



U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission

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Includes recalls from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

CONSUMER PRODUCT SAFETY REVIEW

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Thrift Store Study

About two-thirds of the general thrift stores in the U.S. sell hazardous products that have been recalled, banned, or do not meet current safety standards, according to a study by the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC).

This national study of thrift, consignment, and resale shops targeted hazardous products that pose a danger of death or serious injury. The top three potentially dangerous products found were children's jackets and sweatshirts with drawstrings presenting a strangulation hazard; hair dryers that did not protect against electrocution; and cribs that did not meet current safety standards.

The National Association of Resale and Thrift Shops (NARTS) estimates that there are over 15,000 thrift shops across the country, including specialty product thrift stores. More than 9,000 general thrift stores sell the type of products targeted in this study.

Local and independently-owned and operated thrift stores make up 72% of the market. National organizations make up the other 28% of the market. National organizations include the Salvation Army, Goodwill, St. Vincent De Paul, and Savers.

Many people shop at thrift stores, and it is a growing market. CPSC believes that many consumers and thrift store owners and managers may be unaware of recalls, product standards, or bans of consumer products offered for sale in thrift stores.

Methodology

CPSC field staff visited 301 thrift stores throughout the country from May through September 1999. The participating stores were randomly selected from a national compilation of thrift and consignment shops.

The sampling method used in the study allowed CPSC to make statistically valid national estimates of the number of thrift stores that carry hazardous products and the number of hazardous products for sale in thrift shops.

CPSC visited 217 local and independently-owned and operated stores, which accounted for 72% of the sample. CPSC visited 84 national organizations, 28% of the sample.

CPSC's field staff used a prepared checklist to observe the products in the thrift stores. If any hazardous products were found, CPSC staff gave store personnel information about the products. Stores were asked to remove and destroy the hazardous products or contact the manufacturer regarding repair, replacement, or refund.

Results of Study

CPSC found most of the targeted consumer products in one or more of the thrift stores visited. About two-thirds of these thrift stores had at least one of the targeted products. The results of the study are below.

Continued on page 2

CLOTHING DRAWSTRINGS: 51% of general thrift stores sell children's upper outerwear, including jackets or sweatshirts, with drawstrings at the waist or neck.

Since 1985, CPSC has received reports of 22 deaths and 48 non-fatal incidents involving the entanglement of drawstrings on children's clothing. In 1995, CPSC issued guidelines to consumers and manufacturers to help prevent children from strangling or getting entangled in the drawstrings of garments such as jackets and sweatshirts. As a result of CPSC working cooperatively with industry, manufacturers agreed not to make children's outerwear, including jackets and sweatshirts, with drawstrings at the neck, and now adhere to a voluntary safety standard. Waist drawstrings are now limited to extend not more than 3 inches in length. Retail stores have agreed not to sell new garments that do not meet the voluntary standard.

HAIR DRYERS: 20% of general thrift stores sell hair dryers without protection against electrocution.

In the early 1980s, there were an average of 18 electrocutions each year involving hand-held hair dryers. Most of these deaths occurred when the hair dryer fell or was pulled into a bathtub.

In 1990, the industry adopted a voluntary standard for hair dryers that gave added protection against electrocution. To comply with the voluntary standard, hand-held hair dryers must protect against electrocution if they fall into water with the switch in either the "on" or "off" position.

CRIBS: 12% of general thrift stores sell cribs that do not meet current federal and voluntary safety standards.

More babies — about 40 each year — die from injuries associated with cribs than from any other piece of nursery equipment. Most of these deaths are associated with older, used cribs.

Results from this study indicated that there are approximately 1,400 used cribs for sale in thrift stores throughout the country that do not meet current safety standards. The cribs found during the study violated current federal regulations for slat spacing of full-size and non-full size cribs (the most frequently found problem) and mattress size. The study also revealed non-compliance with voluntary safety standards, including corner posts and finials on full-size and non-full size cribs. Other problems found with cribs in thrift stores included missing hardware, metal knobs, and chipping paint.

HALOGEN TORCHIERE FLOOR LAMPS: 10% of general thrift stores sell halogen torchiere floor lamps without guards.

CPSC has received 65 reports of fires resulting in 6 deaths involving halogen torchiere floor lamps since April 1998. The most common problems associated with these lamps are fires resulting from unintended contact between the lamp and combustible or flammable materials and the tipping or knocking over of lamps, resulting in the ignition of these materials. In 1997, CPSC and the industry recalled for repair 40 million lamps manufactured before February 1997. Lamps manufactured after that date are equipped with a guard that can help prevent fires.

PLAY YARDS AND PLAYPENS: 7% of general thrift stores carry recalled play yards and playpens with protruding hardware or rotating top rails.

CPSC has reports of eight toddlers who strangled in their play yards and playpens when pacifier strings or their clothing caught on the play yard's or playpen's protruding hardware. CPSC obtained recalls of these products and is currently working with industry to develop voluntary standard provisions and testing procedures to prevent further injury or death.

CPSC is aware of 13 children who suffocated in collapsed play yards and playpens that had rotating top rails. The top rails collapsed and entrapped children in the folded "V" formed by the rails of the product.

These play yards and playpens were set up by rotating each top rail. Current production play yards and playpens have top rails that automatically lock into place when the play yard or playpen is fully set up.

