

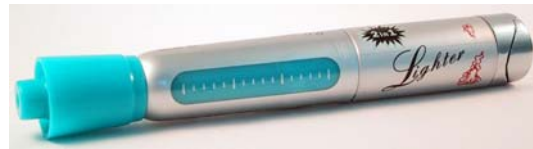
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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **Novelty Lighters Pose Big Risk to Children**

*The Professional Insurance Agents of Wisconsin offer the following safety information about novelty lighters.*

MADISON, Wisconsin (April 9, 2007) – Small children find it easier to light a lighter than strike a match and novelty lighters pose a significant risk to this age group. These lighters are designed to look like harmless toys or common household items like cell phones and markers.



“When children see these lighters, they assume they are harmless toys,” says Ron Von Haden, CIC, Executive Vice President of the Professional Insurance Agents of Wisconsin (PIAW). “There are many stories of children that were playing with these lighters and seriously hurt themselves, family members and ended up setting their residence on fire.”



In 1994, the Consumer Product Safety Commission passed legislation banning the manufacture and sale of lighters that do not meet the standard for child resistance. However, most novelty lighters are imported from overseas and do not meet the child resistant requirements of the Federal Government.

There is some good news from the European Union (EU). As of March 11, 2007, manufacturers of lighters within EU Member States are now required to make them child

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resistant. They are also prohibited from producing lighters that resemble objects that are particularly attractive to children (novelty lighters). This decision applies to roughly 98% of all lighters sold in the EU each year.

The PIAW reminds you to keep *all* matches, lighters and novelty lighters out of the reach of children. These tools can cause serious injury and even death when in a child's hands. To view photo examples of novelty lighters, visit the Oregon State Fire Marshall website at:

[http://egov.oregon.gov/OSP/SFM/Novelty\\_Lighter\\_Gallery.shtml](http://egov.oregon.gov/OSP/SFM/Novelty_Lighter_Gallery.shtml)

To locate a PIA member near you, look for the PIA logo or go to [www.PIAW.org](http://www.PIAW.org).

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Graphics are available in TIF, EPS or JPG format. Contact Heather Goeden at (262) 789-1565 or

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