New European Standard EN 14682

Safety of Children’s clothing – Cords and drawstrings on children’s clothing – Specifications

Issued as a European standard in December 2004, this standard has already been nationalised in the UK and the Netherlands, and will be adopted by other European countries by summer 2005. Following publication in CEN member countries, it has been agreed that there should be an 18-month transition period from the date of issue to allow manufacturers to develop and produce garments that conform to the standard.

This new standard specifies requirements for cords and drawstrings for children’s clothing, including disguise costumes and skiwear, up to the age of 14 years.

In addition to general requirements, there are specific requirements defined for various areas of an item of clothing. (Hood and neck area, Waist area, lower hems of garments hanging below the waist and sleeves) These requirements include the removal of “protruding drawstrings, functional cords or decorative cords on the bottom hem of coats, trousers or skirts, which are designed to finish at the ankle” and a requirement that in garments intended for children aged under 7 there “shall not be drawstrings, functional cords or decorative cords in the hood or neck area”.

Definitions are provided to assist in the understanding of the age and size categories referred to in the standard, and the types of cords and drawstrings and garment parts to which specific length measurements or prohibitions apply. Certain lengths are required to be measures whilst the garment is in both a flat, and “as worn” state.

National accident statistics have been used to provide source data for the new standard, and the standard also lists current legislation and voluntary agreements in various European countries within the informative annex.

The specifications are such that a high number of garments currently available for sale in the European market place would be found to be in contravention of the standard, and whilst the 18-month grace period does allow for these to be cleared from the supply chain, we strongly advise all our clients manufacturing or retailing children’s garments to obtain the standard now, and implement it’s requirements in their new season design process.

Should you have any query on the above news, please email: i.tex@intertek.com