

SAFEGUARDS

SGS CONSUMER TESTING SERVICES

SOFTLINES

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CHILDREN'S CLOTHES ARE STILL UNSAFE

In a recent Press Release from "Prosafe"; the European Product Safety Enforcement Forum, the results of a joint surveillance of shipments of children's clothing in 11 European states are summarised. Whilst the indications are that numbers of "unsafe" garments are down since 2007, the numbers which do not conform to the requirements of EN 14682 are still high at 10%. Two thirds of these non conforming garments were found to be for the younger child (under 7 years) where the risk of serious injury is greatest because of their activities and lack of life experience.

EN 14682 was harmonised in 2006 as part of the General Product Safety Directive (2001/95/EC) and gives specifications for positioning, lengths and styles of cords and drawstrings which may and may not be used in children's clothing. For example:

- clothes with cords or drawstrings in the hood and the neck area carry risk of strangulation where the cord or drawstring (typically with a knot or a toggle) can get caught in for example playground equipment or furniture.
- clothes with cords or drawstrings which are too long at the back, the waist, on the sleeve or lower hems of the garment carry the risk of getting caught for example in doors of moving vehicles and the child is dragged along.
- clothes with elastic cords with three dimensional embellishments like toggles carry the risk of injury to the eyes or teeth.

Non-conforming product and voluntary or enforced recalls of product from the European marketplace are published on RAPEX; the "Rapid Exchange System" a web based facility. The recent surveillance exercise together with the number of published RAPEX recalls for this product area show that even though both the Directive and the European Standard have been available for some time, non conforming product is still widely available on the market.

In a drive to ensure maximum possible circulation and awareness of this information and to promote product safety to its clients, SGS provides a revamped and streamlined "PRODUCT RECALLS" publication. From now on this will be free and sent together with the SafeGuardS. The "Product Recalls" publication summarises the notifications of unsafe consumer products in the European, US and the Australian markets.

References:

1. [PROSAFE](#)
2. [Consumers: Risks from cords and drawstrings in children's clothing.](#)
3. [Questions and Answers on Cords and drawstrings](#)
4. [GPS Directive](#)

FOR ENQUIRIES:

Global Competences Support Centre: gpsc@sgs.com
UK – Rob Croskell, Tel: +44 1379 668625 or Rob.Croskell@sgs.com

Asia – Hong Kong. Tel: +852 2334 4481 Fax: +852 2144 7001 mktg.hk@sgs.com
Australasia – Perth. Tel: +61 (0) 3 9790 3418 Fax: +61 (0) 3 9701 0988 au.cts@sgs.com
Europe – London —UK. Tel: +44(0) 20 8991 3410 Fax: +44 (0) 20 8991 3417 gb.cts.sales@sgs.com
Africa & Middle East – Turkey. Tel: +90 212 368 40 00 Fax: +90 212 296 47 82 sgs.turkey@sgs.com
Americas – USA. Tel: +1 973 575 5252 Fax: +1 973 575 1193 uscts.inquiries@sgs.com

www.sgs.com/cts Global Competences Support Centre: gpsc@sgs.com
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