

Furniture Flammability Advice for Retailers and Consumers

The role of the Leisure & Outdoor Furniture Association is to support outdoor furniture and garden product organisations across the furniture supply chain. As such, we're unable to support public consumers with specific enquiries.

We are aware retailers and consumers have flammability concerns, therefore, this guide offers general advice.

Q1. What is LOFA and what does it do?

- The Leisure & Outdoor Furniture Association is a membership organisation offering members advice and services in the industry
- The LOFA council is a group of industry experts with a wealth of experiences

Q2. What is the LOFAssured scheme?

- The scheme is an audit process which all LOFA members must pass before they are presented the LOFAssured status
- The scheme ensures the member exercises best business practice, full compliance to national legislation and maintains control of products brought and sold

Q3. What is the benefit to buying a LOFAssured product?

- The audit scheme is supported by our primary authority Hertfordshire County Council
- Hertfordshire Council acts as Primary Authority and offers assured advice which will be accepted across all county and borough councils
- The scheme shows the company is doing everything in its power to be compliant to the Flammability Regulations and performs sufficient due diligence to ensure products are fit for purpose

Q4. What flammability regulations apply to outdoor furniture?

The Furniture and Furnishings (Fire Safety) Regulations 1988 (as amended in 1989, 1993 and 2010) set levels of fire resistance for domestic upholstered furniture, furnishings and other products containing upholstery.

It is illegal for furniture (whether manufactured in the UK or overseas) not to comply with the regulations.

Please note, any form of garden/outdoor upholstered furniture that could be used set up or carried into a dwelling and conservatory must meet the above regulations.

The regulations are enforced and policed by all local trading standards departments across the United Kingdom. As a consumer or retailer, if you need advice, clarification or additional information, they are best placed to offer confirmation to the regulations.

Q5. The Furniture and Furnishings (Fire Safety) Regulations essentially say:

- All filling material in upholstered furniture must meet the specified ignition requirement before it is used in a whole product/article
- Upholstery composites must be Cigarette Resistant (this means specified cover material tested over the specified filling material)
- Covers/Outer Material must be Match Resistant (with certain exceptions)
- A permanent label must be attached to every item of new furniture
- A display label must be present at point of sale on all new items of furniture (with certain exceptions)

Q6. What are the rules regarding cushions and seat pads?

Any seat pad or cushion measuring **over** 60cm by 60cm is classed as a piece of furniture in its own right and must fully meet all requirements of the regulations, therefore, both filling and cover material must be compliant. Each item must also have a permanent and display label.

If a seat pad or cushion measures **under** 60cm by 60cm, you have two options:

- Cushions and seat pads ***sold*** as part of a ‘set of’, or ‘designed/purposely made’ for a set or piece of furniture, ***must*** have both filling and outer cover compliant to the regulations with both permanent and display labels
- Cushions and seat pads ***sold*** individually, not in a set or advertised with a set of furniture, may meet the regulations for the filling material only

Please note: If your seat pad or cushion has a non-slip grip or ties to attach to a seat, this would be classed as ‘purposely made’ for products that you’d likely have in your portfolio. Therefore, this type of product must also have both filling and cover material compliant to the regulations. Only a permanent label will be required, however, your description must state that both filling and cover comply.

To save any confusion, as you manufacture/import seating, it would be reasonable to suggest that the seat pads and cushions you sell would be to fit the seating you supply.

Q7. My cover material fails the Match Test, can an inter-liner/fire barrier be used?

Yes, but the following must apply.

- The cover material must be at least 75% of one or a mix of natural fibre
- Inter-liner must meet Schedule 3 of the regulations
- The cover must still pass Schedule 4 part 1 which is the Cigarette Test

Q8. What raw material test reports should I look for?

Foam fillings

- Schedule 1 part 1 – Slab
- Schedule 1 part 2 – Crumb foam
- Schedule 1 part 3 – Latex

Non-Foam/Composite fillings

- Schedule 2 part 1 – A single filling
- Schedule 2 part 2 – A mixture of non-foam fillings

FR Inter-liner

- Schedule 3 (includes water soaking) – Only used in conjunction with a cover fabric of at least 75% of natural fibre

Cover material / Outer fabric

- Schedule 4 part 1 – Cigarette test
- Schedule 5 part 1 – Match test

Non-visible cover

- Schedule 4 part 2 – Modified cigarette test
- Schedule 5 part 3 – Modified match test

Q9. What permanent flammability labels should I look for?

