



AUSTRALIAN COMPETITION
& CONSUMER COMMISSION

Button/coin batteries and consumer goods containing button/coin batteries

May 2021



Australian mandatory safety and information standards

From 22 June 2022 manufacturers, importers, wholesalers and retailers of button/coin batteries or consumer goods that contain button/coin batteries supplied to Australia, **must** comply with the applicable Australian mandatory safety and information standards. Supplying or selling non-compliant products to consumers in Australia is illegal.

The problem

If swallowed, a button/coin battery can become stuck in a child's throat and result in catastrophic injuries and even death. Insertion of button/coin batteries into body orifices such as ears and noses can also lead to significant injuries.

In Australia three children have died and at least one child a month is seriously injured after swallowing or inserting a button/coin battery, with some of them sustaining lifelong injuries.

Children can access button/coin batteries in a variety of ways, including:

- products with unsecure battery compartments
- button/coin battery packaging that is not child resistant
- poor quality products which release button/coin batteries when dropped or broken
- spare batteries being provided loose in product packaging
- spare batteries not being kept out of reach around the home
- used batteries not being properly disposed of.



Regulatory action

After extensive consultation, the ACCC developed mandatory safety and information standards to reduce the risk of injury and death to children from exposure to button/coin batteries. On 21 December 2020 the Federal Government made these standards into law. The standards include a transition period of 18 months and the requirements will become mandatory on 22 June 2022.

Summary of key requirements

Consumer goods containing button and coin batteries

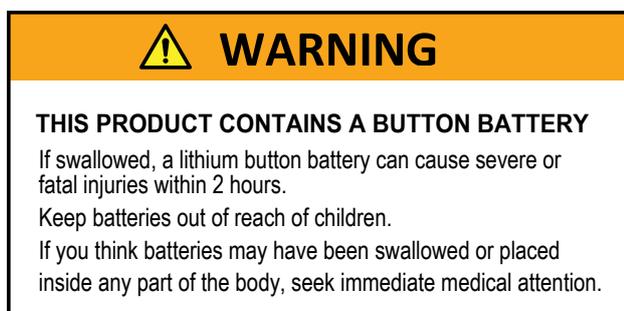
The safety and information standards for consumer goods containing button/coin batteries include the following requirements:

- Consumer goods containing button/coin batteries that are intended to be replaced by the consumer must have a secure battery compartment that is resistant to being opened by young children.
- Consumer goods containing button/coin batteries, whether or not the batteries are intended to be replaced, must be secure and not release the batteries during reasonably foreseeable use or misuse conditions.
- Compliance testing must demonstrate that safety requirements have been met.

Warnings

- Warnings are required on the packaging of consumer goods containing button/coin batteries or in accompanying instructions. If the consumer good is supplied unpackaged, or not supplied with instructions, warnings must be attached or included with the consumer good to alert consumers that a button/coin battery is included with the product and the hazard button/coin batteries pose to children.

Example of a suitable packaging warning for a product containing a lithium button/coin battery



Other recommended warnings

The information standard also includes a number of recommended warnings that are considered to be best practice:

- Consumer goods supplied online should include a warning in the product description to alert consumers to the fact that the product they are purchasing contains a button/coin battery and that button/coin batteries are hazardous.
- Consumer goods containing button/coin batteries should be supplied with a warning containing the contact information for the Australian Poisons Information Centre.
- Consumer goods containing a button/coin battery should be supplied with advice about how to safely dispose of the battery.

While manufacturers and suppliers are strongly encouraged to adopt these particular warnings they are not mandatory.

Exempted goods

The standard does not apply to:

- second-hand goods that are first supplied to a consumer before the standards become mandatory
- professional equipment, subject to certain criteria
- audio visual and information communications technology equipment containing button/coin batteries that are soldered in place
- hearing aids in relation to secure battery requirements, but these products are subject to warning requirements.

Button/coin batteries

The safety and information standards for button/coin batteries include the following requirements:

- Packaging must be child-resistant for button/coin batteries of lithium chemistry of all sizes, and button/coin batteries of a chemistry other than lithium with a diameter of 16 mm or above.
- Compliance testing must demonstrate child-resistant packaging requirements have been met.
- Where multiple button/coin batteries are supplied, blister packaging must be designed to release only one battery at a time.
- Any spare button/coin batteries that are supplied with a consumer good, where the battery is not pre-installed in a secure battery compartment, must be enclosed in child-resistant packaging.

