



Persatuan Pengguna Pulau Pinang
Consumers Association of Penang
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Press Statement

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CAP: Toxic toys in the market

The Consumers Association of Penang (CAP) calls on parents to avoid plastic toys for their children as it was found to contain poisonous chemicals called chlorinated paraffin.

Chlorinated paraffins, classified based on their carbon chain lengths, are highly toxic chemicals used in many types of plastics, including in plastic children's toys. Evidence shows they may cause damage to the liver and kidneys, disrupt the endocrine system, cause cancer, damage developing brains, and pose threats to reproductive health.

Evidence also shows chlorinated paraffins are released from plastics through their life cycle. Children can be exposed to chemicals in toys through inhalation of toxic dust, skin contact, and ingestion which can either be through exposure to the mouth or by chewing.

In a study conducted by International Pollutants Elimination Network (IPEN) on 31 samples of plastic toys collected from 10 countries, including Malaysia, it was found that both short-chain chlorinated paraffins (SCCPs) and medium-chain chlorinated paraffins (MCCPs) were found in all the toys tested. Among the toys tested are inflatable horses, shrilling chickens, rubber ducks, dolls, and plastic teddy bears. The samples were analysed at a laboratory in Prague.

SCCPs have been globally banned and MCCPs are being evaluated for a global ban. Several of the toys tested contained high levels of SCCPs and thus plastic toys that children are playing with are so toxic that they could be classified as hazardous waste.

The IPEN study found alarmingly high concentrations of chlorinated paraffins in children's toys. These results published by IPEN in October 2023 highlight the urgency of regulating these chemicals globally and across regulatory frameworks.

None of the toys tested by IPEN were labeled for the presence of toxic chemicals which calls for the importance of labeling and traceability throughout the plastics life cycle.

Short-chain chlorinated paraffins (SCCPs) were listed for elimination under the Stockholm Convention* in 2017 due to their persistence and toxicity. However, Malaysia has yet to ratify the Convention.

Recent tests conducted in Canada detected high concentrations of SCCPs and MCCPs in toys and electronic devices. The presence of SCCPs in these products is of particular concern as infants, toddlers and young children are vulnerable to exposure from such sources. Even though the products that were tested were purchased in Canada they are manufactured for international markets and thus could be available in Malaysia.

IPEN's latest report *Are Your Children's Toys Hazardous Waste? High Levels of Chlorinated Paraffins in Plastic Toys from Ten Countries* published in October 2023 report highlighted several gaps in how toxic chemicals are currently regulated:

- highlight the importance of regulating classes of chemicals to prevent replacing one toxic chemical with another (so-called "regrettable substitutions);
- demonstrate the harm of allowing exemptions for continued use of toxic chemicals; and
- show the importance of transparency and traceability of chemicals used in plastics.

Given the latest findings, CAP calls for a ban on chlorinated paraffins as a class, given that they all have similar concerns. We also urge the Malaysian government to ratify the Stockholm Convention.

Mohideen Abdul Kader
President
Consumers' Association of Penang

* Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) is the only global legally binding mechanism to eliminate the world's most dangerous chemicals. The chemicals that are listed under the Convention are proven to be so toxic, persistent, and bio accumulative that they are of global concern. Malaysia became a signatory on 16 May 2002 but has yet to ratify the Convention.