

## Regulator satisfied with cement imports

PRETORIA: The National Regulator for Compulsory Specifications (NRCS) has expressed satisfaction with the cement imports into the country following investigations into reports that the cement imported was of a substandard quality.



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"We are happy with the cement and we're happy with the system we have in ensuring compliance," acting chief executive officer, Thomas Madzivhe, said on Tuesday, 7 August 2012.

The NRCS is a public entity that administers compulsory specifications (including cement, among others) behalf of the Department of Trade and Industry.

There had been complaints that the regulator was allowing substandard cement to be imported from Asia, with potential disastrous consequences for infrastructure on the local market.

Madzivhe said the regulator stood for ensuring safety, adding that 26 local importers import Lucky Cement from Pakistan.

"There was suspicion of non-compliance and samples were taken," he said, noting that the samples were tested by the South African Bureau of Standards (SABS).

The regulator took the compliance issue in a serious light, acting executive for non-perishable products division, Musa Ndlovu, said.

"Industry said they were not compliant. The results showed no non-compliance," said Ndlovu following full tests that took 30 days to complete as opposed to the regular two-day test.

In the lead up to the 2010 Soccer World Cup, there was a spike in the demand for cement, with companies supplementing supply with imports.

Last year, the importing of Lucky Cement was halted when the regulator was taken to court by a local cement producer. The sale of the cement was also stopped. The local manufacturer wanted all distributors of Lucky Cement to be investigated.

Following the court case, investigations into the matter were completed three months ago. No measures against Lucky Cement were taken.

On recent road shows taken by the Regulator, no complaints had been noted about the quality of cement used in houses, including RDP houses.

Additionally, representatives of SABS visit the facilities of Lucky Cement in Pakistan annually to conduct tests.

The regulator said that tests conducted on the cement were stringent in nature and included aspects such strength.

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