

Butane lighter refills age restricted sales

Trading Standards information

www.southwark.gov.uk

1. Introduction

It is illegal to sell butane lighter refills to anyone under 18. This Service enforces the law prohibiting the sales of certain age-restricted products. We do this by using underage volunteers to attempt test purchases at shops. We also provide advice and education to businesses, parents and children.

Every week at least one person dies from sniffing gases, aerosols and glues. Over half of the deaths are caused by sniffing butane lighter refills so the government introduced a total ban sales to under 18s.

2. Main legal requirement

The sale of any cigarette lighter refill canisters containing butane to any person under **18** is illegal.

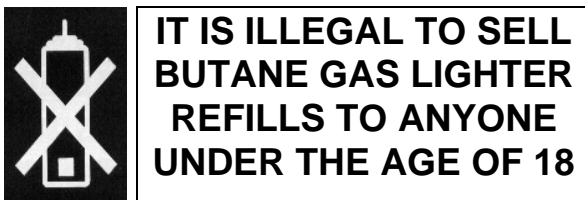
3. Who does the law apply to?

The law applies to any trader who sells lighter refills in the course of his business. The business owner will be liable for any illegal sales by employees.

4. What can I do to avoid underage sales?

Please refer to our separate leaflet entitled *Age restricted sales – best practice guidance*. Make sure all your sales staff read this leaflet and our associated leaflets on proof of age and saying no.

We also recommend you display age warning stickers near the relevant products and at the point of sale. Use our staff reminder stickers on your tills too.



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5. What are the penalties if I sell to underage purchasers?

These restrictions are contained in the Cigarette Lighter Refill (Safety) Regulations 1999. These are made under the Consumer Protection Act 1987. On conviction the maximum penalty is a fine of £5000, or up to 6 months imprisonment, or both.

6. Solvent abuse / glue sniffing

Many other household products may be used for solvent abuse. Some examples are listed below;

▪ Solvent based adhesives	▪ Deodorant aerosols	▪ Aerosol air fresheners	▪ Hairspray
▪ Some typewriter correction fluids	▪ Certain paints, paint thinners & removers	▪ Nail varnish & varnish remover	▪ deodorants

The Intoxicating Substances (Supply) Act 1985 makes it illegal to supply a substance to anyone believed to be under the age of 18 if there is reasonable cause to believe that the substance may be inhaled for the purpose of intoxication.

Re-Solv, The Society for the Prevention of Solvent and Volatile Substance Abuse run a helpline on 01785 810 762. Their website contains further information www.re-solv.org and a retailer advice pack is also available.

7. Further information

If you require further assistance on these requirements, or would like additional information leaflets or any warning notices / reminder stickers, please contact us at the address given.

A Good Practice Award is available to businesses who have actively demonstrated their commitment to preventing under-age sales.