



DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS
BUSINESS, CONSUMER SERVICES, AND HOUSING AGENCY • GOVERNOR EDMUND G. BROWN JR.

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NEWS RELEASE

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COSTUME CONTACT LENSES CAN BE A NIGHTMARE FOR EYES

The California State Board of Optometry warns consumers to only buy decorative Halloween contact lenses with a prescription and from a licensed dealer

SACRAMENTO – Costume contact lenses are a fun way to temporarily change your eye color, change your mood for the day, or add that final touch to a Halloween costume by allowing one to don bloodshot or tiger eyes.

These decorative lenses can provide the right effect to make a Halloween getup even more scary, but must be prescribed by a licensed optometrist or ophthalmologist and purchased only from licensed optometrists, ophthalmologists or licensed contact lens dispensers. Don't be fooled. In California, cosmetic contacts that do not correct your vision, just like contacts that correct your vision, must be prescribed by a licensed eye-care professional.

When not properly fitted, costume contacts can damage the eye. You do not want to end up with an unexpected *trick-or-treat* such as an eye infection, scratched cornea, impaired vision or even worse—loss of eyesight.

Cosmetic contact lenses are easy to find and are often sold illegally without a prescription online, at flea markets, novelty shops, barber shops, beauty salons, Halloween costume stores, mall kiosks and even gas stations. Out-of-state companies that sell contacts online to California residents must also be licensed and verify the prescription with your eye doctor.

If you have purchased costume contact lens without a prescription, the California State Board of Optometry wants to hear from you. Email the board to report illegal cosmetic contact lenses at optometry@dca.ca.gov.

To verify the license of an eye-care professional or to find a licensed optometrist or contact lens dispenser in your area, visit the California State Board of Optometry website at optometry.ca.gov. For an ophthalmologist near you visit the Medical Board of California website at mbc.ca.gov.

ABOUT THE CALIFORNIA STATE BOARD OF OPTOMETRY: *The California State Board of Optometry licenses and regulates more than 12,000 optometrists and dispensing opticians and retail optical sellers. The board's mission is to protect the health and safety of California consumers through licensing, registration, education, and regulation of the practice of optometry and opticianry. For more information visit optometry.ca.gov.*

ABOUT THE DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS: *The Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA) promotes and protects the interests of California consumers while ensuring a competent and fair marketplace. DCA helps consumers learn how to protect themselves from unscrupulous and unqualified individuals. Consumers can file complaints against licensees by contacting DCA at (800) 952-5210. Consumers can also file a complaint online at dca.ca.gov.*

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