

Reminder: EU Microbial and Phthalates Testing for Related Toys and Children's Products

On May 15, 2017, Consumer Council of Hong Kong announced that 2 models of soap bubble toys were detected with pathogen or comparatively high microbial count. According to the test results, these 2 models contained an amount of total aerobic microbial count of 4,600 CFU/g and 5,200 CFU/g respectively, exceeding the limit (1,000CFU/g or CFU/ml) set under the EU Toy Safety Directive and the European Pharmacopoeia.

Moreover, one of the tested models was found to contain a pathogen - *Pseudomonas aeruginosa*. Contact with contaminated products can cause serious infection in young children; typical symptoms include lower limb pain, gastroenteritis, sore throat and fever.

The European Recall Summary, RAPEX Notification, published on February 3, 2017 also reported the recall of a soap bubble toy by Luxemburg due to chemical risk (Alert no: A12/0107/17). It was found that the soft part of the bubble blowing fingers contained di-(2-ethylhexyl) phthalate (DEHP) (measured value: 7.4% by weight). According to the REACH Regulation, the phthalates DEHP, DBP and BBP are prohibited in all toys and childcare articles.

To ensure compliance with the consumer product safety requirements, manufacturers of related toys and children's products should have their products assessed for microbial contamination and/or phthalates content.

European Pharmacopoeia

EP Chapter 2.6.12 & 2.6.13

1. Total aerobic microbial count
2. Total combined molds and yeasts count
3. *Escherichia coli*
4. *Salmonella* spp.
5. *Staphylococcus aureus*
6. *Pseudomonas aeruginosa*
7. Enterobacteriaceae
8. *Candida albicans*



REACH (EC) No. 1907/2006 Annex XVII:

Phthalates content in plasticized materials
DEHP, DBP, BBP, DINP, DIDP & DNOP

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