



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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Faulty hot water bottles under the microscope

News that manufacturers and suppliers of faulty hot water bottles will come under ACCC scrutiny has the potential to reduce incidents of serious burn injuries, Consumer Affairs Minister Dr Craig Emerson said today.

The ACCC is now working with State and Territory fair trading offices to investigate and test hot water bottles across Australia.

This winter 11 people in NSW alone have been admitted to hospitals with serious burns associated with burst or leaking water bottles.

In fact, there have been more than 85 hot water bottle-related injuries in the last three years. In the last year 38 people have been hospitalised with serious burns caused by hot water bottles.

“In colder months people often resort to hot water bottles as a cheap way of staying warm,” Dr Emerson said.

“Yet there are many examples of hot water bottles rupturing and scolding users including infants and the elderly.

“The ACCC is putting suppliers and manufacturers on notice and serious penalties are in place for those that do not comply with safety standards.”

Under the Trade Practices Act the ACCC can take action against businesses that supply hot water bottles that do not comply with the mandatory product safety standard.

Where faulty hot water bottles are found, voluntary recalls may occur and the ACCC can take legal action.

The ACCC has issued a brochure - *Safety Alert: hot water bottles* – which provides safety tips for those using hot water bottles.

The brochure is available online at:

<http://www.accc.gov.au/content/index.phtml/itemId/759045>

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