

SAFEGUARDS

CONSUMER GOODS AND RETAIL

HARDGOODS

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US CPSC ISSUES LETTER CONCERNING DANGERS OF HOLIDAY LIGHTING

On 14 July, 2014 the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) issued an open letter¹ notifying manufacturers, importers, and retailers of holiday seasonal lighting and decorative outfits that they are on direct notice and have direct knowledge of safety related concern for their products. The CPSC is urging companies to review processes and procedures of their production lines specific to the manufacture of such lights and outfits to ensure compliance with the applicable safety standard to minimize product hazards.

The commission cites UL 588 - 2009 – Seasonal and Holiday Decorative Products as an effective standard for safety testing of seasonal lights and related items, and stresses that manufacturers, importers and retailers are responsible to comply with the UL standard for such products.

Holiday lights and similar decorative products must meet the criteria set forth in the UL 588 voluntary standard for defective parts and all elements such as; wire size and type, fuses and their amp ratings, strain reliefs and proper insulation to assure product compliance and safety of products.

The CPSC reports in its letter that for the period of 2000 to 2013, an annual average of 3.1 deaths and 26.1 nonfatal incidents regarding holidays lighting and related items were recorded. This represents a substantial reduction from previous periods accredited by the CPSC to revisions that were made to the UL 588 standard in 1994 and 1997. By raising this issue at this time it is surmised that the number of incidents will be reduced even further.

In its letter, the CPSC has indicated that; “No persuasive reason exists” to “import, manufacture, distribute, or sell seasonal lights and decorative outfits that do not meet the UL standard”.



¹ [CPSC](#)

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