

FACTSHEET

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Disposable cigarette lighters

What are disposable cigarette lighters?

Disposable cigarette lighters, including novelty and cheap refillable lighters are flame producing devices designed for lighting cigarettes, cigars, pipes and other combustible materials. They are designed to be thrown away when empty of fuel. Some may be refillable but not repairable.¹

How are children injured?

Burns are the most common injury to children linked to disposable cigarette lighters. Young children do not understand that a small flame can quickly grow into a dangerous fire.

Burns can happen when children:

- set an object alight using the cigarette lighter.

How common are these injuries?

Between January 2014 and December 2018, 55 children aged up to 16 years were treated in NSW hospitals for a burn associated with the use of a cigarette lighter. The majority (82%) of these were children aged 6 to 16 years of age, playing with a lighter. The most serious injuries involved older children igniting petrol or aerosol spray cans.²

What are the laws, regulations or standards for disposable cigarette lighters?

The Trade Practices (Consumer Product Safety Standard) (Disposable Cigarette Lighters) Regulations 1997 (Cth) states that all disposable, novelty and certain refillable lighters sold must meet performance and labelling requirements. They must have a device, e.g. a button, release catch or metal guard which makes it difficult for small children to operate the lighter. Lighters must also be permanently marked with one of the following warning labels;

WARNING - KEEP AWAY FROM CHILDREN or

WARNING - KEEP OUT OF REACH OF CHILDREN³

Consumer Protection Notice No. 18 of 2011 places a permanent ban on toy-like novelty cigarette lighters which young children may mistake for toys.

From 13 February 2020, the Consumer Goods (Disposable Cigarette Lighters) Safety Standard 2019 will apply. The new mandatory standard includes requirements for visual checking and for testing against performance requirements.

Remember:

- Keep lighters and matches away from children.
- If there are smokers in your home, make sure that cigarettes, lighters, matches and ashtrays are kept out of children's reach.
- The best thing you can do for your child's health is to not smoke.
- Do not ask your child to get lighters or matches for you.
- Only buy or use lighters that comply with the product and consumer safety regulations.
- Remember that child-resistant lighters are NOT child-proof.

References

¹ Australian Competition and Consumer Commission. Product Safety
Available from: <https://www.productsafety.gov.au/products/health-lifestyle/personal/tobacco-related-products/disposable-cigarette-lighters>

² NSW Statewide Burn Injury Service. Unpublished data, August 2019. .

³ Product Safety Australia (2019) Disposable cigarette lighters (disposable). Available from: <https://www.productsafety.gov.au/standards/disposable-cigarette-lighters#child-resistance>