

UK Safety Alert issued for small high-powered magnetic products

- Businesses reminded they must identify and remove products containing small magnets from the market if they breach safety requirements
- The Office for Product Safety and Standards is working with local authority Trading Standards to take appropriate action against any products where magnets may be ingested by a child
- The public is urged to protect children from the risk of ingestion, which can cause fatal injury

The Office for Product Safety and Standards (OPSS), the UK's national product safety regulator, has issued a Safety Alert to warn of the risk of serious injury and death from swallowing small high-powered magnets.

The OPSS Safety Alert follows increasing reports of injuries from ingestion of magnets, particularly among children and young people. OPSS has identified a particular hazard arising from the use of high-powered magnets in products, where the magnets can be swallowed, such as fridge magnets, earrings, tongue piercings and drink charms.

Businesses and online platforms have been reminded of their obligations under product safety law. They must remove from the market products containing small magnets which breach the safety requirements of the Toy Safety Regulations or the General Product Safety Regulations.

Specifically, businesses and retail platforms are advised to remove from the market any products that breach the magnetic flux index where there is a risk that magnets may be ingested by a child. They must also ensure that clear warnings are included with any products that contain magnets, where there is a risk of ingestion.

The public is being asked to take appropriate steps to keep these products away from children as ingestion could result in a serious or fatal injury. Parents or guardians should understand the signs of magnetic ingestion and act quickly to get immediate medical treatment if they believe a magnet has been swallowed.

OPSS is working with local authority Trading Standards to identify and take appropriate action against any products where magnets that breach the required level of magnetic flux may be ingested by a child.

This represents the latest action by OPSS on magnetic products in recent months. In March 2021, an awareness campaign was launched to highlight the

dangers of small, high powered magnets, in conjunction with Child Accident Prevention Trust, Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents and the Chartered Trading Standards Institute.

OPSS Chief Executive Graham Russell said:

“OPSS has taken this important step because the magnets market is changing, with an increasing number being incorporated into a wider range of products, including jewellery and other novelty items. There have been several incidents involving children and young people swallowing small magnets and there is a very real risk of serious injury or worse.

OPSS is working closely with stakeholders and local authorities to gather detailed evidence of the market as a whole and is now taking action against these specific products.”

Further information can be found on GOV.UK [Product Safety Database page with alerts and risk summary](#)