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Certificate No. BTX/12045(1)/AMR/98

Date : 06 May 98

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Your Ref. :

REPORT ON SAMPLE SUBMITTED ON 20 April 1998

One SootherSack wheat bag

SGS were presented with a "soother-sack" and requested to carry out tests to establish whether the item presented any hazards to the user when used in accordance with the instructions provided. SGS were also requested to assess whether the same item would present any hazard if the instructions were misinterpreted or abused by the user.

The soother sack was stated as being suitable for use as both a heat pack and as an ice pack and instructions were provided by the client for both scenarios. In the case of being used as a heat pack, alternative instructions were provided for both heating in a microwave oven and in a conventional oven.

Test Method

- a) Ice pack: The instructions indicated that the pack should be placed in plastic bag and placed in a freezer overnight. This was replicated by SGS with the following comment:

There was no formation of frost or ice either on the surface of the soother sack on apparently within the contents. The soother sack did not require the use of any protection when handling it directly on removal from the freezer.

To simulate abuse, the soother pack was left in a freezer for 48 hours and then removed. Upon removal, the pack exhibited no incidence of frost or other detrimental effect and did not require the use of protective gloves.

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Comments:

On the basis of the tests carried out by SGS, it is the opinion of SGS that the soother sack submitted does not present any hazard to the user when used in accordance with the instructions supplied.

It is also the opinion of SGS that overheating of the soother sack does not present a hazard except when carried out in an oven at temperatures above 200°C.

It is further the opinion of SGS that the duration of freezing may be irrelevant although SGS cannot comment on the effect of the soother sack being left in a sub-zero temperature for prolonged periods of time.

SGS would make the following comment in respect of the instructions provided for oven heating:

A description of 'low-med' for the heat to be used may be inadequate and the user may not understand such a description. It would therefore be more advisable to provide instructions which include both a temperature in Celcius and/or Fahrenheit as well as the equivalent Gas Mark value. Additionally, a warning not to exceed a temperature of 200°C/Gas Mark 5 would probably provide beneficial to the user as an indication of the maximum temperature to which the soother sack can safely be subjected without the user being exposed to a hazard.

Conclusions

It is the conclusion of SGS, based upon the tests carried out that the samplesoother sack submitted does not present a hazard to the user when used in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.

However, SGS would conclude that it is possible for a hazard to exist if the recommended oven temperature is exceeded and that a suitable warning should be affixed to the soother sack.

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