



Press Release – Consumer Alert

Industry groups have detected an increased supply of highly treated “Ruby” products in the marketplace. According to information gathered by various industry members, these lead glass filled red stones are being sold throughout the supply chain including in U.S. department stores, venues in the Caribbean and elsewhere. These treated red stones have significant fissures filled with relatively large quantities of Lead Glass. They are often being sold as “Natural Rubies” without proper disclosure and most importantly with NO information on the required special care to maintain the appearance of the product.

Be Advised: This product is unstable and requires special care to avoid major and irreversible damage

To protect the consumer and the integrity of our industry we call upon the all sellers of this Composite Lead Glass “Ruby” Product - loose or in jewelry - to make the proper disclosures with the utmost clarity.

Failure to do so can directly lead to loss of consumer confidence not just for the Ruby market, but for all gemstones, including diamonds and jewelry. Additionally, it can result in potential legal action against merchants who fail to make the required FTC disclosures. Certain actions (heat or acid) that take place during repair or even normal wear can, and probably will, alter the appearance of these products, and render the jewelry unusable. Certain every day, common exposures to heat, acids and polishing can and probably will significantly alter the appearance and quality of these stones from their point of purchase. This could lead to potential legal action against sellers.

Disclosure of Treatment:

The treatment to these “rubies” filled with lead glass has a significant impact on their durability and value when compared with conventional enhanced rubies of the same size and color. If the heavily treated products are sold at prices near to the market prices attained by an untreated or conventional treated ruby of the same size and color, buyers may have cause for a legal action against the seller based on deceptive trade practices and economic harm.

When compared with natural ruby, both untreated or with conventional treatments and synthetic/lab created rubies, these heavily treated products are not stable. They can and will change their appearance under the most common tradesman processes and normal wear. FTC GUIDES REQUIRE that ALL sellers disclose at the point of sale, throughout the trade and to consumers any special care required to maintain the appearance of an industry product.

While the FTC Guides do not specify the exact wording to be used to identify these products or to disclose treatments, here are descriptions and classifications of this product employed by some leading international gemological laboratories and trade associations:

American Gem Trade Association: “Glass Filled Composite Ruby – Special Care Required.” See Gemstone Information Manual (<http://www.agta.org/gemstones/agta-gim/index.html>)

American Gemological Laboratories: “Composite Ruby” – With comments “This stone represents a composite of natural corundum and glass, also known as Hybrid Ruby.” Additional comments – the material is heavily treated...vastly improving the apparent clarity and adding weight. With special care warnings.

Gemological Institute of America: For a vast majority of this material (LMHC Info Sheet 3 Levels 2 & 3) GIA will not issue Ruby reports but will issue identification reports and the description “A Manufactured Product” with comments – “A manufactured product consisting of glass and ruby” and this product is known to be unstable...with special care comments.

Gemological Research Swisslab: “Synthetic Glass/Treated Ruby” (GRS – type “Hybrid Ruby”) with comments Heat treated and filled with a colored foreign solid substance (including lead). Special care required when handling. Also known as Composite Ruby.

It should be noted that, depending on the level of treatment and lead glass filling to which this material has been subject, and based on the definition of the “gemstone” contained in the FTC Guides, it may be improper to use the name “Ruby” alone, without one of the above mentioned descriptors, to describe these products.

The undersigned associations and laboratories urge the trade at all levels to honor their responsibility to the consumer and the marketplace by fulfilling the requirements of the FTC Guides for disclosure of treatment and special care requirements for this material.

American Gemological Laboratories - agl@aglgemlab.com

American Gem Trade Association – info@agta.org

Gem Research Swisslab - adolfo@peretti.ch

Jewelers Vigilance Committee - clq@jvclegal.org

Manufacturing Jewelers and Suppliers of America - info@mjsa.org

New York Gemstone Association - info@nygagroup.com