

# Kosher Kola? Not in Kalifornia

*By ACSH Staff — April 12, 2012*

In California, some observant Jews who keep kosher and like to drink Coca-Cola may be letting out a big Oy vey this Passover and they have a stringent law called Proposition 65 to thank for this new plague.

Under Proposition 65, businesses are required to notify consumers (usually via a warning label) if their products contain a substance known to the state of California to cause cancer, birth defects, or other reproductive harm. In March, the law placed 4-MEI, an ingredient used in cola s caramel coloring, on that list, leaving Coca-Cola with two choices: Either reformulate Coke to decrease the levels of 4-MEI, or add a cancer warning label to the product. It s no surprise they went with the former. But now the [resulting product doesn t meet Jewish dietary laws for Passover](#) <sup>[1]</sup>, which means many observant Jews will experience a Coke-less holiday this year.

A Coke-less Passover? You d think this news story came straight out of The Onion, jokes ACSH's Dr. Josh Bloom. With all of the problems we have in the world, do we really have to be concerned with 4-MEI, a benign chemical that is found in tiny amounts in some sodas? I doubt this would have been near the top of Moses worry list as he led the Jews across the Red Sea.

On a slightly more serious note, ACSH s Dr. Ruth Kava wishes that Coca-Cola, and any other businesses [affected by Proposition 65 regulations](#) <sup>[2]</sup>, would go ahead and put warning labels on their products. Soon, virtually everything sold in California would have a warning label, showing just how ridiculous this law really is!

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## Links

[1] [http://www.washingtonpost.com/business/coca-cola-says-it-wont-offer-kosher-for-passover-coke-in-california-this-year/2012/04/06/gIQAcavROS\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/business/coca-cola-says-it-wont-offer-kosher-for-passover-coke-in-california-this-year/2012/04/06/gIQAcavROS_story.html)

[2] [http://www.acsh.org/publications/pubid.146/pub\\_detail.asp](http://www.acsh.org/publications/pubid.146/pub_detail.asp)