



Persatuan Pengguna Pulau Pinang Consumers Association of Penang

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Press Statement

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Shock-ing Toys For Children

Besides the numerous hazardous toys that are on sale in supermarkets, shops and stalls throughout the country, there are novelty items that are capable of giving an electric shock that have made a comeback.

It was spotted in a recent survey by the Consumers' Association of Penang (CAP) and we were able to buy "Shock Chewing Gum" at RM6.00 each.

It is designed to look like Wrigley's chewing gum complete with ingredients. A strip of the 'chewing gum' protrudes out for it to be pulled. When someone pulls the 'chewing gum', it triggers a switch which sends an electric charge through the arm of the person. This person will feel a sharp electric shock surging through his arm.

Such devices also come in the form of novelty pens and toy pistols which gives the person using the pen or pressing the trigger of the pistol a sharp electric shock.

We appeal to those who possess or think of buying one of these toys to seriously consider if they want to hurt their friends for what-they-consider as 'fun'. They might think that it is amusing but it is not so to the person who suffers the agonising pain besides being a potential danger to those with health concerns.

It was reported that a teacher in Sacramento, U.S.A., received a shock from a novelty pen given by a student and was unable to use her hand for a while then felt dizzy "in a couple of days". She was once enjoying good health but after that incident her doctor diagnose her as suffering from severe arrhythmia and nerve damage of the hand.

Such toys have been banned in some school districts in the U.S. Countries such as Greece and Cyprus have banned such novelty toys.

The packaging material did carry a warning that the toy should not be given to children below the age of 15, those above 50, and those having health conditions. However, who is monitoring the purchase and use of such toys? In fact, anybody can buy it and use it on anyone as they are targeting children to buy them and would they abide by the fine print warning on the packaging material? Would children know and care if a person has heart problems or epilepsy and that it is not supposed to be used on a person who uses a pacemaker or other electronic devices in their body?

CAP calls on Ministry of Domestic Trade Co-Operatives and Consumerism to immediately crackdown, seize and ban all such novelty products sold in the market. They should also determine how such product were imported into the country.

The Ministry of Health should address the impact on a person's health upon exposure to such toys.

The Ministry of Domestic Trade, Cooperative and Consumers Affairs should immediately look into this matter as the novelty toy manufacturer replicated Wrigley's chewing gum and selling it as a dangerous

toy. If it is not a dangerous toy then why must the manufacturer print the health warning on the toy and its packaging?

Such is a flimsy way to exonerate itself from law suit just in case a mishap occurs.

Moreover, the law states that children toy manufacturers and distributors have registered and must attach a Certificate of Conformance to obtain a certified MC KPDNKK logo for each toy before they can be marketed.

The Ministry of Health also needs to address the impact on a person's health upon exposure to such toy.

CAP calls on the relevant authorities to ban this kind of toy because it is certainly not a 'novelty' to the person experiencing the trauma and pain from the sharp electric shock. We are also keen to know how such dangerous toys can be imported and sold under the very noses of the authorities.

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