



Child-Safe Packaging Group

Newsletter – August/September 2001

www.childsafepackaginggroup.com

News flash.....New standard will banish unsafe blisters

New British Standard Now Expected by November 1st 2001.....

News is emerging from the British Standards Institute (BSI) that the 'fast-tracked' standard of protocol testing for child resistance of non-reclosable pharmaceutical packaging, blister and strip packs, will be published by 1st November this year.

The new standard will be modelled on the existing German one, DIN 55 559, which has been with us for almost twenty years. It will emerge ahead of the proposed pan-European standard – CEN TC 261, which is due in Mid 2002; assuming of course there are no serious objections from any member country.

The November deadline is somewhat disappointing because the Department of Health, in November 2000, promised that we would have a British standard for child resistance in April this year, nonetheless the Medicines Control Agency (MCA) and the BSI should be applauded if the November deadline can be met.

The publication of the new standard will effectively banish unsafe blister packs from homes throughout the United Kingdom.

The unsafe packaging systems will go because, in the event of any claim in the courts for damages or any action under the Consumer Protection legislation, the brand owner or packer/filler will, if they have not met the new standard, have no real defence to the action.

This of course applies to retailers and wholesalers as well.

Child Resistant Packaging – The Best Way Forward.....

At PIRA's recent seminar – *Improving Packaging Accessibility & Functionality*, held in Manchester on July 12th 2001, Stephen Wilkins, the CSPG's secretary said '*Whilst it is recognised that blister packs and other unit dose packaging systems have a unique and recognised function, they do present a problem of child resistance and simultaneous senior friendliness.*'

Attempts to resolve this problem are ongoing with a number of manufacturers making progress. But for products that do not require the unique properties of unit dose packaging, the tried and tested senior friendly and child resistant reclosable should always be the first option!

Changing Attitudes to Child Resistant Packaging in Europe.....

In May of this year the Child-Safe Packaging Group presented a paper in Copenhagen at the 11th Annual *Pharmaceutical & Medical Packaging Conference*, which was sponsored by the Society of Plastics Engineers amongst others.

This conference is a major European event and there were 160 attendees, 20 speakers from 8 European countries and 36 exhibitors.

A substantial proportion of the attendees represented both large and small members of the pharmaceutical industry and, during fringe discussion sessions, it became obvious that there is now no doubt as to the need for child resistant packaging for pharmaceuticals. The inadequacy of very many existing flexible packs was recognised.

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The consensus of the conference was that, even disregarding for a moment the danger to children, it was essential for the pharmaceutical industry to pack to the highest world standard.

Move to Safer Packaging Generally.....

Earlier this year the Department of Trade & Industry Consumer Safety Directorate, which has been a significant contributor to the British Standards Institute's deliberations concerning the new standard, issued a file of information concerning packaging accidents. The DTI called for designers and manufacturers to consider the possibility of accidents in the home, which were not only traumatic, but also potentially costly to the Health Service.

Child resistant Packaging in Poland.....

September 14th will see the Child-Safe Packaging Group presenting a paper in Gdansk, Poland to the *Polish Pharmaceutical Packaging Conference*. This follows the Child-Safe Packaging Group's successful presentation in Copenhagen, and indicates the desire of emerging Eastern European nations to investigate and adopt Western packaging systems.

A Rush to Find child resistant flexible packs.....

The forthcoming standard for blister and strip packs has promoted a sea change in attitude amongst brand owners and packer/fillers. We have received many requests for information and we are happy to assist any organisation in adopting child resistant packaging solutions and complying with the new British Standard.

The Child-Safe Packaging Group continues to work with its sister organisations.....

These are the Institute of Packaging Environmental and Safety Forum and the INCPEN Ad Hoc Trade Association.

Both INCPEN and the IOP endorse this group's objectives, which are....

'To promote the specification, consideration and success of child resistant packaging for all products where ingestion or other contact could prove seriously distressing to a child.'

If you want to join us ask about our membership packages; corporate membership, individual membership or affiliate membership for charities or trade associations.

For further details please email -

swilkinsassoc@lineone.net or see