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Toy Safety for the Holidays

The State Office of the Attorney General, the Division of Consumer Affairs ("Division") and the Department of Education are providing this notice to emphasize the importance of toy safety, particularly during this holiday season.

With numerous toy recalls recently in the news, shoppers are advised to check whether any product they have purchased, intend to purchase and/or donate is on the list of recalled items maintained by the federal Consumer Product Safety Commission ("CPSC"). Over the past several months, millions of toys have been recalled due to hazards including lead paint, choking and strangulation, and the recalls have involved many brands. Given the broad reach of this very serious children's health and safety issue, shoppers, parents and other caregivers are urged to stay informed about the recalls.

The list of recalled toys can be viewed online at <http://www.cpsc.gov/cpscpub/prerel/category/toy.html> This list is updated daily as recalls are announced.

In addition, Division investigators are checking stores this holiday season, and will be examining whether CPSC recall notices are posted for toys that have been subject to a recall and that such toys are not offered for sale. The state's Consumer Fraud Act requires such public notice to be prominently posted for 120 days after the start of the recall, while the CFA regulations prohibit the continued sale of a recalled toy. Consumers are advised that, even if they have already purchased a toy that has been recalled, they should contact the store where the purchase was made. Consumers also can check the CPSC's toy recall notice for information about refunds or exchanges.

Finally, in general, toy purchasers may wish to follow these common-sense safety tips when shopping for toys.

When selecting toys, shoppers should:

- Avoid toys that have objects that can be shot or propelled;
- Avoid toys that make loud noises, like cap guns, because they can damage a child's hearing;
- Make sure strings and ribbons are no longer than 6 inches to prevent strangulation; and
- Avoid toys with sharp points or edges.

After purchasing toys, consumers should:

- Spot check toys regularly for minor damage and urge children to let you know when a toy needs repair;
- Throw away or recycle all toy packaging, such as plastic, cellophane and Styrofoam;
- Make sure batteries in toys are properly installed and never allow your child to sleep with a battery-operated toy; and
- Teach your child to use every toy properly.

Consumers who believe a store is selling a recalled toy can call the Division of Consumer Affairs at 1-800-242-5846 (toll-free within New Jersey) or at 973-504-6200 to report this information. Further information about recalled toys also is available by calling the Division.