



U.S. CONSUMER PRODUCT SAFETY COMMISSION
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June 1, 2015

Manufacturers, Importers, Distributors, and Retailers of Seasonal & Decorative Lighting Products

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen:

The U. S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC or Commission) is an independent federal regulatory agency responsible for protecting consumers from unreasonable risks of injury and death from consumer products. Our authority in this instance is set forth in the Consumer Product Safety Act (CPSA), 15 U.S.C. §§ 2051–2089.

On July 14, 2014, CPSC staff sent a letter to manufacturers, importers, distributors, and retailers of seasonal and decorative lighting products. This letter urged you to make certain that the seasonal and decorative lighting products that you import, manufacture, distribute, or sell in the United States comply with the currently applicable voluntary safety standard, UL 588 – *Seasonal and Holiday Decorative Products*, which you can purchase from Underwriters Laboratories Inc. (www.ul.com).

The Commission has now determined that seasonal and decorative lighting products that do not contain one or more of three readily observable safety characteristics (minimum wire size, sufficient strain relief, or overcurrent protection) defined in UL 588, constitute a substantial product hazard under Section 15 of the CPSA, 15 U.S.C. § 2064. The Commission issued a final rule that amends the Commission's regulation at 16 C.F.R. Part 1120, Substantial Product Hazard List. The final rule was published in the *Federal Register* on May 4, 2015, and it will apply to seasonal and decorative lighting products imported or introduced into commerce on or after June 3, 2015.

<http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2015-05-04/pdf/2015-10342.pdf>

Seasonal and decorative lighting products that do not contain one or more of the three readily observable characteristics are substantial product hazards. A product that is offered for import into the United States, and is, or contains, a substantial product hazard, shall be refused admission into the United States under Section 17(a) of the CPSA, 15 U.S.C. § 2066(a). CPSC will continue to partner with U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) to identify these noncompliant products at the ports, to refuse admission into the United States of these products,

and to take other appropriate actions. CPSC will proceed directly and without delay to seek a seizure and may pursue other remedies, which may include a recall of such products.

As noted in CPSC staff's July 14, 2014 letter, staff repeats our prior instruction that you should not import, manufacture, distribute, or sell seasonal and decorative lighting products that do not meet the UL standard. Accordingly, you are urged to review your product line immediately and ensure quickly that all seasonal and decorative lighting products that you manufacture, import, distribute, or sell in the United States comply with the safety standard referenced above. CPSC staff will follow up, as appropriate, to ensure that firms are meeting their obligations in this area.

Section 15(b) of the CPSA, 15 U.S.C. § 2064(b), requires every manufacturer, importer, distributor, and retailer of consumer products to report immediately to the Commission when it obtains information that reasonably supports the conclusion that a product distributed in commerce contains a defect that could create a substantial product hazard or creates an unreasonable risk of serious injury or death. The statute also provides for imposition of civil and criminal penalties for failing to report the required information timely or as required. CPSC staff intends to use all available tools to further our efforts to ensure that consumers are not placed at unreasonable risk of injury from hazardous products.

If you have any questions, or if we can be of any assistance, you may contact Mary Kroh, CPSC Compliance Officer, at 301-504-7886, or mkroh@cpsc.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Howard Tarnoff", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Howard N. Tarnoff