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AUDITOR GENERAL

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News for Immediate Release

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Auditor General DePasquale Urges Holiday Shoppers to Review Toy Safety Before Buying

HARRISBURG – Auditor General Eugene DePasquale today hosted PennPIRG for the release of its 34th annual *Trouble in Toyland* report on toys that could be hazardous to children, and again called for efforts to get recalled toys quickly removed from store shelves.

“With the holiday shopping season underway, I urge toy shoppers across Pennsylvania to look beyond the colorful packaging and carefully consider whether the toy inside is safe and age appropriate,” DePasquale said. “Federal authorities reported more than 251,000 toy-related injuries were treated by hospitals in 2017.”

The U.S. PIRG Education fund has identified three categories of toys that consumers should be on the lookout for: hidden toxics and hazards, detectable dangers, and recalled toys. The tested toys showcase only a small portion of the thousands of toys available for sale in stores and online. Over the past three decades, the group’s testing has led to more than 150 toy recalls and other regulatory actions.

“Toys have become safer over the last three decades, but dangerous and toxic toys are still on store shelves,” said Emma Horst-Martz of the PennPIRG Education Fund. “With that in mind, parents need to be vigilant to keep their kids healthy and safe. Manufacturers and regulators must do more to ensure all toys are safe before they end up in a child’s hands.”

Toy safety standards are enforced by the Consumer Product Safety Commission, which announced 12 recalls of toys and children’s products this year. Because manufacturers are not required to inform the public how many recalled toys were returned or repaired, it is impossible to know how many of them might still be in homes.

DePasquale encouraged parents and other caregivers to check to see if any toys they already own have been subject to a safety recall. He noted that whenever a toy or children’s product is recalled, state law should require that these items be quickly removed from sale.

“While serving in the state House, I introduced legislation to require dangerous toys to be immediately taken off of store shelves. This topic will always be important and I’m again calling on the General Assembly to act on common-sense legislation to protect our vulnerable children,” he added.

PennPIRG is the Pennsylvania affiliate of U.S. PIRG, a federation of independent, state-based, citizen-funded organizations that advocate for the public interest. To review the 2019 report, visit www.ToySafetyTips.org.

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