

Purchasing Poison for my Daughter



By MEAGHAN ZIEMBA, Associate Editor, PD&D

Following on from my [Zhu Zhu dilemma last Christmas](#) [1], I again find that I've made a poisonous purchase for my daughter. I'm not trying to off my six-year-old; I'm just one of those consumers that assumes big corporations test their products for safety issues before selling them to the public.

My mistake again.

This time the poisonous element is Cadmium, and the products are Shrek glasses sold by the all too familiar Golden Arches to help promote the movie, "Shrek Forever After."

Apparently, the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission announced a voluntary recall early Friday, warning consumers to immediately stop using the glasses. McDonald's said it will post instructions regarding refunds on its site next week. Maybe instructions on how to check for safety issues before distributing poisonous products to the public should be posted internally as well.

Arc International, the company that is responsible for the production of the glasses, and the owner of the Pyrex brand of cookware (more comfort); is keeping tight lipped on where the paint was made. It's the typical hide-and-seek; point the finger at everyone else, blame game.

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Cadmium is a known carcinogen that can cause bone softening and kidney problems. As the article states, "the potential danger would be long-term exposure to low levels of cadmium, which could leach from the paint onto a child's hand, then enter the body if the child puts that unwashed hand to his or her mouth." Let's not forget that glasses are used for drinking, and the poisonous element could enter their tiny bodies that way.

While it's a relief knowing the glass that I bought still sits in the cup holder of my car, I'm more than a little infuriated that this is my second encounter with an unsafe product; especially a product intended for my daughter. It portrays me, unintentionally, as a bad parent who does not do their research before making purchases. But, should I have to?

We are paying the producers and distributors for their goods and services. It is the consumers, who drive and maintain their business, so why can they not ensure the safety standards before placing their merchandise on the shelves?

While I agree with U.S. Representative, Jackie Speier, that we need "stronger testing standards to ensure that all children's products are proven safe before they hit the shelves," I believe we need stronger punishments and penalties for those companies who skip over the proper testing, and distribute unsafe products to the unsuspecting public.

What other products have been recalled because of safety issues? Have any of you been involved with the distribution of unsafe merchandise? Share your stories, comments and assertions below, or send them to meaghan.ziemba@advantagemedia.com [2].

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