



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 4, 2007

## **College of Opticians Seeks Injunction to Prevent Illegal Contact Lens Sales**

VANCOUVER – The College of Opticians of British Columbia has petitioned the Supreme Court of British Columbia for an injunction to prevent the internet sale of contact lenses by two affiliated companies, operating in British Columbia as Coastal Contacts Inc. and Clearly Contacts Ltd.

Under the laws of British Columbia, prescription contact lenses may only be fitted, dispensed and otherwise furnished to members of the public by a qualified eye care professional. By requiring a contact lens prescription and the involvement of an optician who is also a certified contact lens fitter, and who must perform in accordance with the Professional Standards of Practice of the College, the public is assured that a professional will determine a person's suitability for the particular contact lenses by fitting them and then dispensing them and providing any necessary advice and follow-up. Prescription contact lenses are under no circumstances to be supplied to members of the public as if they were merely equivalent to an "over the counter" device.

Coastal Contacts Inc. and Clearly Contacts Ltd. are in the business of selling, dispensing or otherwise furnishing prescription contact lenses to members of the public in British Columbia by placing or taking orders for prescription contact lenses by or from members of the public via telephone, fax or internet communication and by delivery of the prescription contact lenses directly to members of the public in British Columbia, usually by mail. Contrary to the legal requirements, no contact lens prescription, either original or copy, is required to be provided, and no optician, or other eye care professional, and no certified contact lens fitter directs, controls, fills prescriptions, fits, dispenses or is otherwise engaged in the selling, dispensing or furnishing of the prescription contact lenses delivered by these companies.

The College is seeking an injunction to restrain Coastal Contacts Inc. and Clearly Contacts Ltd. from continuing contravention of the laws of British Columbia.

The College again takes this opportunity to caution the public about purchasing contact lenses over the internet in general. Contact lenses, which are placed directly on the tissue of the eye, must be properly fitted by a qualified and registered professional. Poorly fitted and maintained contact lenses can cause abrasions, ulcerations, infections and potential loss of eye sight.

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