

# Proposal for partial amendment of Consumer Products Safety Law

*Press Release*

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Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry

## Purpose of amendment

After a series of serious accidents associated with gas instantaneous water heaters occurred in Japan, the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry, hereinafter “METI”, comprehensively re-examined its product safety measures and announced the conclusion, as attached, on August 28, 2006.

In that process, it was pointed out that the lack of a mandatory regulation obligating manufacturers and importers to provide accident reports to the regulatory authority caused the delay in administrative action to prevent further accidents in the cases of gas instantaneous water heaters and paper shredders.

It had also been pointed out that to make public the necessary information immediately is essential for preventing further hazards.

Therefore, METI has reached the conclusion that it is necessary to immediately amend the Consumer Products Safety Law partially, to require manufacturers and importers to report accident information to administration as their obligation.

## Outline of amendment

### **1. Reporting obligation on serious accidents associated with consumer products**

Every manufacturers and importers of a consumer product must report within ten days to the Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry, hereinafter the “Minister”, if they obtain information on a serious accident caused by their consumer product.

#### **(1) Product coverage**

All consumer products excluding automobiles, medicine and other products that are regulated by other laws and rules

#### **(2) Definition of serious accident**

Accident causing death, amputation of body parts, carbon monoxide poisoning, or fires

#### **(3) Corrective order and penalty**

The Minister can order manufacturers and importers who failed to fulfill their reporting obligation, to establish the information-collecting systems in their

companies.

Any person who violates the ministerial order shall be fined not more than one million yen or be imprisoned for not more than one year.

## **2. Publication by Minister**

When the Minister deems that it would be necessary to make public the accident information for preventing the occurrence or expansion of hazards caused by serious accidents, the Minister shall publish; 1) information on the accident with the general product name as an initial step, and 2) information on the accident with specification of the individual product name if deemed necessary to prevent the recurrence of further serious accidents.

## **3. Related parties' obligation**

- (1) Retailers and persons engaged in repair and installation of gas and electric products, who obtain information on a serious accident associated with the product, will be required to notify manufacturers and importers of such a product of this.
- (2) Retailers would be required to cooperate with the manufacturer or importer for preventing further accidents in the case of product recall ordered by the Law.