

Thursday, 24 November 2005

TIMELY WARNING TO TRADERS

South Australian traders today received a solid reminder of the importance of making sure the goods they sell are safe.

In the Adelaide Magistrates Court, Mission Imports Pty Ltd was convicted of 1 offence of supplying dangerous goods and 6 offences of supplying goods that did not comply with safety standards. The company was fined \$4500 plus court costs and fees and further ordered forfeiture of the lead wick candles seized by trade standards officers.

Minister for Consumer Affairs, Karlene Maywald, said that this case was a timely warning to all traders.

“It’s the responsibility of traders to ensure the products they have for sale are safe. Mission Imports Pty Ltd simply ignored their responsibilities and placed at risk the safety of users of these products,” she said.

The Office of Consumer and Business Affairs (OCBA) has an ongoing program of market monitoring. Each year OCBA officers inspect a wide variety of consumer goods. During a routine inspection, officers found and tested a number of items, which included:

- ***Candles with a wick containing lead*** - these posed a risk of inhalation of toxic lead fumes. Lead wicked candles were banned in 1999.
- ***Toys for children aged less than 3 years*** - tested toys failed to meet the mandatory standard. Toys are rejected if they break into small pieces, which presents a choking or ingestion hazard for small children under the age of three. Types of toys included a “baby guitar” and a child’s wooden game.
- ***Incorrect labelling on a range of flotation devices*** - a number of these devices were found with labelling that was inconsistent with mandatory standards. Types of flotation devices included “Aqualon-Jet kickboard”, “Aqua Fun Safety Swimband” and arm rings.

“This is a particular concern at this time of year because the people Mission Imports Pty Ltd sells to include social clubs holding Christmas parties for employees and families with children. Mission Imports is a wholesaler and doesn’t sell direct to the public,” Minister Maywald said.

“Ideally, I would like OCBA’s inspectors to find nothing, because that would mean traders were complying with the Trade Standards Act and Regulations. Instances such as this, however, highlight the importance of regular testing and investigation to ensure the safety of the consumer. OCBA will continue it’s monitoring,” she said.

A list of banned and dangerous goods can be found on the OCBA website (www.ocba.sa.gov.au). Consumers and traders are encouraged to visit the website, or telephone 8152 0732 (131 882 for regional callers) if they have any concerns.