

Hong Kong Customs alerts public to unsafe bubble blower (with photo)

Hong Kong Customs today (May 16) reminded members of the public to stay alert to an unsafe bubble blower. Test results indicated that the small parts of the toy could pose suffocation risks to children. To avoid an accident, parents should immediately stop letting their children play with the bubble blower. Traders should also remove the toy from their shelves.

Customs officers earlier test-purchased a model of bubble blower from a retailer for safety testing. Test results revealed that the lid of the toy was a removable component and failed the related safety tests. Children would face a danger of suffocation if the lid is swallowed. Customs also found that the toy did not carry the required warning about removable small parts specified in the safety standard. Moreover, the bubble blower did not bear the identification markings and the bilingual warnings or cautions prescribed by the Toys and Children's Products Safety Ordinance (TCPSO).

Customs later conducted an operation to search the retailer's premises in connection with the case. No other suspected unsafe bubble blowers were found and a prohibition notice was served at the same time to prohibit the continued sale of the unsafe bubble blower by the retailer.

An investigation is ongoing.

Customs reminds members of the public to observe the following safety tips when purchasing and playing with toys:

- Beware of whether the toys contain any small parts. Small parts may block a child's throat and lead to suffocation if swallowed;
- 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;
- Do not let children play with toys alone;
- Pay attention to age recommendations shown on labels;
- Pay attention to and follow the instructions associated with the toys;
- Throw away plastic packages of toys to prevent children from being suffocated; 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 a 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).

