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**Balloon Industry Group Offers Free Balloon Weights
In Recognition of International Balloon Month**
*National balloon group uses September balloon month
to encourage smart balloon practices*

The Balloon Council, an organization representing balloon manufacturers, distributors and retailers across the nation, is providing free balloon weights during September's International Balloon Month as people across the country recognize one of America's favorite symbols for celebration.

The free balloon weight promotion continues the Balloon Council's Responsible Balloon Retailer (RBR) program designed to proactively educate consumers about smart balloon use.

"International Balloon Month is a great way to recognize balloons as one of America's favorite ways to celebrate. But, as with all celebrations, it is important to act responsibly. By providing free weights to retailers, we are reminding retailers and consumers about proper handling of balloons," said Dan Flynn, chairman of the Balloon Council.

Premium Balloon Accessories and Control Plastics, two balloon weight manufacturers and members of the Balloon Council, are supplying the balloon weights for the International Balloon Month promotion. The Balloon Council is shipping a set number of weights affixed with smart balloon practice tips to retailers across the country who have joined the RBR program.

Retailers in the RBR program promise to adhere to a code of smart balloon practices. This includes proactively educating customers on how to best enjoy balloons with practical tips such as not releasing foil balloons. Participating retailers in the RBR program have been provided with a window decal so that customers know that they are dealing with a Balloon Council-certified Responsible Balloon Retailer.

The RBR program encourages retailers to help their customers recognize the best ways to enjoy balloons. Among those tips are:

- A helium filled foiled balloon should be tied securely to a weight that will keep it from releasing into the air. If you are giving the balloons with a stuffed animal, flowers, or other gift, be sure the balloons are properly weighted so that they don't get accidentally released when they are detached from the gift.
- Never release foil balloons into the air, as they can cause problems if they become tangled in power lines and can turn into litter if they are not disposed of properly.
- Adults should keep popped or deflated balloons away from children and should always supervise young children around balloons.
- Latex balloons are biodegradable, but they may also cause allergic reactions to those who are allergic to natural rubber latex. While this is extremely rare, keep in mind latex allergies when buying or using latex balloons.
- Properly dispose of balloons by cutting balloons with scissors directly above the knot or sealing point and immediately placing them in trash containers.

“Balloons can be a great symbol of celebration, and it is important that consumers use the product properly. So celebrate International Balloon Month and affirm America’s ongoing love affair with balloons,” said Flynn.

The Balloon Council (TBC) is an organization of retailers, distributors and manufacturers formed in 1990 to educate consumers and regulators about the wonders of metallic and latex balloons and the proper handling of them.

For more information visit www.theballooncouncil.org or call 1(800) 233-8887.

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