

Sainsbury's to introduce enhanced safety standard for Children's Dress-Up

Thursday 28 May, 2015

Sainsbury's today announces that, from Halloween 2015, all children's dress-up outfits will be tested to the British nightwear flammability safety standard, the toughest standard that currently exists.

- Current regulation requires dress-up to be tested to European toy standards¹
- From Halloween 2015, all children's dress-up sold by Sainsbury's will also meet the British nightwear flammability safety standard²
- Sainsbury's will also introduce tests that are more rigorous than the British nightwear flammability safety standard during 2016

Current regulation requires dress-up to be tested to EU toy standards. Experts are calling for the British nightwear flammability safety standard to be applied.

Additionally, Sainsbury's will introduce its own more rigorous safety standard for all children's fancy dress outfits during 2016.

Due to its growing market share and increasing popularity of dress-up as a category, since last year Sainsbury's has been working with an independent laboratory to develop its own safety test which is designed to test the performance of its dress-up outfits in 'normal' conditions – i.e. recreating the test conditions most similar to how we would expect a child to wear fancy dress.

Sainsbury's new safety testing standards will include:

- Flammability testing up to the British nightwear flammability safety standard
- Crucially, testing the whole outfit for fire safety - rather than testing only individual materials – and including all materials used on the garment in the testing
- Testing the garments before washing rather than after, to recreate a more realistic home situation

Sainsbury's technologists have also looked at a number of factors to reduce the flammability of a specific garment, including:

- Embellishments around the hemline
- Reviewing in detail textile & trim combinations for their combined interaction
- Looking at which materials are used in dress-up clothes – for example, many people believe that natural fabrics burn less quickly than man-made fabrics which isn't necessarily the case

Sainsbury's Director of Non-Food, James Brown, said: "We have looked at every detail of our children's dress-up range in creating our new standard and believe that it will be industry-leading.

"This has not been a simple task, but the safety of children is our number one priority and introducing more rigorous safety standards for our children's dress-up is the right thing to do.

"All clothing carries some fire risk, but we hope that introducing our own rigorous testing standards that test clothes as clothes rather than as toys will be the first step towards safer testing across the industry."

Sainsbury's is the seventh largest clothing retailer in the UK and the sixth largest children's dress-up retailer, with sales up 20% in the past year.

Notes to editors

Sainsbury's goldilocks dress featured on BBC Watchdog last week, as the second garment tested of the three. Independent testing verifies that this garment passes the British nightwear standard, as well as the compulsory EU toy standard.

1. European Standard EN71
2. British Standard BS5722, Test 3

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