
Wednesday 16th August 2006

SHOW BAG ITEMS REJECTED

The Office of Consumer and Business Affairs (OCBA) has detected seven items to be removed from show bags after this year's annual inspection.

Minister for Consumer Affairs, Jennifer Rankine said, "Every item in every show bag has been thoroughly checked, and it is pleasing that just seven items were found to be hazardous."

"OCBA's regular checks of show bags have meant that operators have become more aware of their responsibility to supply products that are safe, but inspections will continue each year to ensure that no items slip through the cracks.

Unsafe items were found in a range of bags including brands well loved by children. The list includes:

- A "Bob the Builder" tool belt that has small parts - nuts and bolts - that pose a choking hazard to young children. The tool belt also has a vice grip toy and a clamp that can easily break into small parts if dropped, posing ingestion and inhalation hazards.
- A power tool set in another show bag with small nuts and bolts, and a spirit level, which when dropped, poses a choking risk.
- A musical instrument in the Hi-Five bag that can easily break into small parts when dropped, posing a choking risk.
- A leaking battery in a watch, calculator and electronic game. The items were also prone not to work properly, if at all.
- A beanbag with no warning labels, and a zipper handle that had not been removed. Children could easily access the polystyrene beads that are a choking hazard.
- A charger for a computer game - the charger is not approved and did not demonstrate that it met Australian Communications and Media Authority requirements for television and radio interference.

"The traders have agreed to remove these items before the Show starts. I am pleased with the cooperation of the traders and the organisers of the Show with these annual inspections," the Minister said.

In addition to the contents, the carry bags themselves have been tested. This follows reports from the United States where lead has been found in the decorative paint on beach bags with printed insignias. OCBA often tests toys such as jewellery and cups for lead in the paint or other coatings, and bags will now be checked for lead on a regular basis. This year's show bags passed the lead safety test.

“Consumers can feel confident that all show bag items have been checked, but I urge parents to look closely at the contents of bags, and keep in mind the recommended ages for products and toys. Consider whether the items included in show bags are suitable for your child's age and state of development,” said Ms Rankine.

“It is also wise to supervise children when they play with new toys to ensure that they use them properly. They can still get hurt with a product that has passed safety tests if they don't use it appropriately.”

Toys offered as prizes at Sideshow Alley are yet to be checked, and OCBA will continue its inspections during the Show.

A list of banned and dangerous goods can be found on the OCBA website (www.ocba.sa.gov.au). Consumers are encouraged to visit the website to check that particular products are safe, or telephone 8152 0732 if they have any concerns.