

COMPLAINT NUMBER	21/116
ADVERTISER	Reckitt Benckiser (NZ) Limited
ADVERTISEMENT	Finish Powerball, Television
DATE OF MEETING	29 March 2021
OUTCOME	No Grounds to Proceed

Advertisement: The Reckitt Benckiser television advertisement promotes their dishwashing aid, Finish Powerball. A young girl is shown looking on surprised as her mother is using water to pre-rinse dishes. The advertisement claims that pre-rinsing your dishes can waste up to 40 litres of water.

The Chair ruled there were no grounds for the complaint to proceed.

Complaint: In the finish powerball ad it shows a young girl despairing at her mother pre rinsing dishes before putting them in the dishwasher. The mother notices the look and uses a finish powerball instead.

The ad flashes up a graphic about how pre rinsing wastes 40 litres of water, which is might well do. The ad gives the impression that using tap water to wash dishes is bad and wasteful and it's going to destroy the world for the young child who looks like the world will end if mum doesn't turn the tap off.

The recommendation for water saving by Council is to fill a sink and wash the dishes by hand - not pre rinsing anyway but that isn't really what bothers me about the ad. It's misleading and distracting from the truth but it's not my main "beef".

What bothers me is finish power balls are full of chemicals, are not great for the environment and they are completely toxic and poisonous to children.

Kids and Dishwasher products shouldn't be in the same place at the same time. One powerball could kill a kid, I still don't understand why rinse aid doesn't have a childproof lid and I wrote to finish and never got a response. Finish products are only safely used by adults and safely locked up, not sitting on the bench like blue candy.

Let's not pretend Reckett Benckiser cares about the environment or children or saving water.

The ad sends several wrong messages and it needs to be pulled in it's entirety, no kids should be in the ad, no distraction from the fact their products are highly toxic and bad for the environment by focussing on supposed water savings - those power balls aren't even good for dishwashers - just ask any dishwasher technician

Please get this ad taken down and if you have any power over any other agencies please get childlock lids put on rinse aid bottles!

The relevant provisions were Advertising Standards Code - Principle 1, Principle 2, Rule 1(e), Rule 2(b);

Principle 1: Social Responsibility: Advertisements must be prepared and placed with a due sense of social responsibility to consumers and to society.

Rule 1(e) Safety: Advertisements must not, unless justifiable on educational or social grounds, encourage or condone dangerous, illegal or unsafe practices, or portray situations which encourage or condone a disregard for safety.

Principle 2: Truthful Presentation: Advertisements must be truthful, balanced and not misleading.

Rule 2(b) Truthful Presentation: Advertisements must not mislead or be likely to mislead, deceive or confuse consumers, abuse their trust or exploit their lack of knowledge. This includes by implication, inaccuracy, ambiguity, exaggeration, unrealistic claim, omission, false representation or otherwise. Obvious hyperbole identifiable as such is not considered to be misleading.

The Chair noted the Complainant was concerned the advertisement was promoting a dangerous product with unsafe packaging which should not be used around children.

The Chair carefully reviewed the advertisement and said the likely consumer takeout would be that there is no need to pre-rinse dishes when using this dishwashing product.

While the Chair acknowledged the Complainant's genuine concern about the composition of the dishwashing product, she said the Advertising Standards Authority does not have jurisdiction over products or packaging and can only consider where and how products are advertised. The Chair said the advertisement reflected the everyday activity in a kitchen and interaction between a child and parent. The scenario shown did not reach the threshold to breach Principle 1, Principle 2 or Rules 1(e) and 2(b) of the Advertising Standards Code.

The Chair ruled there were no grounds for the complaint to proceed.

Chair's Ruling: Complaint No Grounds to Proceed

APPEAL INFORMATION

According to the procedures of the Advertising Standards Complaints Board, all decisions are able to be appealed by any party to the complaint. Information on our Appeal process is on our website www.asa.co.nz. Appeals must be made in writing via email or letter within 14 calendar days of receipt of this decision.