

Children's Sleepwear to be Less Flammable

Remember those "cute" pictures of a pajama-clad child holding a lighted candle? One such classic picture has long been used for advertising purposes.

Such a pose will soon be less hazardous, but still not safe. The less hazardous aspect will come from a portion of the Amended Flammable Fabrics Act, recently passed by Congress.

Children's Sleepwear Flammability Standards have been developed by the U. S. Department of Commerce and its National Bureau of Standards at Gaithersburg, Md. in accordance with the Act and are scheduled to become effective on July 29.

The standards will apply to readymade sleepwear in sizes up to 6X.

For the first year after the program takes effect, sleepwear not meeting the standards must carry a label stating that the fabric is flammable.

Some manufacturers are already turning out children's sleepwear labeled as made from flame-retardant material. Fabrics currently available, which are not so labeled, can be assumed to be flammable.

Sleepwear made from the new flame-retardant fabrics will cost 20 to 30 per cent more than

sleepwear utilizing conventional flammable materials, depending on the fabric and finish used.

But this is a nominal price increase, considering that it may prevent death or serious injury to your child.

Even though the standards apply only to readymade

children's sleepwear, home-sewn sleepwear for tots can also be made from flame-retardant materials when they become available in fabric shops.

Clothing made from flame-retardant fabrics must be laundered strictly in accordance with manufacturer's label in-

structions to assure continued flame-resistance.

Based on an analysis of data of burn injuries and deaths involving clothing, the U. S. Department of Commerce has

estimated that young children are injured or killed at a rate which is three to four times as high as would be expected on the basis of their ratio to the total population.

Permanent Labels Now Required

The Federal Trade Commission has issued a ruling requiring that articles of wearing apparel bear permanent labels clearly giving instruction for their care and maintenance, according to Carol Rothermel, Chester County Extension home economist. This ruling, which goes into effect July 3, 1972, applies to all clothes manufactured after that date—not to clothes that are still in stock.

In making the permanent care labeling ruling, the FTC hopes to help the consumer avoid possible damage to the product through improper care; to use the care procedure which will give the best overall performance; and to be able to select apparel on the basis that it can be cared for inexpensively, yet effectively. Currently, such information is not available in permanent form on most apparel now sold.

Care and maintenance information on wearing apparel has been provided to consumers by many manufacturers in the

form of hangtags and separate instructions. But such unattached directions are easily lost or misplaced and unavailable when the homemaker sets out to launder or dryclean a garment.

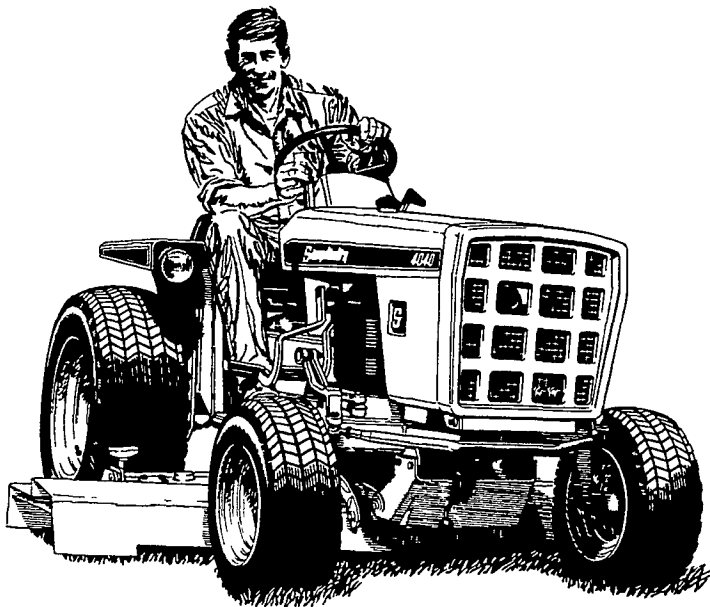
Although the new ruling will provide care and maintenance information at the homemaker's fingertips, neither the FTC nor manufacturers can see that these instructions are carried out. It's up to the homemaker to read and follow the instructions to insure maximum satisfaction from the garment.

Some clothing manufacturers believe that the most important aspect of the FTC ruling on permanent care labeling is the challenge to the clothing industry to build quality and performance into their products. They also point out that the effectiveness of the ruling is really in the hands of the consumer. If consumers read labels and understand them and report to local retailers or the manufactureres articles of apparel that do not live up to the stated expectations, consumers can then bring pressure to bear on manufacturers to upgrade products.

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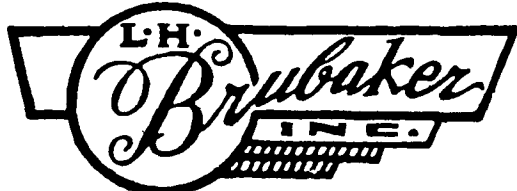


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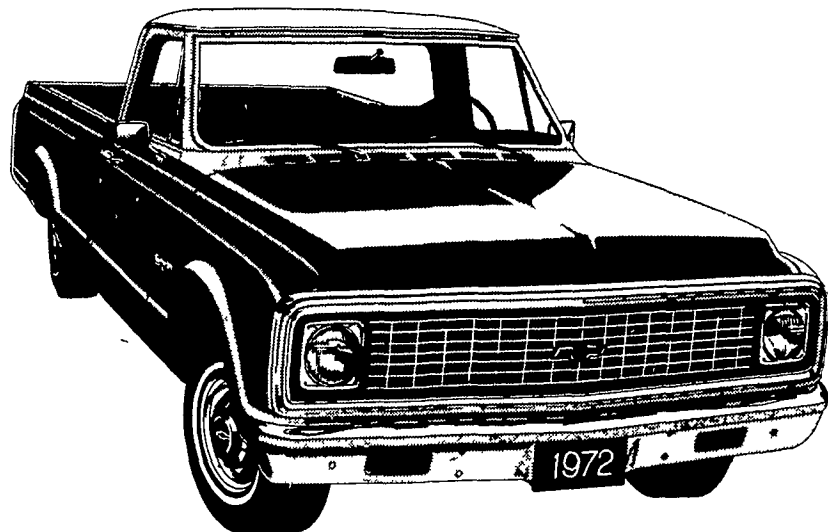
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