Warnings

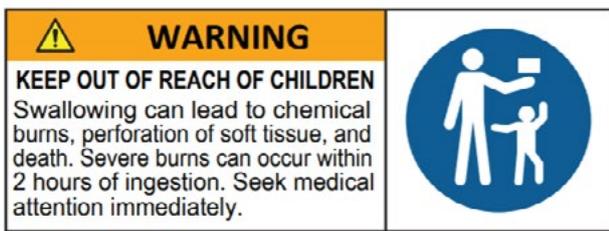
- Coin batteries of lithium chemistry with a diameter of 20mm and above must be marked with an internationally recognised “Keep Out of Reach of Children” symbol. The symbol should be clearly visible and at least 6mm in diameter.

Example of an internationally recognised ‘Keep Out of Reach of Children’ symbol



- Button/coin battery packaging must contain warnings and information to alert consumers to the hazard they pose to children and provide clear directions on what to do in the event a child is suspected to have swallowed or inserted a battery.

Example of a suitable packaging warning for button/coin batteries



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Other recommended warnings

The information standard also includes a number of recommended warnings that are not mandatory but are considered best practice:

- Button/coin batteries supplied online should include a warning in the product description to alert consumers that button/coin batteries are hazardous.
- Button/coin battery packaging should include contact information for the Australian Poisons Information Centre.
- Button/coin battery packaging should include advice about how to safely dispose of the battery.
- Where size permits, all button/coin batteries, including lithium batteries smaller than 20mm and all non-lithium button/coin batteries, should be marked with an internationally recognised “Keep Out of Reach of Children” symbol.

Exempted batteries

The standard does not apply to:

- button/coin batteries supplied in bulk for professional use (subject to certain criteria)
- button/coin batteries of zinc-air chemistry intended for hearing aids are exempt from child-resistant packaging requirements, but these products are subject to warning requirements.

Transition period

- While there is a transition period of 18 months before the standards become mandatory suppliers are encouraged to comply with the new requirements as soon as possible.
- Businesses can use the transition period to sell through existing stock, make any manufacturing and design changes, change product line up, and undertake any testing necessary to ensure compliance with the standards.
- As a supplier, you **should** continue to apply the requirements outlined in the [Industry Code for Consumer Goods that Contain Button Batteries](#) whilst you transition to the new requirements.
- From 22 June 2022 suppliers **must** only supply products that meet the requirements of the mandatory standards.

Testing

Suppliers of products that are subject to mandatory standards are encouraged to use specialist laboratories to conduct testing of those products to ensure they comply with the mandatory standard. Visit the Product Safety Australia website for more information on [product testing](#).

Consumer guarantees

All traders supplying into the Australian market, whether you are in Australia or not, must comply with Australian trading laws. Suppliers must provide consumers with a repair, replacement or refund if goods are faulty, unsafe, or do not work or appear as they should. These laws form part of the Australian Consumer Law (contained in Schedule 2 to the *Competition and Consumer Act 2010*).

Given the risk of harm associated with button/coin batteries and consumer goods containing button/coin batteries is fully understood and documented, suppliers should comply with the new requirements as soon as possible. During the transition period, however, if goods are supplied which would be non-compliant with the standards, this should be drawn to the attention of the consumer in safety information accompanying the goods. For more information, visit the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission website www.accc.gov.au/consumerrights.

More information

This fact sheet contains a summary of the new compliance requirements. Suppliers should read the mandatory standards below for the full compliance requirements.

[Consumer Goods \(Products Containing Button/Coin Batteries\) Safety Standard 2020](#)

[Consumer Goods \(Products Containing Button/Coin Batteries\) Information Standard 2020](#)

[Consumer Goods \(Button/Coin Batteries\) Safety Standard 2020](#)

[Consumer Goods \(Button/Coin Batteries\) Information Standard 2020](#)

To assist manufacturers and suppliers, the ACCC has issued administrative guidance [insert link] to provide further clarity on the new standards' requirements and best-practice recommendations.

The ACCC has sought to harmonise the new standards' requirements with the voluntary requirements of relevant national and international industry standards, where this will ensure an acceptable level of safety. Manufacturers and suppliers should refer to the new standards and the administrative guidance to determine whether their products comply with the new requirements.

For more information on the ACCC's investigation and consultations, visit the Product Safety Australia website: www.productsafety.gov.au.

Disclaimer: The ACCC has made every reasonable effort to provide current and accurate information. This fact sheet is intended as a general guide only and does not constitute legal advice.