WORKSAFE
Mahi Haumaru Aotearoa

HSWA

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Heater adaptor banned

This safety alert highlights the health and safety risks associated with a mini heater adaptor fitting, which has been prohibited by Energy Safety.

What happened

Energy Safety has identified a product for sale through Trade Me which has the ability to convert a portable gas cooker into a portable gas heater. Energy Safety contacted Trade Me and asked them to block further sales of this device, by the seller.

The Gas (Safety and Measurement) Regulations (GSMR) requires that gas appliances supplied in New Zealand must meet specified safety certification. Although this device isn't an appliance, it is a fitting that would turn an otherwise safe and compliant gas appliance, (a cooker), into another type of gas appliance, (a heater). There is no way to ensure that the device when used on an unknown cooker would be either safe or compliant. Heaters also must meet much tighter emission controls than cookers.

What we know

The immediate safety concern is the likelihood of excessive amounts of carbon monoxide being produced through the use of the mini heater adaptor fitting. If a metal object such as a pot (or in this case, the device) is placed inside the flame rather than above it, the combustion process is compromised and excessive carbon monoxide will be produced. There is no certainty that this device won't be used with it sitting inside the flame.

In 1997 three people died in their car from carbon monoxide poisoning at Arthurs Pass. In this case they were using a cooker that did not have a trivet to hold the pot above the flame.

As the device may not be secured to the cooker there is other hazard in that there is a significant risk that the red hot device may tumble from the cooker causing a burn and/or fire hazard.

While the GSMR has highly prescriptive controls for gas appliances, this is not the case for fittings. For this reason a prohibition notice has been issued for this fitting.

More information

Keep yourself safe from carbon monoxide

Camping appliance safety