West Sussex Trading Standards are reminding residents to be careful when buying electrical products online. The safety warning comes after a person suffered a serious electric shock from the metal casing of a device bought on Amazon.

The device, a PoE (Power over Ethernet) switch, was supplied with a standard three-pin cable, commonly referred to as a ‘kettle lead’. A sample lead was found to have the earth wire connected to the live pin, meaning the metal casing of the PoE device became live when plugged in.

“The danger of this power lead was hidden inside a moulded plug, and it was inevitable the user would receive an electric shock,” said Peter Aston, Trading Standards Team Manager. “It’s only as a result of luck the reported accident didn’t result in a fatality; although the resident is suffering long term nerve pain and remains under medical investigation.”

The power lead was also fitted with an unsafe fuse which could have resulted in injury or fire. Trading Standards Officers took immediate steps to ensure these items were removed from sale and a product recall was undertaken.

Investigations found that the seller was based in China. "Our advice for anyone purchasing electrical products or power leads is to buy them from a reputable business in the UK”, said Peter Aston. “Exercise care when buying something online that appears to be a particular bargain."

Duncan Crow, West Sussex County Council Cabinet Member for Community Support, Fire and Rescue, said: “The dangerous nature of this product is thankfully not something our Trading Standards Officers come across often, but the unseen deadly risk it posed is of great concern.”

If you live in West Sussex and have bought an unsafe electrical product, you can let Trading Standards know by calling Citizens’ Advice Consumer Service on 03454 040506 or by going online to. [www.westsussex.gov.uk/tsreport](http://www.westsussex.gov.uk/tsreport)