

MEDIA RELEASE



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Heat Pack Standard Has Got Your Back

Today Standards Australia, in conjunction with NSW Fair Trading, published a new Australian Standard to address the design, construction, performance and labelling of microwaveable heat packs.

Standards Australia CEO, Dr Bronwyn Evans, says that a broad range of stakeholders came together to develop this standard.

“The Australian Standard will help support market confidence in heat packs and provide additional safety measures.”

The Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) originally proposed the development of AS/NZS 5116:2016, *Microwaveable heat packs—Wheat and other organic filling materials*. It was prompted by an inquest into the death of an elderly woman in NSW following a fire caused by a wheat bag.

NSW Fire and Rescue Commissioner, Mr Greg Mullins, adds that the incident was not isolated.

“We have responded to numerous residential fires due to wheat bags being heated for too long in the microwave, or being used inappropriately to warm bedding materials.

“Worryingly, there is a new trend of wheat bags in plush toys, and these are frequently being used to keep children warm in their beds,” said Commissioner Mullins.

This standard applies to wearable products, bags, pillows, children’s products and similar products that contain organic materials such as wheat, rice, legumes, or herbs. It does not apply to heat packs filled with chemicals, synthetics, crystals, gels, or liquids.

AS/NZS 5116:2016 was developed by Technical Committee CS-113 Wheat Bags which is chaired by Mr Michael Cooper of NSW Fair Trading.

ENDS.

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