

Re. BS EN 13120:2009+A1:2014 Internal blinds - Performance requirements including safety

This Department has visited manufacturers and suppliers of window blinds to remind businesses of the need for ongoing vigilance and compliance with the safety standards.

As you were made aware during the visit, in 2014 stringent new standards governing the manufacture, selling and installation of new internal window blinds came into effect with the aim of reducing child accidents. The General Product Safety Regulations 2005 place a legal responsibility on traders to provide a safe product. In the case of internal window blinds, compliance with the standards provides a presumption of conformity with the General Product Safety Regulations 2005.

I have provided further information below on the common issues and queries identified during the completion of visits to businesses.

Requirements for point of sale information

Information suitable for display at the point of sale regarding protection from strangulation shall be provided. This information shall contain at least the warning notice defined in 15.2.2.2 of BS EN 13120:2009+A1:2014. The supplier should recommend that this information is displayed by the retailer at the point of sale.

General warning notice defined in 15.2.2.2 of BS EN 13120:2009+A1:2014



NB: The word "WARNING" in this notice should be in upper case and not less than 8mm high. The rest of the text should be in letters no less than 3mm high.

Till prompts

Depending on the system used, it may be possible to highlight the importance of blind safety and reiterate the importance of fitting safety devices via a till prompt.

Requirements for accompanying documents (in particular the instructions for use)

Written information for installation, use and maintenance should be provided. Instructions for use should accompany the product. The instructions should include a repeat of the information with which the product is marked and should clearly state when the procedure specified can be completed by non-professionals.

Where safety devices are provided, accurate instructions should be included to ensure their proper installation.

Instructions for use should include the duties and conditions under which the internal blind has to be used, with regard to correct methods for operating the internal blind including safety devices where provided and an explanation of the warning signs.

Installation of safety devices and labels

Consumers should be supplied with the compliant goods, including labels and any safety devices. Clearly a supplier cannot be held responsible if the end user decides to remove or not keep the safety features or labels supplied. If fitting blinds ensure non-integral safety devices are always installed in all homes and all public buildings.

Our view is that a consumer cannot remove the trader's responsibility to install a safe product by signing a disclaimer. So if a non-integral device is required it must be installed by the professional installer. Such advice should have been given to the consumer before they made their purchase decision.

Compliance of blind displays

The EU Decision and the standard deal with internal blinds with cords and chains that could create a hazardous loop "*intended to be installed in premises where children 0-42 months are likely to have access or to be present*". This includes homes and public places like shops. Blind displays within your premises should therefore have compliant products installed. Compliant display products will also aid consumer choice.

Alternative designs

Where possible blinds should be made safe by design, in other words the blind can be operated without cords or chains that can form a loop. The British Blind and Shutter Association have produced a video on window blind safety which demonstrates the extensive range of blinds now available, which either do not use looped cords or chains to operate them or have concealed or tensioned cord systems. The video also provides advice on the child safety devices that should be fitted on blinds that could form a loop, at the point of manufacture. The video can be accessed using the following link

<https://vimeo.com/user7269955/review/141160650/cc3bd695b2>.

Please be advised that the requirements stated above are **not exhaustive** and relate only to the common issues and queries identified during visits.

I trust the above information will be given due consideration. Should you wish to discuss the content of this e-mail or require further information please do not hesitate to contact the Environmental Health Department on 0300 0300 900 or email: ehhealth@armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk.