

FACT SHEET



Consumer Alert! – Novelty & Toy Like Lighters

An Essential Guide for the Safety of the Consumer and Children

Driven by unscrupulous manufacturers, a frightening and scurrilous product has made its way into the public market place.

This product may be found on the counters in shopping malls, grocery stores, hardware stores, mini-marts, and on-line markets or anywhere fathers and mothers bring their children to shop.

It is generally found low at children's height or in reach of children near the checkout stand, at the candy and gum counters, intermingled with bright and alluring lights, music and sports icons posters, intermingled with impulsive and impetuous buying-product lines.

An adult may easily tell the difference, but to children these lighters look just like toys. They are designed in the shape of bright, whimsy like cartoon characters, musical instruments, sports equipment, tools or household products, vehicles, popular animal shapes, toy or game pieces, holiday decorations, even human body parts.



The Rubber Duckie Lighter Quacks and shows flame when struck. The Traditional Rubber Duckie only floats.

Collectors are targeted with novelty-lighter images or look-a-like miniatures such as; adult tools, instruments, cell phones, hammers, measuring devices, paintbrushes, felt-tip markers, pens, cigarette shapes. These novelty lighters are truly collectible and endearing to the collector.

However, the more sinister side of these collectibles is the curiosity they engender with children.



Note flame size on this toy wrench.

A word of caution: Children are not the consumers of novelty or toy-like lighters, adults are. But, because these lighters are manufactured to look like toys, they are a magnet for small hands to explore.

The danger is that in many ways these novelty or toy-like lighters have more appeal to children than the associated toys or images these lighters were designed to emulate.

- Audio effects: Music, animal sounds and whistles, buzzers, beepers or other noises.
- Visual effects: Flashing lights, color-changing lights, changing images and flame color variations.

These special effects are generally not related to the flame producing function of the lighter, however require the lighter to be struck to function.

A Novelty/Toy like lighter IS NOT a disposable lighter that is printed or decorated with logos, decals, artwork, or heat shrinkable sleeves.

Toylike and novelty lighters have been responsible for injuries, deaths, and accidents across the Nation.

■ September 25, 2007, 15-month-old Paton Edwards and 2-year-old Breydon Edwards of Russellville, Arkansas, died after setting fire to their apartment with a Motorcycle-shaped lighter.

■ In North Carolina, a 6-year-old boy sustained second-degree burns after playing with a lighter that looked like a toy cell phone.

■ In Maryland, playground equipment was set on fire by three 5-year-old girls using a gun-shaped lighter.

■ In Oregon, one child died and another permanently brain damaged after a 6-year-old, playing with a lighter that looked like a toy dolphin, started a fire.

■ In another incident, a mother was severely burned after her child, playing with a lighter that resembled a Christmas tree, ignited the mother's bed.



Disposable Lighters

Due to the extreme danger these implements pose to children, both Maine and Tennessee passed a ban on novelty and toy like lighters in 2008. Ten other states including Utah are considering bans on these dangerous imposters. Their availability causes pain and anguish to children and to their families.

The Utah State Fire Marshal's Office has taken the lead to enact legislation to remove such products from the market place, by drafting legislation that would ban the sale and distribution of novelty and toy-like lighters within the State.

We, in the Fire Marshal's Office, are asking the assistance from each one you. Please help your District's representative to the Legislature, to understand the importance of this issue for the safety and well being of children throughout the State of Utah.

A short e-mail or quick call will help ensure their attention is directed to this matter.

Please find your representative's contact information at: <http://www.le.state.ut.us/Documents/find.htm>

Click on **house map** – find **your district** and **click on the map** – above the district map – click on the **Representative contact information** to find phone number or e-mail address – **Call or e-mail your representative.**

Lighters of various design, size and lengths are a useful and appropriate tool for adults. However, novelty and toy-like lighters are:

- Ⓢ Attractive to children.
- Ⓢ Dangerous to children.
- Ⓢ Stimulate curiosity in children.
- Ⓢ Attract child play.
- Ⓢ Are economically unsound
- Ⓢ Deceptive to adults and children.

Novelty & toy-like lighters are dangerous & deceptive - indeed a Child-Hazard.