



Consumer Federation of America

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Consumer Federation of America's Toy Safety Advice in Response to Chinese Product Recalls: America's Parents and Caregivers Need to be on Heightened Alert

Washington DC—"The many recent recalls of children's toys have put Americans on heightened alert when it comes to the safety of the toys in their homes and on store shelves," said Rachel Weintraub, CFA's Director of Product Safety and Senior Counsel.

The Consumer Federation of America is calling on toy manufacturers, Congress and the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission to take immediate and concrete steps to protect our children from unsafe products. These steps include:

- 1) Increase the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission's budget to allow more resources to prevent unsafe products from entering the stream of commerce.
- 2) Require manufacturers to test components of products as well as final products for compliance with voluntary and mandatory standards. Independent third parties must conduct these tests.
- 3) Develop a product traceability program to easily and quickly identify where products and product parts are made.
- 4) Require that importers post bonds to cover the cost of a recall.
- 5) Increase the civil penalties that CPSC can assess against manufacturers, importers and others who fail to comply with CPSC regulations.
- 6) Assess penalties for the knowing introduction of unsafe products into the market.
- 7) Require the CPSC to publicly disclose information about safety investigations and reports of adverse events.
- 8) Improve consumer notification about recalls by requiring manufacturers to directly communicate news of a recall to purchasers or owners of the recalled product.

We recommend that parents and other caregivers and toy purchasers take the following steps:

- 1) Identify whether you have a product in your home that has been recalled. Go to www.cpsc.gov to determine whether the products in your home are subject to the recall.
- 2) If you do have a recalled toy in your home:
 - a) Take it out of your children's hands immediately;
 - b) Follow the manufacturer's instructions for the recall; do not just throw out the product; and

- c) If the recalled toy contains lead, wipe down other toys that were near the recalled toy to catch lead dust.
- 3) Beware of young children's tendency to put small toys in their mouths.
- 4) Beware of choking hazards, including small magnets. To determine if there are toys or parts of toys that may pose a choking hazard to a young child, use the inside of a toilet paper tube. If a toy or piece of a toy easily fits through, do not let children under three play with or have access to these toys.
- 5) Lead is a hidden hazard. While lead test kits exist on the market they are not always accurate. If you are concerned that your child may have ingested lead, contact your child's doctor.

“Parents should not have to conduct chemistry experiments in their homes to determine whether a product is safe. Manufacturers, importers and retailers must take responsibility to ensure that the products they sell do not pose risks of harm to children,” said Weintraub.

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Consumer Federation of America (CFA) is a nonprofit association of 300 consumer groups with a combined membership of more than 50 million people. CFA is dedicated to advancing the consumers' interest through advocacy and education.