

PRESS RELEASE

SCOTSS Trading Standards Week – Press release

Product Safety (embargoed 20<sup>th</sup> September 00:00)

**Stopping unsafe goods - Trading Standards services save around £8m a year through removal of unsafe products in Scotland.**

Trading Standards Teams throughout Scotland work every day to ensure that unsafe and non-complaint goods are removed from sale. This involves working at ports and airports to prevent unsafe goods being placed on the market, inspecting goods on the market which are produced or imported by local businesses or marketed online, and providing business advice to ensure that businesses are aware of their obligations.

These activities often go unnoticed, but they are vital to the protection of Scottish consumers and also to the Scottish economy by preventing the import of cheap non-compliant goods from overseas. Trading Standards teams throughout Scotland have prevented over £4m worth of harm since April this year through the removal of almost 10,000 unsafe and non-compliant products from the market, which posed a risk to the public.

In an increasingly globalised marketplace, it has never been more important that consumers report accidents and near misses involving products they have purchased, in order that Trading Standards teams can take the necessary steps to investigate and take appropriate action.

Christopher Bell, Chair of SCOTSS Product Safety Group, said:

“Trading Standards are a hidden service within Local Government. As part of Scottish Trading Standards Week, I am delighted to highlight, not just the impact that our activities have, but also some real examples of the work being undertaken across Scotland to protect consumers from unsafe products, the dangers of which are often not apparent.

**Electric Lamps** – This product was obtained as a sample by a local business and examined by Trading Standards who were providing business support. The copper wiring in the cable was 75% thinner than that declared on the cable outer, which could lead to overheating and fire.

No others are known to be on the market, but the exporter in China is now being traced to allow any further shipments to be prevented from entering the country.



**Inflatable Neck Rings** for babies were purchased and tested. These revealed that the items contained excessive phthalate levels, posed a choking risk due to small detachable parts, and also posed a significant risk due to inadequate design and quality of inflation chambers and valves.

The items are being removed from online platforms, and consignments are being screened to prevent further items entering the country.



## Hoods Cords & Entrapment

Over 1000 items of clothing posing entrapment and choking risks were suspended from sale until they could be modified to be safe. A project in the West of Scotland highlighted free running hood cords, which pose a choking hazard to children, and other long cords and features which can become tangled, risking other injuries.





Christopher continued “I would like to appeal to consumers to ensure that they are satisfied that the products they purchase are safe, and that they contact their local trading standards team with details of any products which they believe may be unsafe. Details of your local Trading Standards team to report such issues can be obtained from:

<https://www.tradingstandards.uk/consumers/support-advice>

I would also urge local businesses to seek out their local Trading Standards teams and ask for business advice relevant to their activities.

Sandra Harkness, Chair of SCOTSS added:

“It is vital that consumers have adequate levels of protection when purchasing goods, but also that businesses are aware of safety standards and their obligations when providing those goods. This is especially true when we consider the changes which will occur upon leaving the EU, which will bring a significant level of additional responsibility to those importing goods.”

Scottish TS Week takes place 16-20 September 2019. Follow @socotss on Twitter for full updates and follow #ScottishTSweek2019 for updates from across Scotland.

[www.tradingstandards.scot](http://www.tradingstandards.scot)

ENDS

Notes for Editors:

For press queries, email [coordinator@scotss.org.uk](mailto:coordinator@scotss.org.uk)

Telephone 07720538349

1. The Society of Chief Officers of Trading Standards in Scotland (SCOTSS) represents the 31 local authority Trading Standards services in Scotland. SCOTSS was established in 1996 and helps support and coordinate the activities of Scotland local authority trading standards teams. It is a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation SC047951 and works closely with other governmental and regulatory organisations, such as the Competition & Markets Authority, and Office for Product Safety and Standards.

2. Trading Standards Officers in Scottish councils advise on and enforce laws that govern the way we buy, sell, rent and hire goods and services. Local authorities carry out inspections and monitor or investigate complaints, they work with businesses to help achieve compliance but ultimately, can instigate prosecutions against those who break the law.

3. Anyone with information about about product safety concerns can report it anonymously through Advice Direct Scotland on 0808 164 6000 [www.consumeradvice.scot](http://www.consumeradvice.scot) or to their local Trading Standards team <https://www.tradingstandards.uk/consumers/support-advice>