



DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS  
REGULATED INDUSTRIES COMPLAINTS OFFICE

## DCCA News Release

**NEIL ABERCROMBIE**  
GOVERNOR

---

KEALI'I S. LOPEZ  
DIRECTOR  
Phone: (808) 586-2850  
Fax: (808) 586-2856

---

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: October 12, 2011**

### **COSMETIC CONTACT LENSES HAVE POTENTIAL HEALTH RISKS**

HONOLULU – As the Halloween season approaches, the Hawai'i State Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs (DCCA) is warning consumers about the risks associated with wearing cosmetic, non-corrective contact lenses that are purchased without a valid prescription.

In 2008, the State passed a law prohibiting sales of nonprescription contact lenses in Hawai'i. However, these lenses continue to grow in popularity and are being marketed illegally as fashion or Halloween accessories at beauty salons, flea markets, swap meets, convenience stores, and through on-line businesses. DCCA reminds consumers that it is against the law to sell or offer to sell contact lenses without an appropriate license.

“Decorative contact lenses can be worn safely, provided they are appropriately prescribed and dispensed by a licensed professional,” said Jo Ann Uchida, Complaints and Enforcement Officer for DCCA’s Regulated Industries Complaints Office (RICO). “The problem occurs when the lenses are not suited for the particular purchaser, not fitted correctly, or are of questionable quality from an unknown supplier. Although these lenses appear harmless, serious eye injuries can result, including blindness,” she added.

For those consumers who wish to wear decorative contact lenses, DCCA makes the following recommendations:

1. Get an eye examination from a licensed eye care professional, even if you have perfect vision.
2. Get a valid prescription that includes the brand and lens dimensions.
3. Purchase lenses from a licensed eye care professional or from a vendor who requires a prescription for the lenses.
4. Follow the directions for cleaning, disinfecting, and wearing the lenses, and visit a licensed eye care professional for follow-up eye examinations.

For more information, contact the DCCA Consumer Resource Center at 587-3222 (toll-free 1-800-394-1902 for the Neighbor Islands) or check the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's website at

<http://www.fda.gov/ForConsumers/ConsumerUpdates/ucm048902.htm>.

###

For media inquiries, please contact:

Cathy Yasuda

Media Liaison, DCCA

Phone: 586-7582

E-mail: [cyasuda@dcca.hawaii.gov](mailto:cyasuda@dcca.hawaii.gov)