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Press Release

COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Alaskans advised to check the 'best by' dates on Hot Dog Chili Sauce, other named products

Botulism poisoning risk from products marketed under a variety of brand names

DEC is asking consumers to check the 'best by' dates for the following products due to possible botulism contamination:

- Austex Hot Dog Chili Sauce 10oz, Bar Code 30300 99533
- Bunker Hill, Chili no Beans, 10oz, Bar Code 75266 04112
- Castleberry's Hot Dog Chili Sauce, 10oz, Bar Code 30300 00101
- Castleberry's Chili with Beans, 15oz, Bar Code 30300 01015
- Castleberry's Barbecue Pork, 10oz, Bar Code 30300 00402
- Cattle Drive Chili with Beans 15oz Bar Code 30300 01515
- Kroger Hot Dog Chili Sauce 10oz Bar Code 11110 83942
- Meijer Corned Beef Hash 15oz Bar Code 41250 95229
- Morton House Corned Beef Hash 15oz Bar Code 75266 65830
- Southern Home Corned Beef Hash 15oz Bar Code 07880 15360

"Best by" dates from April 30, 2009 through May 22, 2009--found on can lids--should be discarded. Botulism can be fatal.

Consumers who have any of these products or any foods made with these products should throw them away immediately. If the "best by" date is missing or unreadable consumers should throw the product out.

Two children in Texas and an Indiana couple who ate these products became seriously ill and have been hospitalized. **Preliminary reports show that these products have not been shipped to Alaska; however, DEC is issuing a precautionary alert to ensure the safety of the public.**

"We're asking Alaskans to take a moment and check the 'Best By' dates on any of these products they might have in their homes. We want to make sure Alaskans are safe by using a little caution," noted Program Manager Ron Klein.

Symptoms of botulism poisoning can begin from 6 hours to 14 days after eating food that contains the toxin. Symptoms may include double vision, blurred vision, drooping eyelids, slurred speech, difficulty swallowing, dry mouth, and general muscle weakness that progresses down the body. Botulism poisoning can also cause paralysis of the breathing muscles which can result in death unless assistance with breathing (mechanical ventilation) is provided.

Individuals who show these symptoms and who may have recently eaten Castleberry's Hot Dog Chili Sauce, Austex Hot Dog Chili Sauce, Kroger Hot Dog Chili Sauce, or the other named products should call the Alaska Section of Epidemiology at 907-269-8000; after hours call 800-478-0084.

All of the above products are manufactured by the Castleberry Food Company in Augusta, Georgia.

Castleberry has informed FDA that it is voluntarily recalling all of the potentially contaminated products and is cooperating with FDA, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and the states' active investigations into the cause of this contamination and scope of the products' distribution.

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