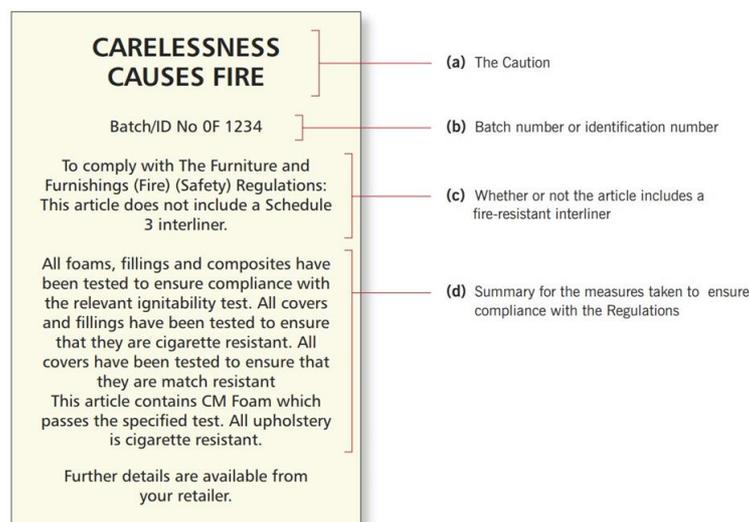
Permanent labels are to be attached to the product(s) permanently, where removing it would cause significant damage to the product, do not remove them.

This label assists enforcement officers and shows compliance with specific ignition requirements for both covers and fillings.

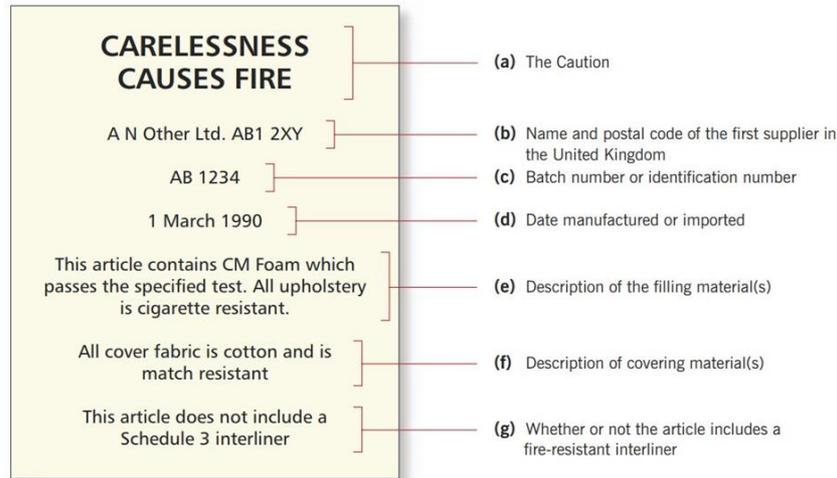
Permanent labels must be carried on all items of upholstered garden and outdoor furniture. A multiple piece set of furniture must carry a label on each item.

They may also be incorporated into other labels, for example Care Labels.

Example 1: A shorter label giving only the minimum information about the furniture



Example 2: A label giving full information about the furniture



Q10. What display flammability labels should I look for?

Display labels contain valuable information regarding the steps taken to ensure compliance and should be specific to each piece of furniture. Consumers can remove display labels upon delivery, retailers must not remove any display labels.

Display labels indicating ignition resistance, needs to be attached to all new outdoor furniture. A multiple piece set of furniture must carry a display label on each item.

Example 1: The display label for new furniture which meets the filling requirements and is cigarette and match resistant



Example 2: The display label for new furniture with a limited range of cover fabrics. The cover fabric is not match resistant, but the furniture has an interliner which passes the specified test. The furniture meets the filling requirements and is cigarette resistant



Example 3: The display label for new furniture which meets the filling requirements and is cigarette resistant



Q11. As a consumer, can I sell on my furniture without a display or permanent label?

Yes, you can sell on your furniture privately without either label.

Q12. As a retailer/supplier, can I sell or donate my furniture to 2nd hand furniture retailers and charities?

- It is illegal for charity and 2nd hand furniture shops to sell furniture without permanent flammability labels
- Therefore, they will not accept or purchase furniture without the correct labelling

Further Resources

If you need any additional support, contact the most relevant organisation below for your query.

Consumer Support

British Standards Institute

<http://shop.bsigroup.com> / cservices@bsigroup.com / +44 (0)345 086 9001

Citizens Advice Bureau

www.citizensadvice.org.uk / +44 (0)3454 040 506

Trading Standards Institute

www.tradingstandards.uk / institute@tsi.org.uk / +44 (0)3454 040 506

Associations

The Furniture Ombudsman

www.thefurnitureombudsman.org / info@thefurnitureombudsman.org / +44 (0)333 241 3209

The Leisure and Outdoor Furniture Association (LOFA)

www.lofa.co.uk / +44 (0)2392 258 844

Regulations

Furniture and Furnishings (Fire Safety) Regulations

www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/1988/1324/contents/made

General Product Safety Regulations

www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2005/1803/contents/made

Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals (REACH) regulations

www.hse.gov.uk/reach