

COMMUNITY NEWS

City hairstylist sheds light-on beauty dangers

By MARY FRANCES HILL
Special to the News

The popular rappers Public Enemy said it first, and now a Richmond hairstylist has adopted a choice phrase for beauty consumers: Don't believe the hype.

Don't believe the slogans and ad jingles for shampoos and conditioners guaranteeing volume, shine and control; don't believe the well-paid model when she tells you how a skin cream has changed her life, says Peter Jovan, a Richmond hairstylist

Calling themselves the Human Safe Network, and encouraging their audiences to use "human safe" (non-toxic) beauty products, Jovan and his wife Janica will hold seminars for stylists and the public across the country, beginning with Calgary and Toronto dates in September.

"I was never into the environmental thing," says Jovan. "I always thought the most important thing is to look after people and their health."

When his father took ill this spring, Jovan did some research into herbal remedies in the hope they could help him to recover. His findings would affect his business and his life.

He found that hidden in the same products that promise beauty and rejuvenation - including hair salon

supplies - lie chemicals that can harm hair and skin.

The main culprits, he says, are propylene glycol and sodium laurel sulfate. Propylene glycol is used not only in hair care products but in greater proportions in industrial anti-freeze. Anyone who takes regular bubble baths is also soaking in sodium laurel sulfate, a chemical found in engine grease remover, says Jovan.

"The skin is a living, breathing organ. By applying many of these products, you're contaminating the hair directly," he says.

The Jovans will tour with Judy Vance, a friend and researcher with the Vancouver-based Cosmetic Health Report. Vance is completing a book on the dangers of beauty ingredients.

"We want people to question what goes into the products they use and to ask, 'Where does it come from? What's the source?'"

Their first targets will be their peers in the beauty profession.

"I've always believed that if you want people to know something you should tell their hairstylist."

Hairstylist Peter Jovan is hoping to convince others of the danger hidden in some beauty products.

PAYING THE PRICE FOR BEAUTY: NOT EVERYTHING IS HEALTHY

The products that claim to make you beautiful may also make you sick. Peter and Janica Jovan and cosmetic health researcher Judy Vance will conduct seminars across the country this autumn to inform beauty professionals and the public about questionable ingredients in the skin and hair care products on salon and pharmacy shelves. Here are some of the worst offenders, according to the trio.

* **Sodium Laurel Sulfate:** When salt is added to this mixture, it produces foam and gives an illusion of being thick, rich and expensive. This chemical is sodium fatty acid soap, used commonly as a wetting

agent in the textile industry. Found commonly in bubble baths, it causes skin irritation and may cause hair loss.

* **Humectants:** Hailed for their ability to "nourish aging skin," humectants may actually take away from skin's moisture. They're designed to take moisture from the environment and apply it to skin. But in dry environments, it actually reverses the effect, taking moisture from the skin.

* **Glycerin:** A clear, liquid syrup made by combining water and fat, contained in many moisturizers. Unless air humidity is over 65%, glycerin pulls moisture out of skin, "drying from the inside out."