on the recommendations of the World Health Organization, and make use of the best practices," said Bakhtadze.

The Coordination Council is working on environmental issues under the 2018-2022 National Environment and Healthcare Action Plan.

Georgia's National Food Agency stated in 2017 that they detected a higher concentration of lead in red pepper, dry-Ajika, a mixture of sharp spices and other spices in the Georgian market.

The agency says the allowable content of lead in a product is 5 milligrams for one kilo.

The issue of lead was pushed forward when several foreign diplomats stated in 2017 that higher level of lead was found in their blood after they moved to Georgia.