



U.S. CONSUMER PRODUCT SAFETY COMMISSION WASHINGTON, DC 20207

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Manufacturers and Importers of Consumer or Home-use Inflatable Children's Toys

Home-use inflatable children's toys that contain electric motors powered by electric current from nominal 120-volt branch circuits are subject to the regulations for Electrically Operated Toys or Other Electrically Operated Articles Intended for Use by Children, 16 C.F.R. Part 1505. We have determined that this regulation applies to such products as they are designed, labeled, advertised, or otherwise intended for use by children, are electrically operated, and powered by a 120-volt circuit. However, as discussed below, we are exercising enforcement discretion so long as these products meet certain requirements.

Because electric motors associated with home-use inflatables are within easy access to young children, they may present an electrocution hazard to children. One cannot separate the motor/blower from an inflatable product, as it is integral to the function of the product. Children are clearly exposed to both the inflatable product and the motor/blower because the latter is affixed to the product by various means, usually by a sleeve, to provide the air to sustain the inflatable. Even though an adult would be needed to set up the inflatable and initially carry and position the motor/blower, children would be exposed to it because of the proximity of the motor/blower to the inflatable product. The motor/blower of this product is integral to the function of this toy and is not separated from the inflatable during operation. Because the motor/blower is part of the inflatable, we consider the total product to be intended to be used by children and subject to the electrical toy regulation.

The staff, in its enforcement discretion, will not enforce all the provisions of 16 C.F.R. Part 1505 for these products if they meet an appropriate electrical standard for outdoor use products, contain a listed Ground-Fault Circuit-Interrupter, GFCI, protected power cord, and a warning not to use extension cords.

The following provisions will not be enforced:

The standard limits the amperage to 5.5 amperes, 16 C.F.R. 1505.5(e). To use these products safely, the motors need to be powered with higher amperage than permitted in the standard to inflate and sustain the air pressure in the various types of units. We will allow higher amperage necessary to power the product.

The standard requires that the power cord length be from 5 to 10 feet, 16 C.F.R. 1505.5(e)(5). Short cord length will encourage the use of extension cords. Therefore, we


will allow the use of longer cords than allowed in the regulation so long as the cords are protected by a GFCI.

The standard does not have a provision for exposing the electric motor to wet conditions that are encountered in outdoor situations. Also, the standard does not require the use of a GFCI. There are no restrictions on the use of extension cords which can be hazardous if used outdoors in wet conditions. For us to exercise enforcement discretion, the electrical standard to which these products are certified must include a leakage current test, dielectric tests, locked rotor tests, and rain spray tests followed by additional leakage current and dielectric tests. In this regard, we will exercise enforcement discretion if the electric motors sold with these inflatables are certified to meet UL 507, *Standard for Safety for Electric Fans*, or another appropriate outdoor electrical standard, and listed for this specific outdoor application.

These products must meet the labeling provisions found at 16 C.F.R. § 1505.3 for the product, packaging, and instructions. Also, these products must comply with the provision for accessibility under 1505.4 (f)(2)(i) to ensure that the fasteners on the motor cannot be removed by a common household tool to access live electrical parts. Any access to live electrical parts must be prevented by welding, or the use of tamper-proof screws or equivalent. The attachment-plug must meet the requirements at 16 C.F.R. § 1505.5(e)(3)&(4). The firms that market these inflatables must meet the record keeping requirements at 16 C.F.R. § 1505.4(a)(3).

Firms should add a warning to instructions for these products that sudden gusts of wind may lift the inflatables off the ground. In addition, firms should include appropriate means for anchoring, such as, stakes with the products and provide instructions so that the user will secure the loops on the inflatables to the ground to prevent them from moving or turning over due to wind gusts. Failure to do so could result in the staff making a preliminary determination that the products are defective and present a substantial risk of injury to consumers.

In addition, the firms should add the following or equivalent warning, on the motor or on the electrical cord itself, which states:

“ WARNING- Electrocution Hazard
DO NOT USE EXTENSION CORDS
WITH THIS PRODUCT.”

The warning should be in accordance with the American National Standards Institute, ANSI, standard Z535.4-2002 for *Product Safety Signs and Labels*. The warnings to secure the inflatable and not to use extension cords also should be prominently displayed and placed in bold print in the instructions.

All firms have a continuing obligation to inform the Commission if they obtain information that reasonably supports the conclusion that the inflatable products contain a defect which could create a substantial product hazard or creates an unreasonable risk of serious injury or death. See 16 C.F.R. Part 1115 and CPSC’s Recall Handbook. You can access these materials on our Web site at www.cpsc.gov. Click on search and then enter “1115” for 16 C.F.R. Part 1115 or enter “recall handbook” for the handbook. The Commission’s regulations

are also located on this Web site and can be accessed at the “Business” icon and search under regulations.

This interpretation is based on the information currently available to the staff. If additional facts come to our attention, the interpretation could change. Also, the views expressed in this letter could be superseded by the Commission.

If you seek assistance or if you have any questions, please contact Frank Krivda, Senior Compliance Officer, at (301) 504-7580 or by e-mail at fkrivda@cpsc.gov or write to: Office of Compliance, U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, Room 613A, 4330 East West Highway, Bethesda, MD 20814-4408.

Sincerely,

/s/

Alan H. Schoem