



Report Warns of Dangerous Toys on Holiday Shelves

Written On December 1, 2009 By [Bob Kraft](#)

The [Washington Post](#) reports, "Despite a new law that bans six chemicals from children's products and lowers the lead limit for them, a public interest group has found a number of toys at major retailers that contain the chemicals and illegal amounts of lead." The US Public Interest Research Group's (US PIRG) "report called 'Trouble in Toyland,' found that while many manufacturers and retailers are complying with the new law, a handful are not, and it is hard for consumers to tell the difference."

Referring to the report released on Tuesday, the [AP](#) says, "Holiday shoppers should look out for toy hazards such as small parts, loud sounds, soft plastics and lead contamination, consumer advocates warned." Elizabeth Hitchcock, public health advocate for US PIRG, warned, "This is definitely a time when people are going to be thinking about making purchases for the holidays, so we want people to be aware of these hazards." For its part, the Toy Industry Association warned "parents not to be 'needlessly' frightened by these types of reports, which 'often ignore or misinterpret the facts.' Government safety officials assured shoppers that toys are safer this year than in previous holiday seasons."

In an article entitled "Fewer Dangerous Toys On Shelves — But Safety Still An Issue, the [Christian Science Monitor](#) reports, "In general, parents shopping for children this holiday season can be confident that toys on the shelves are safer than they have been in the past. The Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) has had 38 toy recalls this year, down from 162 in 2008 and 148 in 2007, when 45 million toys were recalled and the public demanded stronger laws and better enforcement." Yet, noted the Monitor, "not all toys on shelves are safe, and parents still need to be vigilant."

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Florida's Sun-Sentinel reports that the 24th annual Trouble in Toyland survey "examined toys purchased by its researchers in national chain and dollar stores around the country," and "found 16 that either violated current toy manufacturing standards or were potentially dangerous, even if they met guidelines." However, the law doesn't "require retailers to stop selling inventory made before the new standards involving tiny magnets and small parts went into effect, she said, so these products still could legally be on the shelves."

HealthDay reported that US PIRG "said it will unveil a new interactive tool — accessible via computer or smart phone — that will help parents and other purchasers avoid hazardous toys. Consumers will also be able to report dangerous toys to the new web tool."

From the American Association for Justice news release.

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