SAFEGUARDS
SGS CONSUMER TESTING SERVICES

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ASTM PUBLISHES F963:2011 REVISED U.S. TOY SAFETY STANDARD

As part of its continuing efforts to proactively address potential toy safety issues, the ASTM International Committee F15 on Consumer Products has approved revisions to ASTM F963, Consumer Safety Specification for Toy Safety. The new standard, designated ASTM F963-11, was published 15 December, 2011 and is available on the ASTM International website.

In accordance with section 106 of the CPSIA, ASTM has notified the CPSC of the availability of the revised standard, on 15 December, 2011. The CPSC must review the revised standard and advise ASTM within 90 days if they have any issues with accepting the revised F963-11. If the CPSC does not object to making F963-11 the new mandatory standard for toys under CPSIA section 106 (replacing the F963 2008 version), the new version of the standard will become mandatory 180 days after the date that the Commission was notified of the availability of the new standard.

Changes made to the standard include revisions to the section on heavy metals, the introduction of compositing procedures, new safety requirements and technical guidance for bath toy projections, acoustics and other potential safety hazards in toys.
Here is a brief summary the major revisions:

- Plastic Film : section title changed to include all plastic film in toys instead of just packaging components. The test method is revised to eliminate duplicate details (reference sections: 4.12, 8.21 and A10.6).
- Impaction and Spherical Ends : no substantial change to the intent; adds clarification of toy shapes with additional pictorial examples in Annex 10, for example, mallet of a musical toy is not covered by this requirement since it is not a nail, screw, peg, or bolt; changes section title to "Certain Toys with Nearly Spherical Ends" (reference sections:4.32 and A10.1).
- Stability of Ride-on Toys and Seats : clarifies test methods for variations in seating design to include fore and aft as well as sideways directions, and will include 'toy seats' in stability tests. The definition of 'toy seats' was added (reference sections: 3.1.83, 3.1.83.1, 4.15, 8.15, A10.2 and A10.5).
- Rattle, Teether and Squeeze Toys : exemptions were added which aligned with the EN 71-1, soft filled toys or soft filled parts or parts of fabric are exempted from this requirement. Rigid components having a major dimension equal to or less than 30mm contained within soft-filled toys are also exempted (reference sections: 4.22.3, 4.23.2, 4.24.3 and A10.7).

- Overload Requirements for Ride-on Toys and Seats : clarification that 'toy seats' are included in the standard and furniture is excluded; specific overload test method added to reflect how third party labs have historically been conducting this testing. (reference sections: 4.15.5, 8.26, A10.4 and A10.5)
- Jaw Entrapment : gauge size requirement modified to add a third dimension; added requirement for gauge to pass completely through the opening. (reference sections: 4.39, 4.39.3, Fig 25 and A10.8)
- Yo Yo Tether Balls : clarify measurement of extended tether when rotating. Length is specified between the clamp point and the center of rotation as this parameter is affecting the load on the tether during rotation, which was aimed to achieve consistent results across laboratories. (reference sections: 8.23, Fig 38, Fig 39 and A10.11)
- Heavy Elements : adds new section for substrate materials to include CPSIA lead content limit, soluble migration for other heavy elements at same levels as EN 71; excludes substrates that are inaccessible or cannot be mouthed or sucked; includes provisions for metal, glass and ceramic small parts; excludes materials that are excluded for lead in 16 CFR 1500.91; includes toys for children less than 6 years that are likely to come in contact with the mouth; includes limits for cadmium in metallic toys or components of toys with specific test requirements; includes a total metal content screening method which would eliminate soluble testing total results are less than soluble limits; allows compositing (defines methodology) for total metal content screening test but not for soluble testing; provides for alternate methods (i.e. XRF testing) provided the test lab can validate method accuracy. (reference sections: 4.3.5, 8.3 and A10.10)
- Bath Toy Projections—adds new sub-section to 'projections' requirements addressing bath toys. Revisions are intended to address the potential hazards that may be presented by vertical, or nearly vertical, rigid projections on bath toys. This requirement is intended to minimize possible puncture or other hazards to the skin that might be caused if a child were to fall on a rigid projection. Additional design guidelines specifically for bath toy projections are provided in Annex A4 of this specification. (reference sections: 4.8.1 and A4)

The above list that represents the major changes to ASTM F963, may not include some 'editorial' and/or minor revisions.

SGS will follow up and provide information about developments in the regulations for consumer products as a complimentary service. Throughout our global network of laboratories, we are able to provide a wide range of services including physical/mechanical testing, analytical testing and consultancy work for technical and non-technical parameters applicable to a comprehensive range of consumer products. Please do not hesitate to contact us for further information.

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