



U.S. CONSUMER PRODUCT SAFETY COMMISSION
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Manufacturers, Importers, Distributors, and Retailers of Extension Cords

Dear Ladies and Gentleman:

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (“CPSC” or “Commission”) is an independent federal regulatory agency responsible for protecting consumers from unreasonable risks of injury and death from consumer products. Our authority in this instance is set forth in the Consumer Product Safety Act (“CPSA”), 15 U.S.C. §§ 2051–2089.

On January 9, 2015, CPSC staff sent a letter to manufacturers, importers, distributors and retailers of extension cords (indoor and outdoor). The letter urged you to make certain that the extension cords you import, manufacture, distribute or sell in the United States comply with the currently applicable voluntary safety standard, UL 817 (11th Edition – February 2014 revision) - *Cord Sets and Power-Supply Cords* (the “UL standard”), which you can purchase from Underwriters Laboratories Inc. (www.ul.com).

The Commission has now determined that extension cords that do not contain one or more of five readily observable safety characteristics (minimum wire size, sufficient strain relief, proper polarization, proper continuity, outlet covers for 2-wire indoor cords and jacketed cords for outdoor extension cords), defined in UL 817, constitute a substantial product hazard under Section 15 of the CPSA, 15 U.S.C. § 2064. The Commission issued a final rule that amends the Commission’s regulation at 16 C.F.R. Part 1120, Substantial Product Hazard List. The final rule was published in the *Federal Register* on July 27, 2015, and it will apply to extension cords imported or introduced into commerce on or after August 26, 2015.

<https://www.federalregister.gov/articles/2015/07/27/2015-18294/substantial-product-hazard-list-extension-cords>

Extension cords that do not contain one or more of the five readily observable characteristics are substantial product hazards. A product that is offered for import into the United States and is, or contains, a substantial product hazard, shall be refused admission into the United States under Section 17(a) of the CPSA, 15 U.S.C. § 2066(a). CPSC will continue to partner with U.S. Customs and Border Protection (“CBP”) to identify these noncompliant products at the ports, to refuse admission into the United States of these products, and to take

other appropriate actions. CPSC will proceed directly and without delay to seek a seizure and may pursue other remedies, which may include a recall of such products.

As noted in CPSC staff's January 9, 2015 letter, you should not import, manufacture, distribute, or sell extension cords that do not meet the UL standard. Accordingly, you are urged to review your product line immediately and ensure quickly that all extension cords that you manufacture, import, distribute, or sell in the United States comply with the safety standard referenced above. CPSC staff will follow up, as appropriate, to ensure that firms are meeting their obligations in this area.

Section 15(b) of the CPSA, 15 U.S.C. § 2064(b), requires every manufacturer, importer, distributor, and retailer of consumer products to report immediately to the Commission when it obtains information that reasonably supports the conclusion that a product distributed in commerce contains a defect that could create a substantial product hazard or creates an unreasonable risk of serious injury or death. The statute also provides for imposition of civil and criminal penalties for failing to report the required information timely or as required. CPSC staff intends to use all available tools to further our efforts to ensure that consumers are not placed at unreasonable risk of injury from hazardous products.

If you have any questions, or if we can be of any assistance, you may contact Mary Kroh, CPSC Compliance Officer, at 301-504-7886, or mkroh@cpsc.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Howard Tarnoff". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

Howard N. Tarnoff