

## **Voluntary Standards as Market Surveillance Tools**

**The CPSC is often asked: Why do you stress that products that don't meet voluntary standards might be prevented from being sold in the United States? If there is no specific technical regulation, isn't a voluntary standard "voluntary"?**

In the absence of a federal requirement, voluntary standards are, in fact, voluntary.

However, in its efforts to conduct efficient surveillance operations, CPSC staff often uses a convincing claim of conformity with a relevant, widely recognized voluntary standard as an indicator that a product is free of the safety hazards that are prevented by adherence to that standard.

In this function, relevant voluntary standards are useful tools that are well-understood by both industry and the CPSC.

In addition, CPSC staff may also give weight to other indicators that a product is free of specific safety hazards if industry provides a useful and convincing means of doing so.

Such indicators would vary from product to product but to be useful, would need to provide the CPSC with a high level of confidence that hazards of concern to the agency are not present in the product.

It is always an option for the CPSC to test samples for safety hazards and restrict distribution in commerce pending outcomes of the testing. This is more likely to occur in the absence of useful indicators to provide the CPSC with confidence that a product is free of safety hazards.