

Buckinghamshire and Surrey Trading Standards Service

Advice

Window Blind Cords – Residential Properties, Landlord’s Responsibilities

Introduction

* Revised standards for internal window blinds were published in the UK in February 2014 in response to a number of fatalities where children became accidentally entangled in cords and chains of window blinds.

* The revision to the product standard (BS EN 13120) also saw the creation of a test method standard (BS EN 16434) to ensure safety devices used on new blinds and for retrofit were fit for purpose.

* No standard is retrospective and the applicable legislation is the General Product Safety Regulations 2005.

Residential Landlord Responsibilities

Landlords have a duty of care to their tenants, including keeping their rented properties safe and free from health hazards.

<https://www.gov.uk/renting-out-a-property/landlord-responsibilities>

Landlords therefore have a responsibility to ensure blinds installed in their properties containing cords or chains (which may be hazardous) are safe.

If the blinds cannot be made safe by the addition of a compliant safety device(s) they should be replaced.

Blinds installed by the landlord or his agent after February 2014 must be compliant with BS EN 13120:2009+A1:2014.

Blinds installed by the tenant should be checked to ensure they are compliant as part of the landlord/agent inspections.

Curtains, Draperies, Insect Screens and Blinds in Sealed Glazed units

These products must be just as safe as traditional blinds. Where these are operated with cords, chains, ball-chains or similar, the law requires landlords to be able to demonstrate the safety of these items. To do this they should follow the same requirements as laid down for blind cords above.

Compliance is required irrespective of the age of the tenants.

This advice covers all residential environments and will include (but is not

exclusive to) homes, holiday homes, mobile homes, caravans and boats.

Summary

This advice was issued to BBSA by Buckinghamshire and Surrey Trading Standards Service on 23rd August 2022. It is not Primary Authority Assured Advice but is designed to assist BBSA when landlords seek guidance on blinds and other similar products fitted in their properties.