

Press Release



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Product safety in the pet industry

May 20, 2026

TÜV SÜD: EU requirements enhance safety and transparency for consumers

Munich. Collars, leads, toys and bowls for pets are not just everyday items, but also products that can affect consumers safety and health, for example through chemical contaminants or mechanical hazards. Since its entry into force in December 2024, Regulation (EU) 2023/988 on General Product Safety (GPSR) has become increasingly important in the pet industry, particularly with regard to product safety, traceability, and consumer information.

TÜV SÜD emphasizes that the regulation establishes a clear framework for manufacturers, importers, and distributors, helping them to provide safe and compliant consumer products. Pet products are subject to the GPSR in particular when they are made available on the European market as consumer products.

“Regulation (EU) 2023/988 serves to protect consumers and sets out basic requirements for the safety of consumer products,” explains Cristina Marafante, Technical Expert for toy safety, food contact products, and chemical safety at TÜV SÜD. “Pet products, too – insofar as they constitute consumer products – must be designed safely and must not pose any risks to consumers. The focus on safety, traceability, and accountability throughout the supply chain strengthens consumer confidence and promotes uniform safety standards across the European Union.”

Pet Market: A Growing and Strategically Important Sector

The European pet market encompasses over 166 million households with at least one pet, totaling around 352 million animals. The European pet industry is valued at over 53 billion euros (FEDIAF European Pet Food). These figures underscore the importance of clear safety and quality requirements for products used in connection with pet ownership.

Impact on Pet Accessories

All pet accessory products – including textiles, toys, electronic devices, bowls, carriers, mats, and grooming and hygiene products – must be assessed in accordance with the GPSR and

other relevant EU regulations, as applicable. These include, for example, the REACH Regulation or, for electrical products, the RoHS Directive. The Toy Safety Directive may also be relevant if a product, due to its design or presentation, could be mistaken for a children's toy. The goal is to ensure a high and uniform level of safety within the EU. For example, a leash must be sufficiently strong to withstand tension, a toy must not break easily, and bowls must not release substances hazardous to health.

Technical Documentation: The Core of Conformity

In accordance with Regulation (EU) 2023/988, every manufacturer must create, update, and retain technical documentation for at least ten years. It includes, among other things:

- Description of the product and the materials used
- Evidence of product safety and conformity assessment
- Analysis of chemical, mechanical, and electrical risks, as well as risks arising from foreseeable misuse
- Applicable procedures and test methods
- Test reports and, where applicable, certifications
- Instructions for safe use and warnings
- Traceability and product identification (e.g., batch or serial number, brand information, manufacturer contact details)

Importers and distributors must have access to relevant parts of the technical documentation to ensure that only compliant products are placed on the market.

Online sales and marketplaces

Products sold via e-commerce must meet the same safety and information requirements as products sold in brick-and-mortar stores. Online marketplaces and certain economic operators must comply with the requirements for cooperation with the "Safety Gate" under the GPSR and take appropriate measures in the case of unsafe products. Imported products may not be placed on the European market without an economic operator established in the EU.

Shared responsibility along the supply chain

The Regulation defines clear responsibilities for all economic operators, i.e., manufacturers, importers, distributors, and logistics service providers. All parties involved must ensure that only safe products are placed on the market. In the event of serious risks, they must halt distribution and notify the authorities.

Consumer rights and market surveillance

In the case of dangerous products, rapid warning and recall processes are triggered via the EU “Safety Gate” portal. Consumers must be informed immediately and are entitled to effective remedies at no additional cost. The competent authorities in the EU member states have expanded coordination and control tools at the European level.

Recommendations for manufacturers, importers, and distributors

TÜV SÜD recommends continuously updating internal compliance processes and technical documentation, conducting appropriate tests in accordance with relevant standards, carefully designing labeling and instructions for use, and systematically implementing traceability and market surveillance. Equally important are training programs for employees and raising awareness among partners and distribution channels. Companies should also engage external technical expertise at an early stage to efficiently meet regulatory requirements.

In summary, Regulation (EU) 2023/988 provides an important foundation for strengthening the safety of consumer products on the European market. For companies in the pet industry, this means in particular that consumer-related products must meet clear safety and information requirements to ensure a high level of consumer protection and market transparency.

Further information:

- [Certification mark for consumer products for pets](#)

Note for editorial staff: The press release is available on the Internet at:

tuvsud.com/newsroom.

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