

News from NARTS

National Association of Resale & Thrift Shops

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 12, 2009

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Resale Professionals Unwilling to Test Their Fate

St. Clair Shores, MI—The Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) press release, issued January 8, is void of relief and security for resale professionals unwilling to test their fate under the current Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act (CPSIA) as it stands. “It is a step in the right direction toward open communication,” said Adele Meyer, NARTS Executive Director, “but it is NOT a ruling, exemption or exception to the CPSIA... it is a Press Release. It is NOT definitive! The children’s resale industry needs definitive rulings that will guarantee they can operate in compliance to the CPSIA without the risk of violations.”

This attempt at “clarification” has worsened the confusion surrounding the law which goes into effect on February 10, 2009. The CPSC press release says, “The new safety law does not require resellers to test children’s products in inventory for compliance with the lead limit before they are sold. However, resellers cannot sell children’s products that exceed the lead limit and therefore should avoid products that are likely to have lead content, unless they have testing or other information to indicate the products being sold have less than the new limit.” Meyer says, “We have ALWAYS fully understood that manufacturers are required to test for lead, not resellers, but how is a store to know definitively if a product violates the lead requirements unless it tests.” CPSC also stated, “Those resellers that **do** sell products in violation of the new limits could face civil and/or criminal penalties.”

If a resale business—profit or NFP—cannot open its doors “knowing” they are following absolute clear guidelines of the law, they “don’t know” anything. Their integrity will be challenged and they will stand on shaky ground. They may feel they are always looking over their shoulders and wondering whether when they turn around they will receive support from the CPSC and the government . . . or receive a big fat fine! “As the CPSIA stands today, should resale shops be willing to continue business as is and jeopardize their business, their family and home for words that tip toe around a bottom line of fact and clear wording of the expectations of the law?” asks Gail Siegel, NARTS Director of Membership Services, “With so much at stake for the resale industry, we do not need a pacifier to ‘calm us down.’ We need a fix for this terrible mess a well intended law has become.”

The National Association of Resale & Thrift Shops (NARTS), the world’s largest resale trade association, is dedicated to continuing education within the resale industry. The Association serves thrift, resale, and consignment shops of all types by providing educational and professional development for future owners and current store owners/managers. NARTS is committed to product safety, educating both consumers and store operators on how to identify previously recalled or banned products and any products that do not meet current safety standards. Please visit the NARTS Website at: www.narts.org for more information.