

# SAFE GUARDS

SGS CONSUMER TESTING SERVICES

SOFTLINES

NO. 051/10 MARCH 2010

## KOREA CERTIFICATION (KC MARK): IMPACT ON KOREA TEXTILE COMMODITIES

Ministry of Knowledge Economy (MKE) of Korea has implemented a New National Unified Mark, called KC Mark (stands for "Korea Certification"). This is a legally compulsory certification mark that must appear on products as specified in related laws and ordinances.

### Overview of KC Mark System:

- To protect public health and safety, companies are required to obtain approval of a certification mark from an authorized body before certain products will be allowed to be sold in the marketplace. Items subject to legally compulsory certification are specified in related laws and ordinances pertaining to safety, health, environment and quality.
- Currently, diverse certification marks cause confusion among consumers, and have also proven costly and time consuming for businesses.
- To resolve this problem, the Korean Agency for Technology and Standards (KATS) revised the Framework Act on National Standards and its Enforcement Decree and introduced the unified Korea Certification Mark on July 1, 2009.
- This one single Korea Certification mark ("KC mark"), integrates and unifies all 13 existing legally compulsory certification marks.

### BENEFITS FOR CONSUMERS & COMPANIES

Consumers can rely on the KC Mark when choosing safe, healthy, environmentally friendly and quality products. Companies will save time and cost thanks to the streamlined certification processes, which eliminates redundant procedures.

### IMPACT OF "KC MARK" FOR THE KOREAN TEXTILE AND GARMENT INDUSTRY

In Korea, textile products are regulated by the **Self Regulatory Safety Confirmation Act**<sup>1</sup> and the **Safety Quality Mark Act**<sup>2</sup>. Every product (including imported goods) sold in the Korean market is required to comply with these two acts. This is a mandatory requirement for all textile/apparel items sold or imported into Korea.

Existing 13 legal Mandatory Marks in Korea



Korea New Unified Mark KC Mark



<sup>1</sup>. Article 19 (2) of the Quality Control and Safety Management of Industrials Act

<sup>2</sup>. Article 22 (1) of the Quality Control and Safety Management of Industrials Act

The **KC mark** became effective on January 1, 2010. This is a compulsory legally certification mark that must appear on products specified in related laws and ordinances. The **KC Mark for the Self Regulatory Safety Confirmation Act**, must be authorized by the Korean Government. The **KC Mark for the Safety Quality Mark Act**, is a self declaration of conformity from manufacturers or importers.

#### SCOPE OF SELF REGULATORY SAFETY CONFIRMATION ACT AND SAFETY QUALITY MARK ACT

##### 1. Self Regulatory Safety Confirmation Act

The manufacturers or the importers of products covered by the Act must have the products tested by an authorized testing and inspection institution. The products must meet the corresponding standards to qualify for the KC Mark and to import or sell their products in Korea.



Field	Self Regulatory Safety Confirmation Industrial Products
Textiles	Example: Textile Products for Infant, Accessories for Children, Sports Life-jacket, etc.
Merchandise products	Example: Shopping Trolleys, Disposable diapers, Toys, Children's metal jewelry, etc.

#### Safety Requirements of Textile Products for Infant:

Test item	Products for Infant (36 months & under)	
Formaldehyde(mg/kg)	20 or below	
Organotin <sup>1</sup> compounds(mg/kg)	DBT	1.0 or below
	TBT	0.5 or below
Azo Dye <sup>2</sup> (mg/kg)	30 or below respectively	
Total Phthalate Plasticizer Content <sup>3</sup> (%)	0.1 or below	
Flame retardants <sup>4</sup>	None	
Dimethyl Fumarate <sup>5</sup> (mg/kg)	0.1 or below	
Lead <sup>6</sup> (mg/kg)	90 or below	
Cords and drawstrings <sup>7</sup>	Conformance (As suitable)	
Disperse dye(mg/kg)	None	
pH	From 4.0 to 7.5	

#### Remark:

- <sup>1</sup> Only for coated/printed textile products
- <sup>2</sup> Only for dyed textile products.  
Restricted substances complied with KSK 0147, KSK 0734.
- <sup>3</sup> Only for products using coating materials, rubber or plastic. Test List: DNOP, DEHP, BBP, DBP, DINP & DIDP.
- <sup>4</sup> Only for flame retardant products. Test list: TDBPP, PentaBDE & OctaBDE.
- <sup>5</sup> Only for parts using leather materials.
- <sup>6</sup> Only for clothing with coating, printing & button (In case of metal, the requirement is 300 (mg/kg).
- <sup>7</sup> Only for products with a cord or drawstring.

## 2. Safety Quality Mark Act

In order to sell or import products for sale in Korea and to receive the KC Mark for the Safety Quality Mark Act, the manufacturers or the importers of products covered by the Act must indicate that the products meet the corresponding safety requirements.



Field	Safety Quality Mark Industrial Products
Textiles	Example: Textile Products (including textile products with skin contact), Carpet, Leather product, etc.
Merchandise products	Example: Furniture, Tent, Shoes for elder, Reflective Safety Vests, Mattresses, Umbrella, etc.

### Safety Requirements:

Test item	Textile Products for Children (Up to 12 yrs)	Innerwear	Midwear (e.g. Shirt)	Outerwear	Beddings	Fur, Hide		Leather	
						Natural	Natural	Artificial	
Formaldehyde(mg/kg)	75 or below			300 or below					
pH	From 4.0 to 7.5			From 4.0 to 9.0		NA	NA	NA	NA
Azo Dye (mg/kg)	30 or below					NA	NA	NA	NA
Organotin compounds (mg/kg)	TBT	1.0 or below				NA	NA	NA	NA
Dimethylfumarate (mg/kg)	0.1 or below								
Pentachlorophenol (PCP) (mg/kg)	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	5 or below		0.5 or below	
Chromium VI (mg/kg)	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	3 or below		0.5 or below	
Total phthalate plasticizer (%)	0.1 or below	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Lead(mg/kg)	90 or below	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Cords and drawstrings	Conformance (As suitable)	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Flame retardants	None					NA	NA	NA	NA
Disperse dye (mg/kg)	None		NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA

"NA" = "Not applicable"

### Grace Period

Certification obtained under the previous system will remain valid. The KC Mark can be used simultaneously with existing marks until June 30, 2011. As of July 1, 2009, the KC Mark will be required to be attached to all new products subject to compulsory certification.

Throughout our global network, SGS can offer testing services and allow you to conduct pre-tests before applying for the KC Mark. Please contact us for more information.



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