

Hong Kong Customs alerts public to one model of unsafe plastic doll (with photo)

Hong Kong Customs today (July 27) reminded members of the public to stay alert to a model of unsafe plastic doll. Test results indicated that the amount of phthalates (a type of plasticiser) contained in the model exceeded the limit stipulated in the Toys and Children's Products Safety Ordinance (TCPSO) and its subsidiary legislation. To avoid an accident, parents should immediately stop their children from playing with the toy. Traders should also remove the toy from their shelves.

Customs officers earlier conducted a test-buy operation on nine models of plastic dolls from retailers in different districts for safety testing. Test results revealed that Class 1 phthalates contained in a model of plastic doll reached 4.5 per cent of the total weight of the plasticised materials, exceeding the limit of 0.1 per cent stipulated in the TCPSO and its subsidiary legislation.

Customs later conducted an operation and searched 11 shops of the retailer involved in the case. Moreover, spot checks were conducted in various districts across the territory. No plastic dolls connected to the case have been found for sale so far. An investigation is ongoing.

Customs reminds members of the public that chronic exposure to plasticiser may harm children's health and cause liver, kidney, reproductive and development system toxicity. When purchasing and using toys, parents should observe the following safety tips:

- Do not let children play with toys alone;
- Avoid prolonged exposure to or licking of plastic toys;
- Follow the instructions associated with the toys;
- Check the structure of the toys to see, for example, whether they have a fragile structure, hidden sharp points, rough surfaces, sharp edges or gaps that may pinch children's fingers; and
- Stop children from playing with the toys immediately if any damage is observed.

Customs is committed to the protection of consumer interests and regularly conducts spot checks and safety tests on toys and children's products to ensure that they are reasonably safe for use by consumers.

Under the TCPSO, it is an offence to supply, manufacture or import unsafe toys or children's products. The maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine of \$100,000 and imprisonment for one year on first conviction, and a fine of \$500,000 and imprisonment for two years on subsequent conviction.

Members of the public may report information relating to suspected unsafe toys or children's products via Customs' 24-hour hotline 2545 6182 or its dedicated crime-reporting email account (crimereport@customs.gov.hk) or online form (eform.cefs.gov.hk/form/ced002).

