

Tuesday, 1st September 2009

BABY PRODUCTS FAIL SAFETY CHECKS

Ten items designed for young children have been removed from sale for failing to meet stringent safety standards.

Product safety inspectors from the Office of Consumer and Business Affairs (OCBA) have recently focused on baby products to make sure that any potentially dangerous items are removed from sale. Fifty retail outlets across South Australia were visited including speciality baby stores, second-hand baby stores and discount variety stores.

Consumer Affairs Minister, Gail Gago says she is concerned about the number of potentially dangerous items found.

“It’s concerning that ten baby items were found to be unsafe. Clearly some traders need to be more thorough in making sure their stock meets safety standards before it goes on sale.”

“Rigorous safety standards apply for many baby products to help keep our very young children safe.”

The six failed ***second-hand*** items include:

- Three prams. One pram did not have a wrist tether strap, and two prams had footbrakes that did not comply with the safety standard.
- Three cots. Two cots with protrusions that could catch on a child’s clothing, presenting a strangulation hazard. There was no automatic locking device on the drop side of the third cot.

OCBA has asked the traders to correct the faults or remove these items from sale and will be following up to ensure that this has occurred.

The four ***new*** items that failed checks include:

- A children’s folding chair that could trap little fingers in the frame (sold at Cheap as Chips).
- “Baby Play Centre Activity Table” that contains small parts, presenting an ingestion or inhalation hazard (sold at Browse In and Save).
- “Roger Armstrong Nursery Furniture Elyse Stroller” that did not carry required warning labels (sold at a number of stores).
- “Oeuf Sparrow Cot” where the space between the bars is too small and so little arms or legs could become trapped (supplied from 3 Feet High).

These non-compliant items have been removed from sale, and consumers who may have already purchased one of these products are urged to return them to the place of purchase. Consumers are entitled to a full refund, and proof of purchase may be required.

Where non-compliant products have been sold OCBA expects traders to conduct a public recall.

One supplier is being investigated with a view to prosecution for repeat offences, and five other traders have received warning letters.

Minister Gago said “There will be no concessions made for traders who have previously been warned about selling unsafe products. “

Traders risk a maximum penalty of \$10,000 under the *Trade Standards Act 1979* for supplying products that don't meet applicable safety standards.

Minister Gago encouraged consumers who are concerned about the safety of items for babies and young children to contact OCBA.

More information about product safety is available at OCBA's website (www.ocba.sa.gov.au) or by phoning OCBA's product safety section on 8152 0732. Information about recalled products is available at www.recalls.gov.au

Independent testing has been arranged for some additional products, to determine whether the products are in breach of the relevant safety standards.