

# Unsafe products another target of reforms



*Australia's product safety systems are also being reformed as part of the new Australian Consumer Law now before parliament.*

The proposed changes will result in:

- product bans and standards across Australia being harmonised—leading to a much simpler regulatory environment
- a new national Product Safety website—providing a single public reference point, which will go live early next year
- earlier identification of hazards—resulting from the introduction of a systematic 'clearing-house' approach
- improved recall processes—flowing from a major review of the system later this year.

More than 160 regulations have been scrutinised as part of the harmonisation project. A single set of regulations will apply across Australia by the end of 2010, with a reduction of around one-third in the number of regulations that currently exist.

The new national website will present a single entry point for product safety information in Australia, with content for business and consumers on current product hazards and regulatory information. It will also explain the roles of

specialist regulatory agencies (such as the Therapeutic Goods Administration) and provide links to relevant websites.

The Emerging Hazards Clearinghouse is on track for implementation early in 2010. It will use a range of information sources to analyse consumer product incidents in Australia, with the aim of identifying emerging safety hazards more rapidly. It will allow regulators to be more responsive to new issues and to share emerging hazard information.

A review of Australia's product recall system this year is likely to result in recommendations for a more effective way of recalling unsafe consumer products from the post-sale environment. A paper of options and recommendations will go to the Ministerial Council for Consumer Affairs by 31 December 2009.

Next year will see the introduction to parliament of the next stage of the Australian Consumer Law reforms. One of these reforms will be the mandatory reporting of unsafe products, with suppliers being required to notify the ACCC if their product has been associated with serious injury or death.

**PRODUCT SAFETY RECALL**

**Acme Hot Water Bottle (1 litre bottle)**

On the advice of the ACCC, Acme Products Australia Pty Ltd is voluntarily recalling the above hot water bottles.

The filling aperture (opening) is not the required size while the stopper from the hot water bottle separated below the required force. These failures could result in users suffering serious burns.

These hot water bottles were offered for sale at homeware stores in NSW, Queensland, WA and Victoria between June 2007 and August 2009. Consumers should immediately stop using these products and return them to the place of purchase for a full refund.

**For further information please telephone Acme Products Australia Pty Ltd on telephone number 02 9999 9999 during normal office hours.**

See [www.recalls.gov.au](http://www.recalls.gov.au) for Australian Product Recall Information