

Counterfeit Electrical Goods – profit over principle?

Electrical Safety First is currently conducting research into the growing issue of counterfeit electrical products in the UK. Often indistinguishable from the authentic product, these goods are placing the public at risk of serious electric shock and fire. In addition, purchasing these goods undermines responsible manufacturers and may also help fund organised crime.

Electrical Safety First is currently sourcing examples of counterfeit goods to subject to investigation and comparison against the real products, in order to highlight the risks the users are taking and the shortcuts taken in manufacturing these products.

The problem is not just limited to “complete” counterfeits, where the entire product is a fake, as large numbers of counterfeit components are thought to have entered supply chains. There is already acknowledged to be an issue with plug fuses, but some larger counterfeit components have also been identified and their use in products may also be widespread. These can range from individual resistors and capacitors used in the printed circuit boards to entire plugs, leads and adaptors.

In investigating this serious issue Electrical Safety First aims to identify exactly how consumers are being placed at risk and gain a better understanding of the true extent of the problem. As it is believed that the threat posed by these products necessitates a “call to action” for both the industry and the government, in order to help produce the best possible case Electrical Safety First is asking for additional evidence from interested stakeholders. This could take the form of statistics, case studies of counterfeit goods they have personally encountered and statements on what the stakeholders believe should be done.

Interested parties should contact William Wright at Electrical Safety First at William.Wright@Electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk to discuss the project in further detail.