



MEDIA RELEASE

DR CRAIG EMERSON

Minister for Small Business, Independent Contractors and the Service Economy
Minister for Competition Policy and Consumer Affairs
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BAN ON DANGEROUS PLASTIC

Toys and baby products which contain a potentially dangerous chemical have today been banned by Consumer Affairs Minister Craig Emerson.

Dr Emerson said he was banning items containing more than one per cent Diethylhexyl phthalate (DEHP) because of international research linking it to reproductive difficulties.

While toys and baby products on Australian shelves are thought to be DEHP-free, they are available in some other countries.

“This is largely a precautionary measure because when it comes to the safety of our children, I will err on the side of caution,” Dr Emerson said.

“DEHP is a chemical used in plastic manufacturing to make products soft or pliable.

“It has been found in footwear, garden products, vinyl flooring and a range of toys and baby products like teething toys.

“Research has shown there is a risk factor when products containing this chemical are chewed or sucked for long periods – that’s why I am not taking a risk when it comes to babies and children.

“The Australian Competition and Consumer Commission has recommended to me that these products be banned because of the risk – albeit remote – of future reproductive problems.”

Similar bans are in force in the United States and the European Union, Dr Emerson said.

The types of toys and equipment covered by the ban include dummies, bowls, plates, cups, cutlery, soft books, infant activity centres and rattles – if they contain more than one per cent DEHP.

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