



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

OFFICE OF  
ENFORCEMENT AND  
COMPLIANCE ASSURANCE

EPA Orders Destruction of Illegal Ozone-Depleting Confetti String product at Major Retail  
Outlets Fact Sheet

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has issued five Administrative Compliance Orders to companies that had imported, distributed and sold cans of illegal confetti string products that contained ozone depleting substances, used as a propellant.

What sorts of products are involved?

The products are known by various names, such as Zany String, Crazy String, and Party Streamer.

What volume of illegal products have been sold?

Million of cans of these novelty items have been sold in the United States and over 2.7 million cans will be incinerated under these compliance orders. Approximately 1.5 million additional cans were sold to the public before the illegal sales were stopped. We assume that most of these cans have vented their ozone depleting propellants to the atmosphere.

When were these products banned?

EPA banned the use of ozone eating propellants in spray cans decades ago when the Montreal Protocol was adopted. Then, in the 1990 Amendments to the Clean Air Act, specific statutory authority was added to Title VI. Implementing regulations were promulgated in 1993.

Where are the illegal products coming from ?

We are seeing imports of these products from overseas manufacturers that claim their products comply with all American laws, mostly from China and Taiwan. None of the United States or European manufacturers of confetti string have had illegal propellants.

How did EPA identify these violations?

EPA inspectors purchased cans of string confetti products at large chain retail stores throughout the country. EPA chemists analyzed the samples at the EPA Environmental Science Center, Ft. Meade, Maryland. EPA's investigation found that many stores sold illegal product, all of which was imported from China and Taiwan. The companies found to have illegal product on their shelves are Dollar Tree, American Greetings, Inc., Dollar General, Target, and Too, Inc. which owns Limited Too.

What is being done to address the violations?

These companies have agreed to cooperate with EPA's investigation, to stop sales by taking the banned product off their shelves, and to ship the banned products to an incinerator company that will ensure that the ozone-depleting substances are destroyed.

What regulations are at issue?

The sale or distribution of any such confetti string product containing similar ozone-depleting substances is banned by EPA's regulation, found at 40 Code of Federal Regulations, Part 82.

What environmental harm comes from these products?

These ozone-depleting substances, used as propellants, attack the stratospheric ozone layer which protects human and animal life from skin cancers, cataracts and other ailments.

What else are these companies doing to solve the problem?

The companies have also agreed to audit their operations and adopt new policies to ensure that these problems do not arise again.

What else is EPA doing to prevent these problems?

EPA is in contact with Chinese environmental officials in hopes of preventing the export of illegal products to the United States.