



PRESS RELEASE

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New European Standards will improve safety of window blinds and reduce risks to children

CEN, the European Committee for Standardization, is pleased to announce the publication of three new European Standards that will help manufacturers to improve the safety of internal window blinds. These standards are aimed in particular at reducing the risk of accidents associated with the cords that are used to operate window blinds.

The new European Standards for internal window blinds were developed in response to a request from the European Commission (Standardization Mandate 505 – issued on 4 September 2012). This request was accepted by the CEN Technical Board in October 2012 with a sense of urgency, following reports of fatal accidents involving young children strangled by loosely hanging cords. The solutions defined by CEN can be applied to new products and also to blinds that are already installed.

The three new European Standards released by CEN are:

- EN 13120:2009+A1:2014 'Internal blinds - Performance requirements including safety'
- EN 16433:2014 'Internal blinds - Protection from strangulation hazards - Test methods'
- EN 16434:2014 'Internal blinds - Protection from strangulation hazards - Requirements and Test methods for safety devices'

The standards will now be offered to the European Commission for referencing in the Official Journal of the European Union, so that products manufactured according to these standards may benefit from 'presumption of conformity' with the EU's [General Product Safety Directive](#) (2001/95/EC).

The new European Standards for internal window blinds were developed by the 'Blinds and shutters' Working Group of CEN's Technical Committee on 'Doors, windows, shutters, building hardware and curtain walling' (CEN/TC 33/WG 3). The Working Group benefitted from the participation of experts representing window blind manufacturers and testing laboratories, as well as child safety experts nominated by ANEC (the European consumer voice in standardization). CEN has also benefitted from close cooperation with product safety regulators in Australia, Canada and the USA, in the framework of an International Pilot Alignment Initiative on the Safety of Corded Window Coverings.

The new European Standards have been made available to all CEN Members (since 19 February). During the next six months, they will be 'implemented' (i.e. published) by all the [Members of CEN](#), i.e. the National Standards Bodies of 33 European countries (including all EU and EFTA Member States), in accordance with the [CEN Internal Regulations](#). CEN Members may also translate these European Standards into the national languages of their respective countries.

EN 13120:2009+A1:2014 amends the previously existing European Standard on 'Internal blinds - Performance requirements including safety' (published in 2009), which specifies the requirements that internal blinds should fulfil when they are fitted to a building. The amendment considerably extends the scope of this text so that it covers not only venetian blinds, roller blinds, vertical blinds and pleated blinds – but also honeycomb blinds, Roman shades, Austrian/Festoon blinds, panel blinds, plantation shutters and roll-up blinds. It also significantly expands the clause on 'protection from strangulation' to address specific hazards posed by cords.

EN 16433:2014 'Internal blinds - Protection from strangulation hazards - Test methods' is a new standard that specifies test methods which can be used to verify that a window blind conforms to the requirements relating to 'protection from strangulation' as specified in EN 13120.

EN 16434:2014 'Internal blinds - Protection from strangulation hazards - Requirements and Test methods for safety devices' is a new standard that specifies requirements and test methods for safety devices that can help to improve the safety of window blinds and prevent accidents. These safety devices can either be fitted to window blinds during the manufacturing process or retro-fitted to window blinds that have already been installed.

*"The publication of these standards is a result of intensive work by experts in window blinds and child safety," explains **Hervé Lamy**, Convenor of CEN's 'Blinds and shutters' Working Group (CEN/TC 33/NG 3). "For the industry, this is a major step in the production of safer products as well as safety retro-fitting of blinds already installed. Information and education of manufacturers and professional installers is now the major factor – together with raising public awareness – for successful application of the standards and significant reduction of accidents."*

The publication of these new European Standards has been welcomed by ANEC (the European consumer voice in standardization). Child safety experts **Anne Smith** and **Mike Hayes** commented: *"ANEC are delighted to have helped CEN and to have worked with window blind manufacturers to develop these standards to make homes safer for children. We welcome their publication as a move towards reducing deaths and injuries to children. Nevertheless, the hundreds of millions of blinds already installed in homes continue to pose a risk. Parents still have a key role to play, and we believe raising public awareness is key in minimizing the risk."*

The **European Committee for Standardization (CEN)** is one of 3 European Standardization Organizations officially recognised by the European Union as being responsible for developing and defining standards at European level (alongside CENELEC and ETSI).

CEN brings together the National Standards Bodies of 33 countries including all of the EU member states plus 3 EFTA countries (Iceland, Norway and Switzerland) and 2 EU candidate countries (Turkey and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia). European Standards (ENs) that have been adopted by CEN are accepted and recognized in all of these countries.

For further information, please visit www.cen.eu and www.cenelec.eu

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