



STAYING  
INFORMED

# What should I do?



**Consumers** can play an important role in buying products that are safe and ensuring that they are used safely.

This means following some basic steps:

- › buying products that are appropriate for the user (e.g. toys with small parts are not appropriate for children under three)
- › responding to product safety recall notices
- › reading and following instructions
- › using products for their intended purpose only
- › asking the supplier if the products meet an Australian or international safety standard
- › using appropriate protective gear
- › considering the environment in which the product is being used and the possible effects on others (e.g. young children should be kept away from exercise equipment that could harm them)
- › checking the ongoing condition of the product
- › taking immediate action on safety problems with the supplier or appropriate agencies.

**Suppliers and manufacturers** have an obligation to help ensure that only safe products are marketed. In particular, suppliers can contribute to safe outcomes by:

- › providing clear instructions for proper use, including warnings against possible misuses
- › being aware of and meeting industry and mandatory safety standards
- › developing product recall plans and procedures including effective communication strategies to the public (e.g. advertisements in papers)
- › incorporating safety into product design
- › developing appropriate safety standards through product improvement
- › implementing a quality assurance program which includes consumer feedback
- › responding quickly to safety concerns that arise.

**Governments** set up regulatory frameworks that encourage markets to deliver safe products to consumers. They can intervene if there is evidence of actual or potential product safety problems. They contribute to safety outcomes by:

- › making sure suppliers and manufacturers comply with mandatory safety standards for specific consumer products (e.g. children's products, electrical products)
- › promoting consumer awareness of particular product hazards
- › promoting good product safety management practices to suppliers
- › encouraging research to improve the safety of products.