

## Press Release

DEKRA tips for the safe use of toasters, mixers, and other appliances

### **Do not Ignore the Operating Instructions**

- ▶ Operating and cleaning errors not uncommon
- ▶ Avoid unnecessary damage, annoyance, and costs
- ▶ Intended use – otherwise no liability

**As a rule, toasters, mixers, and other household appliances are easy to use. However, according to DEKRA's product testing experts, it still makes sense to carefully read the operating instructions of even simple appliances. This may avoid hazards and a lot of damage, annoyance, and costs.**

"Operating instructions help people get to know and use their newly purchased electrical appliance," explains Oliver Brumm from DEKRA Testing & Certification. "There are many reasons to carefully read the operating instructions after purchasing an appliance and, if necessary, consult them at a later date for information about, for example, cleaning and the precautions to be taken when there are children in the household."

#### **All important information about the appliance**

As well as covering safety aspects, the operating instructions provide users with important information about the appliance itself: its components, the function and location of the controls, how to start the appliance, and what to remember when setting up and cleaning the appliance. Also included are the technical data, device name, and order number, and usually also the contact details for the service team, information about disposal, and tips for energy-efficient use.

#### **Avoid damage, annoyance, and costs**

There are good reasons why no technical device may be marketed in the European Union without separate operating instructions. "Anyone who doesn't simply throw away the operating instructions with the packaging, but reads them carefully, may possibly spare themselves a lot of damage, annoyance, and costs," comments expert Brumm from DEKRA's Product Testing division.

The first page shows important warnings that are highlighted with words such as "warning," "caution," and "danger," or with pictographs: What health hazards can be

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expected? What circumstances may cause burns or fire? When is there a risk of electrocution or a short circuit? What misuse may be dangerous for the user or damage the appliance? What are the dangers for children and people of diminished capacity?

### **Broad spectrum of dangers**

The warnings thus cover a broad spectrum. For example, electrical appliances should not be immersed in water. Appliances such as toasters that become hot should not be placed below a wall cabinet or right next to drapes to avoid the risk of fire. Due to its high wattage, a kettle should not be plugged into a multi-socket but only powered from an installed socket. A chafed or kinked cable may cause a short circuit or electrocution – there is a risk of death if the cable insulation is damaged.

### **Operating errors not uncommon**

“It doesn’t matter how high the safety standards are for familiar kitchen appliances such as kettles, mixers, and toasters, operating and cleaning errors are still not uncommon,” observes Oliver Brumm. “That’s why the EU Product Safety Regulation stipulates that products must be accompanied by clear instructions in easily understandable language.” According to Germany’s Federal Statistical Office, electrical injuries in households resulted in more than 3,500 people being hospitalized in 2022.

### **Intended use – otherwise no liability**

In the usually unremarkable leaflets, one important term stands out: intended use. This means that a standard mixer is only designed to process normal household quantities. It is not intended for continuous use in a catering environment, which might result in overheating. This is important because the manufacturer assumes no liability for damage to the appliance or injury to people if they are caused by a non-intended use.

### **Check for a quality mark when purchasing appliances**

In the European Union, electrical appliances may only be marketed if they have been tested in accordance with the relevant guidelines and regulations. The CE label is evidence that this testing has been carried out. DEKRA expert Brumm also recommends looking for the GS mark, which stands for “Geprüfte Sicherheit” in German and means tested safety. Products with this mark must comply with certain statutory standards.

By the way, losing the operating instructions is not usually a problem because, as a rule, they can be consulted or downloaded online.



## **About DEKRA**

*DEKRA was originally founded in 1925 to ensure road safety through vehicle inspection. With a much wider scope today, DEKRA is the world's largest independent non-listed expert organization in the testing, inspection, and certification sector. As a global provider of comprehensive services and solutions, we help our customers improve their safety, security, and sustainability outcomes. In 2023, DEKRA generated revenue of EUR 4.1 billion. The company currently employs around 49,000 people who offer qualified and independent expert services in approximately 60 countries on five continents. With a platinum rating from EcoVadis, DEKRA is now in the top one percent of sustainable businesses ranked.*