State Program Responds to Baby Formula Recall

Local News

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Olympia, WA - A nationwide recall of certain Similac-brand powder infant formulas will have a big impact in our state. The product is the main baby formula offered to non-breastfed babies of Washington’s Women, Infants, and Children Nutrition program — also known as WIC. Similac maker Abbott Nutrition issued the voluntary recall after finding that some of its powder formula products had been contaminated with parts of a small, common beetle. Products affected by the recall that are provided by Washington WIC include Similac Advance in 12.4 ounce and 12.9 ounce containers; and Similac Isomil Advance Powder in 12.9 ounce containers. Only the products in the powdered form are included in the recall. These are among the primary infant formula products distributed by Washington WIC, which served more than 30,000 formula-fed infants last month. No illnesses are known to have been caused by the product in Washington. The WIC program advises clients to check the lot number of their Similac products (www.similac.com/recall) online to see if they’re subject to the recall. If so, the products should not be fed to babies. They may also call the company’s information line, 1-800-986-8850.

The company’s website and phone number have been jammed with high volume and may not respond right away. Caregivers who aren’t sure if the Similac product they have is part of the recall should not give it to infants until they’re able to verify that it’s not. If parents confirm that they have formula with lot numbers that match those that may be tainted, they should not give it to their children, and should check the WIC website as the situation develops. The federal Food and Drug Administration (FDA) says the formula containing this beetle poses no immediate serious health risk. But FDA says babies who consume the beetle parts may have gastrointestinal discomfort, which could discourage them from wanting to eat. Parents should take their babies to a health care provider to be checked if the symptoms continue.Washington WIC (www.doh.wa.gov/cfh/WIC/default.htm) is a public health program that improves health in lower income families. The program reaches about half of all babies born in the state. More than 85 percent of WIC infants start off breastfeeding. Washington WIC provides nutrition education, breastfeeding services, healthy foods, and referrals to other important preventive health services.