

DECEMBER-IS-SAFE-TOYS-AND-GIFT-MONTH---BE-SURE-TO-CHOOSE-WISELY

For Release

December 1, 2019

During this time of the year, children become excited in anticipation of the toys they'll receive from Santa, friends and family, yet if not properly selected, toys chosen may cause injury even death. A report released by Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) titled "Toy-Related Deaths and Injuries Calendar Year 2017" (https://www.cpsc.gov/s3fs-public/Toy_Report_2018.pdf?qI01DVoYhV6lzYgcLa04K28yF28BOgdS) states an estimated 251,700 toy-related emergency department-treated injuries and 13 toy-related deaths occurred in 2017 among children younger than 15. Riding toys, specifically, non-motorized scooters were the category of toys associated with the majority of these injuries and half of toy-related deaths.

The CPSC has the most stringent toy safety standards in the world. Due to their collaborative effort with the U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP), who oversees more than 300 of the nation's ports, seized several shipments of unsafe toys, throughout the country, over the past few years, for violating toy standards and containing lead. In July 2017, CBP officers, in Charleston, South Carolina, seized unsafe toys valued at over \$120,000. This year, in July, CBP officers seized approximately \$28,000, in unsafe toys, for violation of the Consumer Product Safety Act. These toys failed to meet federal safety standards and therefore, were prohibited from entry into the U.S. These strict enforcements are good news for shoppers and toy recalls which have been on the decline since 2008 when 172 toys were recalled compared to 18 toys recalled in 2018. (<https://www.cpsc.gov/Safety-Education/Toy-Recall-Statistics>)

December is Safe Toys & Gifts Month. Prince William County Fire and Rescue System Chief Tim Keen in conjunction with CPSC urges individuals to carefully select toys prior to purchase in an effort to reduce toy-related injuries and deaths. During the holiday season and throughout the year, follow these simple safety tips when purchasing toys:

- Check the label: Choose age appropriate toys by reading the age label on the toy. Children younger than 3 should not have access to toys with small parts, which can cause choking. Also avoid marbles and small balls for children under 3.
- Get safety gear: With scooters and other riding toys, supervision is key along with proper safety gear that includes helmets. Helmets should be worn properly at all times and they should be sized to fit. Avoid riding a scooter on a street or roadway with other motor vehicles.

- Hoverboards: Although not considered a toy, hoverboards should be compliant with [UL 2272](#) safety standard. Buy from a retailer that requires UL certification as standard. Hoverboards that don't have this certification should be avoided.
- Be careful with magnets: High powered magnet sets are dangerous and should be kept away from children under 14. Building and play sets with small magnets should also be kept away from small children.

Once Gifts Are Open

- **IMMEDIATELY** discard plastic wrappings from toys.
- Keep toys for older children away from younger children.
- Pay attention to instructions and warnings on battery chargers.
 - Battery charging should be supervised by adults.
 - Chargers and adapters can pose thermal burn hazards to young children.
 - Some chargers lack any mechanism to prevent overcharging.
- Keep button batteries away from younger children.
 - A child can swallow a button battery and suffer dangerous chemical burns in as little as two hours. **DO NOT** leave products with accessible button batteries within reach of children.

Checking It Twice

Before discarding that gift list, make sure items purchased **DO NOT** appear on the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission's recalled toys or children's products list www.cpsc.gov/Recalls. Throughout the year, consumers should always check their homes and toy boxes for previously recalled toys as well.

To receive recall e-mail notification, visit U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission www.cpsc.gov/cpsclist.aspx or call their toll free hotline (800) 638-CPSC (2772) (TTY 800-638-8270).

To report an unsafe product, visit www.saferproducts.gov.