

Dangerous drawstrings and cords

Disclaimer: This document provides guidance and is not a legally binding interpretation and shall therefore not be relied upon as legal advice.

Week after week

Children's clothes are withdrawn from the market for the same reason:

"The product poses a risk of strangulation and injuries due to the presence of cords in the neck and waist areas. The product does not comply with the relevant European standard EN 14682."

The risk for young children that wear clothing with drawstrings while playing is high: strangulation and fatal injuries.

So the compulsory measure required by the market surveillance authorities is severe:

"Withdrawal of the product from the market, recall of the product from end users."

Fatalities and injuries

The following fatal and serious accidents occurred with children due to non-compliant clothing:

- Strangulation due to fatal entrapment of hood cords on slides;
- Children being dragged along by vehicles because their waist cords got entrapped;
- Elastic hood or neck cords resulted in a number of injuries.

EN 14682

EN 14682 is a harmonised standard for the General Product Safety Directive 2001/95/EC.

The standard was published to minimise the above-mentioned risks of accidental and fatal entrapment by cords or drawstrings on children's clothing.

The requirements are more severe for children younger than 7 years of age (134 cm length). For instance drawstrings, functional cords or decorative cords in the hood or neck area are **prohibited** for garments intended for young children.

EN 14682 contains requirements for decorative cords, functional cords, belts, sashes, toggles, embellishments, fixed loops, flat loops, zip pullers, adjusting tabs, shoulder straps, lower hems, elastic cords, sleeves, halter neck-style garments and garments that finish at the ankle.

More than 3,100 recalls !

In the past years more than 3,100 recalls were mentioned on Safety Gate (former RAPEX) for children's clothing with dangerous cords or drawstrings. Safety Gate is the "rapid alert system" that provides information on measures taken to prevent the marketing or use of products with a serious risk to the health and safety of consumers in the EU.

Especially prohibited neck cords for younger children are very easy to detect by customs and market surveillance authorities. This explains why textiles always rank very high in recall statistics.



[Click here](#) to visit the Safety gate website and type 14682 in the free text search field for an overview of all recalls.

PROSAFE

PROSAFE (Product Safety Forum of Europe) is a professional organisation for market surveillance authorities. Its primary objective is to improve the safety of consumers in Europe.

PROSAFE created a 4-minute video that explains the risks and provides more information on this recurring problem: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n-VeALc7xw>.

The pictures show five examples randomly taken from Safety Gate's weekly recall notifications.

