

TOYS: SAFETY REQUIREMENTS AND TESTS

CONTEXT

In response to the consumer's growing preoccupation with the safety of toys, the European Union published a new EU Toys Safety Directive, including new points of attention and several enforcing activities.

Toys belong to a highly regulated product group in Europe. Manufacturers and importers of toys are faced with very strict obligations concerning the CE-marking of toys according to the prescriptions defined by the **EUROPEAN TOYS SAFETY DIRECTIVE (88/278/48/EEC recently replaced by 2009/48/EEC)**.

This new directive will enter into force in 2011.

The EU Toys Safety Directive not only defines what toys are but also the different safety and health requirements toys have to comply with.

By affixing the mandatory CE-marking on a toy, one indicates in principle that the Toys Safety Directive has been observed. In any case, it is prohibited to sell toys without CE-marking.

CE-MARKING AND CONFORMITY ATTESTATIONS

CE-marking is not a quality mark but indicates in principle that the article complies with a set of **minimum requirements** in the field of the **safety** and **health** of users or third parties.

To affix this CE-marking, the manufacturer or importer has to dispose of an **attestation of conformity**, indicating that he or she has correctly applied the Toys Safety Directive and that the toy complies with all legal requirements in the field of **health, safety and environmental protection**. The attestation or auto-certification is an important element in the context of **product liability**.

Because of the enormous juridical and economic implications in the case of abuse, legitimate companies strictly observe this legislation.

The conformity of toys with the different applicable safety and health criteria is usually illustrated by a supporting test and sometimes by an inspection report or attestation issued by a recognized laboratory such as Centexbel.

Manufacturers or importers who are unable to present such attestations may be faced with huge claims for damages and high costs due to the removal of unsafe products from the market.

The massive import of fake or even utterly dangerous toys from Asia will surely increase the number of controls performed by the authorities in the future.

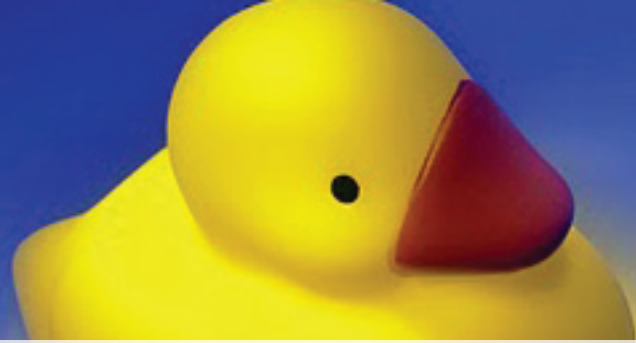
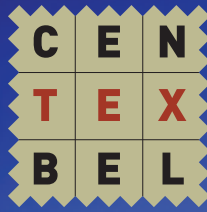
The presence of toxic substances or of loose parts that may be swallowed are among the most frequent problems. Every year tens of thousands of babies, toddlers and small children are admitted into hospitals because of accidents at home with toys.

Each year, several CE-marked products are obligatory removed from the market because of their non-conformity with the requirements (RAPEX-list).

MAJOR MODIFICATIONS OF THE NEW TOYS SAFETY DIRECTIVE 2009/48/EEC (APPLICABLE AS FROM 2011)

- total ban of carcinogens
- toys sold together with food has to be wrapped separately
- adapted maximum standards for heavy metals, lead, cadmium and mercury
- regulations for allergen colorants
- noise producing toys must comply with the applicable European standard
- results of risk analyses shall be part of the technical documentation
- respect of the essential health and safety requirements
- attestation of conformity with unique photograph and product number





CONFORMITY TESTS ON TOYS

EN 71 describes the criteria and test methods toys have to comply with according to the most recent toys safety directive. This standard includes eleven categories related to specific properties, methods and agreements:

1. MECHANICAL and FYSICAL properties of materials and construction - EN 71-1
2. RESISTANCE TO FIRE - EN 71-2
3. MIGRATION of certain components such as heavy metals - EN 71-3
4. chemistry boxes - EN 71-4
5. chemical toys other than chemistry boxes - EN 71-5
6. WARNING SYMBOLS to indicate age - EN 71-6: requirements regarding the use and shape of age indicating symbols
7. finger paint - EN 71-7: requirements and test methods
8. swings, slides and similar toys for domestic use in- and outside the house - EN 71-8
9. ORGANIC CHEMICAL COMPONENTS such as monomers, plasticisers, residues of coating solvents and lacquers, fire retardants, colorants - EN 71-9: requirements for toys likely which use may lead to mouth contact, inhalation, skin contact, eye contact, swallowing or sucking. **It is indeed forbidden in general to use any harmful substances or preparations in toys (EU directives 67/548/EEC, 76/769/EEC and 88/379/EEC, REACH annex XVII)**
10. ORGANIC CHEMICAL COMPONENTS - EN 71-10: PREPARATION and EXTRACTION of certain organic components from toys depending on the type of material (polymers, textiles), the envisaged components and detection limits
11. ORGANIC CHEMICAL COMPONENTS - EN 71-11: ANALYTIC METHODS

WHAT DOES CENTEXBEL OFFER THE TOYS INDUSTRY?

QUICK ANALYSIS OF TOYS

Centexbel offers a test package in the framework of the renewed toys safety directive with amongst others the determination of chemical components (EN 71-3), burning behaviour tests (EN 71-2) and mechanical tests (EN 71-1) on toys, of which a number of accompanying tests is performed under accreditation. Our expertise in the chemical composition of textiles and in chemical substances allows us to quickly detect and analyse the most common organic chemical components (EN 71-9,10 & 11). Centexbel also performs laundry tests on children and baby articles.

SPECIALIZED SERVICE ON PRODUCT SAFETY

Next to the specific toys safety directive requirements, the toys industry have to reckon with more general legal requirements (REACH, RoHS...) that also apply to other products and restrict the use of certain chemical substances, such as cadmium, azo-colorants, phthalates

REACH TEST PACKAGE

Centexbel has composed a test package to analyse your products on the presence of substances of very high concern as defined by REACH.

OEKO-TEX AND CERTIPUR

Centexbel is a certification organisation recognized by Oeko-Tex and CertiPUR. Products complying with the strict requirements of Oeko-Tex and CertiPUR automatically comply with all European directives concerning heavy metals, azo-colorants, plasticisers, organic tin compounds, fire retardants, antimicrobial substances...

An Oeko-Tex and/or CertiPUR certificate makes a lot of chemical analyses in the framework of the toys safety directive redundant.

TECHNOLOGICAL CONSULTANCY

When non-conformities are detected, we will refer you to our technological consultants to solve the problem. Centexbel assists you in running a risk analysis of certain toys and in drafting and updating your technical files concerning conformity with the toys safety directive. Centexbel organises appropriate training sessions for all your staff members involved in the purchase of toys and the drafting of technical files.



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