Open Forum for Standards Development

ASTM International welcomes the participation of anyone interested in developing voluntary consensus standards and encourages that participation through its advanced Web-based standards development infrastructure.

The consumers and technical experts — scientists, engineers, manufacturers, academicians and business leaders — who join ASTM International represent 150 countries and diverse interests. These individuals come together to collaborate on the development of intellectual capital on the cutting edge of new trends and technology.

ASTM International standards improve product safety while enabling businesses to reduce costs, streamline product development, access markets and comply with codes and regulations.

For more information about ASTM International membership, visit www.astm.org/member

About ASTM International

ASTM International meets World Trade Organization principles and provides a global forum for developing international consensus standards known for their high technical quality and market relevance. Its standards, used around the world for everything from product design to market development, cover a breadth of topics from consumer products, materials and the environment to medical services, aircraft and security, and more.

Established in 1898, today ASTM International is a leader in its field with a proven reputation. ASTM International standards are used in research and development, quality systems, product testing and acceptance, and commercial transactions; they are a critical component of the information infrastructure that guides design, manufacturing and trade in the global economy.

In addition to toy safety, ASTM International Committee F15 on Consumer Products also develops standards for playground equipment, infant carriers, infant bedding and cribs, strollers, children’s jewelry, baby monitors and many other juvenile products.

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ASTM International F963, Consumer Safety Specification for Toy Safety

Safety for Children, Peace of Mind for Parents

For over 25 years, an ASTM International standard that is now cited in U.S. federal law has contributed to the goal of making toys safer.

Originally approved in 1986, ASTM standard F963, Consumer Safety Specification for Toy Safety, establishes nationally recognized safety requirements for toys. ASTM F963 includes guidelines and test methods that help prevent injuries from choking, sharp edges and other potential hazards.

ASTM F963 was developed by Subcommittee F15.22 on Toy Safety, part of ASTM International Committee F15 on Consumer Products. The standard is reviewed on a regular basis by the committee, which includes technical experts from academia, consumer groups, industry and government.

Many different types of toys intended for children under 14 years of age are covered by safety requirements in ASTM F963. These include:

- Balloons
- Stuffed and beanbag-type toys
- Marbles
- Balls
- Battery-operated toys
- Projectile toys
- Toys intended to be attached to a crib or playpen

ASTM F963 contains over 20 test methods, including tests for:

- Hazardous substance content
- Cleanliness and preservative effectiveness
- Stability of ride-on toys
- Toys that produce noise
- Loops and cords

Because it is continually reviewed and revised, ASTM F963 is a living document that helps mitigate new potential hazards in toys. Recently revised areas of the standard include:

- Presence of heavy metals
- Compositing procedures
- Ingestion of magnetic components
- Bath toy projections
- Testing for lead
- Acoustics
- Yo-yo tether toys

ASTM F963 and the Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act

ASTM F963 is cited in the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act (CPSIA), approved by the U.S. Congress in August 2008. Passed with strong bipartisan support, the CPSIA makes ASTM F963 a mandatory requirement for toys; since February 2009, all toys sold in the United States must meet the safety requirements of F963.

Congress has recognized the value of this collaborative international safety standard.

“When powerful magnets emerged as a new toy safety hazard, technical experts from ASTM Committee F15 recognized the seriousness of the issue and quickly worked to update the F963 toy safety standard,” said U.S. Sen. Bill Nelson (FL), who championed the toy safety requirements included in CPSIA. “These standards also provide an open, collaborative process to address changing conditions needed to ensure the safety of toys and children’s products.”

Ultimately, consumers and children benefit the most from the inclusion of F963 in the CPSIA. Inez Tenenbaum, chairman of the CPSC, noted, "In 2008, Congress created a paradigm shift with the passage of the Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act. ... With tight deadlines to establish lifesaving, federal standards for toys, cribs and numerous juvenile products, it was vital that the technical staff at CPSC have confidence that they could use and build from the existing voluntary standards. The longstanding relationships that CPSC technical staff have with the chairs and members of the ASTM F15 subcommittees on juvenile products were a key to our success at CPSC.”

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About ASTM Committee F15 on Consumer Products

ASTM F963 was developed by Subcommittee F15.22 on Toy Safety, part of ASTM International Committee F15 on Consumer Products. The committee includes 1,000 participants on 60 technical subcommittees. Formed in 1973, Committee F15 has jurisdiction over more than 90 ASTM International standards. The committee writes standards covering a wide variety of subjects, including juvenile products, toys, playground equipment, candles and pool safety.

F15 standards are developed by representatives of industry, government, testing laboratories, trade associations, retailers and consumers. The standards play an important role in reducing the number of injuries and deaths associated with the use and performance of consumer products based on identified hazards.

ASTM Committee F15 works closely with the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, an independent federal regulatory agency charged with addressing unreasonable risks of death and injury associated with more than 15,000 types of consumer products. Since CPSC’s establishment in 1972, its staff has been involved in the work of Committee F15 and other consumer-related ASTM committees.

For its development of the toy safety requirements of ASTM F963, Subcommittee F15.22 was awarded the CPSC’s Chairman’s Circle of Commendation Award in September 2013. Anyone with an interest in the standards development process is invited to join ASTM International.

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www.astm.org/COMMITTEE/F15