

SAFEGUARDS

SGS CONSUMER TESTING SERVICES

HARDGOODS, TOYS & JUVENILE PRODUCTS

NO. 079/12 MAY 2012

MEXICO INTRODUCES STANDARD CONTROLLING HEAVY METALS IN SCHOOL SUPPLIES AND TOYS

Mexico's Ministry of Health has published an Official Standard for environmental health limiting the bioavailability of heavy metals in toys and school supplies. The standard also includes chemical specifications for the targeted substances and testing methods. The heavy metals include antimony, arsenic, barium, cadmium, chromium, mercury, lead and selenium.

On 15 May, 2012, Mexico's Ministry of Health has published STANDARD NOM-252-SSA1-2011 in the Official Journal of the Federation ¹ to regulate the limits of bioavailability of 8 heavy metals in toys and school supplies. This standard sets the bioavailability limit and test method for the determination of lead in toys for children under the age of 12 and school supplies for preschoolers. This standard also sets bioavailability limits and test methods for the determination of antimony, arsenic, barium, cadmium, chromium, mercury and selenium in toys for children under the age of 3 and school supplies destined for preschool, which by their very nature pose the risk of sucking, licking or swallowing. The details are listed in Table 1.



TABLE 1.

SOLUBLE ELEMENT		Sb	As	Ba	Cd	Cr	Pb	Hg	Se
Maximum migrated element in mg/kg from the material analyzed	toys for children under the age of 12 and school supplies for preschoolers						90		
	toys for children under three years and school supplies destined for preschool, which by their very nature pose the risk of sucking, licking or swallowed	60	25	Any toy and preschool supply material, except:		60	90	60	500
	modeling clay			finger paint					
modeling clay and finger paint	60	25	250	50	25	90	25	500	

¹ STANDARD NOM-252-SSA1-2011 (only Spanish is available)

Materials that need to be tested (grouped according to different sample removal and preparation procedures):

- Coatings of paints, varnishes, lacquers, printing inks, polymers
- Polymers and similar materials including laminates, whether textile reinforced or not, with the exclusion of other textiles.
- Paper and cardboard.
- Textiles, natural or synthetic.
- Glass, ceramic, metallic materials under certain small parts tests.
- Other materials in the mass colored or not (eg wood, fibreboard, hardboard, bone and leather).
- Materials intended to leave traces (eg Mine pencils and ink pens).
- Modeling materials including pastes for modeling and mold, and gels.
- Paints, including finger paints, varnishes, lacquers, glass powders and similar materials in solid or liquid form.

This standard will become effective 90 calendar days after its publication in the Official Journal of the Federation, i.e. August 13, 2012.



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