

Regional Column

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With Senior Regional Officer for the South West, Annetta Bellingeri

Banned toys containing small magnets found online

Helping Western Australians make safe choices is a key priority for Consumer Protection. With that in mind, there is a serious product safety concern involving certain toys and games that contain small magnets.

The Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) has been investigating the online sale of banned toys, games, puzzles, construction or modelling kits that contain separate or loose small high-powered magnets.

Under Australian Consumer Law, certain small, high-powered magnets have been permanently banned since 2012 due to the serious and potentially life-threatening injuries they can cause if swallowed.

The ban means that these dangerous items cannot be sold to any Australian consumers. However, the ACCC identified listings for these products on major online marketplaces and issued takedown notices to have them removed.

Examples of affected products include those being marketed to adults as 'magnetic chess' or 'magnetic battle chess' style games.

Online platforms including Amazon, eBay, Kogan and Fruugo have committed to removing affected listings, preventing relisting where possible, and contacting customers who may have purchased these products.

Some marketplaces have also offered refunds, so consumers are encouraged to contact the seller or relevant online marketplace to enquire about a refund.

Parents, grandparents and guardians who have recently purchased magnetic toys or games - particularly a magnetic chess-style game containing loose magnets – should stop using them immediately and keep them out of the reach of children. If a child has swallowed a magnet, urgent medical assistance should be sought.



Businesses should review all products with magnets for sale. If you're not sure whether a product is part of the ban, you have a responsibility to carry out compliance checks before making products available to consumers.

If you become aware of a banned product continuing to be sold in Australia, you can report it to the ACCC at its product safety website www.productsafety.gov.au or inquiries can be made by calling Consumer Protection on 1300 30 40 54.