

December is Safe Toys & Gift Month – Be Sure to Choose Wisely



During this time of the year, children become excited in anticipation of the toys they'll receive from Santa, friends and family, yet if not properly selected, toys chosen may cause injury even death. During the past four years, U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC)(www.cpsc.gov) and U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) have stopped more than 8 million units of about 4,500 different types of toys and children's products due to hazards or the failure to meet federal safety standards. These strict enforcements are good news for shoppers and toy recalls which have been on the decline from 172 in 2008 to 24 in 2016.

In November, the CPSC released a new report indicating, in 2015, there were an estimated 185,500 toy-related injuries treated in U.S. emergency departments and 11 deaths of children under 15 years of age. Riding toys, specifically, non-motorized scooters were the category of toys associated with the majority of these injuries which consisted primarily of lacerations, contusions or abrasions to the head and face.

December is Safe Toys & Gifts Month. Prince William County Department of Fire and Rescue Chief Kevin McGee in conjunction with CPSC urges individuals to carefully select toys prior to purchase in an effort to reduce toy-related injuries and deaths this holiday season and throughout the year by following these simple safety tips when purchasing toys:

- Magnets
 - Children's magnetic toys are covered by a strong safety standard that aims to prevent magnets from being swallowed. High-powered magnet sets that do not meet CPSC's lifesaving standard are not permitted.
 - Balloons
 - Children can choke or suffocate on deflated or broken balloons.
 - Keep deflated balloons away from children younger than 8 years old.

- Discard torn balloons immediately
- Small balls and other toys with small parts
 - For children younger than 3, avoid toys with small parts which can cause choking.
 - Scooters and other riding toys
 - Riding toys, skateboards and in-line skates go fast, and falls could be deadly.
 - Helmets and safety gear should be worn properly at all times and they should be sized to fit

Once Gifts are Open

- **IMMEDIATELY** discard plastic wrappings from toys.
- Keep toys for older children away from younger children.
- Pay attention to instructions and warnings on battery chargers.
 - Battery charging should be supervised by adults.
 - Chargers and adapters can pose thermal burn hazards to young children.
 - Some chargers lack any mechanism to prevent overcharging.

Checking It Twice

Before discarding that gift list, make sure items purchased **DO NOT** appear on the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission's recalled toys or children's products list. To receive recall e-mail notification visit U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission at www.cpsc.gov/cpsclist.aspx or call their toll free hotline (800) 638-CPSC (2772).

To report an unsafe product, visit www.saferproducts.gov.