

June 2021

Via email: customerhelp_uk@ebay.com

To whom it may concern,

'Black Spot'/'Patch' Carbon Monoxide Indicators:

We are a group of UK parliamentarians from the All Party Parliamentary Carbon Monoxide Group, writing to ask you to remove all adverts and offers of sale for 'black spot' or 'patch' carbon monoxide indicators/detectors from your website, and to take immediate action to prevent any further ads from being listed in the future. This is because these alarms do not work and give a false sense of security to home occupiers. [Amazon has recently taken this action](#), and patch carbon monoxide detectors are no longer sold from their platform.

The UK's Health Department has described Carbon Monoxide (CO) as the most common cause of fatal poisoning in the USA and Europe. Carbon monoxide has a particularly harmful impact on unborn babies, and can cause brain injury in all ages. Healthcare professionals increasingly consider that there can be very harmful impacts from low-level exposure to carbon monoxide over a period of time, as well as from CO spikes. It is, however, entirely avoidable. The life of one of Barry Sheerman MP's constituents, a 10-year old little boy called Dominic Rodgers, would have been saved if an audible and effective carbon monoxide alarm had been installed.

eBay's Product Safety Policy says: "Products that pose a health or safety hazard aren't allowed." We urge you to apply this policy here. Patch carbon monoxide detectors cannot alert people to danger while they are asleep. Even when awake, the 'warning' from the changing colour strip can be easily missed, for example if people are in another room or do not remember to regularly check the detector. Unlike audible alarms, there is no noticeable signal to alert householders to a potential fatal carbon monoxide leak. It is particularly misleading, in terms of advertising, when such products are called "[Sleep Safe](#)", as a sleeping person clearly cannot check the indicator.

The safety of patch carbon monoxide detectors has been widely criticised by industry stakeholders, and their use is strongly discouraged:

- [Which? magazine](#): *If there was a dangerous carbon monoxide build-up in the middle of the night, a patch changing colour won't wake you up to let you know. So whatever kind of carbon monoxide alarm you buy, go for one that sounds the alarm.*
- [Gas Safe Register](#): *We don't recommend the use of 'black spot detector' warning strips because their warning is too easily missed and they don't emit a sound, so they won't alert you if you have a CO leak whilst you're asleep.*
- [Npower](#): *ensure that you choose an audible alarm, as these are the most effective way to ensure you are notified to any carbon monoxide leaks as quickly as possible. These should make a loud beeping sound, as opposed to 'black spot' alarms, which you would need to visibly check.*
- [London Chimney Sweeps](#): *The problem with these patches is that the colour change is subtle and the patch is quite small, so it can easily be overlooked – especially if you aren't in the same room as your*

faulty boiler or fire and they will not wake you and warn you should CO reach a dangerous level in your home over night.

We strongly urge you to remove all patch carbon monoxide detectors from eBay's website as soon as possible.

We look forward to hearing from you on this important matter at your earliest opportunity.

Yours sincerely,

Mr Barry Sheerman MP
Baroness Finlay of Llandaff
Rt. Hon Mrs. Maria Miller MP
John McNally MP
Liz Twist MP
Jason McCartney MP
Stephanie Peacock MP