

Consumer Information Notice

HALLOWEEN COSTUMES AND OTHER ITEMS

Halloween is growing in popularity and increasingly consumers are making more purchases for the occasion. The Office of Fair Trading is therefore issuing the following guidance to help consumers avoid potentially dangerous halloween products.

- **Check for 'CE' markings** - Products with this marking are tested to prove conformity with EU minimum health, safety and environmental standards before being placed on the market. Children's costumes (including wigs, masks and other such accessories) are classed as toys and should bear the 'CE' marking. However, costumes with CE markings can still be flammable. Facepaints which are marketed for children should also carry the 'CE' marking.
- **Child safety** - If you buy props and other items for your child's costume you should consider whether these are appropriate for safe use by your child. Children under the age of three are particularly susceptible to choking on small detachable parts.
- **Who are you buying from?** - Only buy from reputable traders and be wary of fakes as these products do not undergo rigorous testing before being placed on the market and may therefore be more susceptible to catch fire or fall apart. Be particularly careful when purchasing online.
- **Is it fake?** - Be aware that 'CE' markings can be faked by counterfeiters or those looking to cut corners. Check the logo looks correct and that the middle line of the "E" on the logo is shorter than the top and bottom lines.
- **Check the packaging and labels** - Packaging and garments should contain the manufacturer's or importer's name and address. Ensure the product is accompanied by safety information and instructions where applicable.
- **Halloween contact lenses** - Only buy these from registered opticians to avoid possible complications.
- **Novelty halloween lights** - These are growing in popularity and are similar to Christmas lights. Limit any risks with these electrical products and only buy those with a 'CE' marking and contact details of the manufacturer and importer.
- **Candles** - Try going for battery operated candles as this reduces the risk of fire. If using tea lights, keep these in a glass jar for extra protection.
- **Check for product recalls** - Search the EU's product recall database (RAPEX) on the following webpage:
https://ec.europa.eu/consumers/consumers_safety/safety_products/rapex/alerts/?event=main.listNotifications

Search the UK Trading Standard's (CTSI) product recall database on the following webpage:
<https://www.tradingstandards.uk/consumers/product-recalls>

Like the OFT's facebook page or follow us on Twitter for regular recall notices.

CAUTION!

ALL GARMENTS HAVE A RISK OF BEING FLAMMABLE! PLEASE CHECK THE LABEL AND STAY AWAY FROM NAKED FLAMES