At CPSC's urging, manufacturers have recalled more than 10 million play yards and playpens with protruding hardware or rotating top rails. Recalled brands include Bilt-Rite, Evenflo, Gerry, Graco, Kolcraft, Playskool, Pride-Trimble, Strolee, Century, All Our Kids, Home and Roam, and Baby Express.

CAR SEAT CARRIERS: 4% of general thrift stores have recalled car seat carriers for sale.

More than 1 million car seat carriers have been recalled because the handle disengages. Evenflo's On My Way model resulted in 89 injuries when the handle unexpectedly disengaged, causing the seat to flip forward. Cosco's Arriva and Turnabout models resulted in 29 injuries. Manufacturers supplied a retrofit device to secure the handle in a locked position while in use. In the investigations of the thrift stores, only one recalled carrier was found equipped with the retrofit device.

(After the thrift store study was released, Kolcraft Enterprises recalled more than 750,000 car seat/carriers for repair. Forty-two injuries to infants had been reported.)

TOY BASKETBALL NETS: 3% of general thrift stores nationwide sell recalled toy basketball nets.

Children can strangle on loops or openings in the nets of youth or toy basketball sets that come unhooked

from the rim or have knots that slide. If children put their heads into these openings, the net can get tangled around their necks. Children, standing on the base of the basketball set, have put their head up through the

THRIFT STORE SAFETY CHECKLIST

If you buy at thrift stores, here are some tips to help you make safer purchases.

CRIBS — Make sure cribs meet current national safety standards and are in good condition. Look for a certification seal. Check that crib slats are no more than 2 ³/₈ inches apart. Crib mattresses should fit snugly.

If crib slats are too far apart, infants can slip between them and strangle. If the mattress doesn't fit snugly, infants can become entrapped and suffocate.

CLOTHING DRAWSTRINGS — Be sure there are no drawstrings around the hood and neck of children's upper outerwear clothing, such as sweatshirts. Other types of clothing fasteners, like snaps, zippers, or hook and loop fasteners (such as Velcro), should be used. Drawstrings at the waist should not extend more than 3 inches.

Drawstrings can catch on playground and other equipment, and can strangle young children.

HAIR DRYERS — Look for hair dryers with large rectangular shaped safety plugs.

These immersion protection plugs prevent electrocution by shutting off the current if the hair dryer comes into contact with water.

HALOGEN FLOOR LAMPS — Make sure that halogen torchiere floor lamps have glass or wire guards over the bulb shield and the bulb is 300 watts or less.

Glass or wire guards with lower wattage bulbs can prevent fires that occur when flammable materials like curtains get too close to the lamp. Wire guards are free. For information, call CPSC at 1-800-638-2772.

PLAYPENS AND PLAY YARDS — Check that playpens and play yards have not been recalled. Recalled products include play yards with protruding hardware or rotating top rails that don't properly lock into place.

Children can strangle if pacifier strings or clothing become entangled on protruding hardware. Children can be entrapped by folding play yards that collapse.

CAR SEAT CARRIERS — Check to make sure the infant car seat carrier you are buying has not been recalled. Car seat carrier handle locks on recalled models can unexpectedly release when used as a carrier outside of a car.

Infants can fall forward and strike the ground if the handle disengages.

BUNK BEDS — Make sure all spaces between the guardrail and bed frame and all spaces in the bed headboard and foot boards of the top bunk are less than 3 ¹/₂ inches. Make sure there are guardrails on both sides of the top bunk.

Children can become entrapped and strangle in the bed's structure or wedged between the bed and a wall and suffocate.

TOY BASKETBALL NETS — CPSC has obtained recalls of millions of hazardous toy basketball nets. Check before you buy. Children can strangle on loops or openings in these basketball nets if the nets come unhooked from the rim or have knots that slide. If children put their heads into these openings, the nets can get tangled around their necks.

Toy basketball nets can present a strangulation hazard to children.

ACCORDION-STYLE SAFETY GATES — Do not buy older accordion-style child safety gates. Make sure that newer style child safety gates are used to keep children away from potentially dangerous areas, especially stairs.

Older child safety gates that do not meet current safety standards can present strangulation and other hazards to young children.

BEAN BAG CHAIRS — Do not buy bean bag chairs with zippers that can be opened. CPSC has obtained recalls of more than 12 million bean bag chairs.

Young children can unzip bean bag chairs and choke or suffocate on the small pellets of foam filling.

bottom of the net into the openings. They then have twirled around and fallen with the net twisted around their neck.

Since 1988, CPSC has received 20 reports of children under 5 years old getting their heads and necks caught in the nets of toy basketball sets subject to the recalls. In 1992, an 18 month-old child died after becoming entangled in a partly unhooked net.

More than 10 million nets on toy basketball sets have been recalled. Recalled brands include Ohio Art, Little Tikes, Today's Kids, Fisher-Price, Franklin Sports, Huff Sports, and Lifetime Products.

OTHER HAZARDOUS PRODUCTS FOUND DURING STUDY: The following products also were found in thrift stores, accounting for about one percent of hazardous products.

Lawn darts were responsible for the deaths of three children when darts punctured their skulls. CPSC banned lawn darts in 1988.

Ride-on battery-powered vehicles made by Fisher-Price and Peg Perego have caused over 180 fires. At least 10 children have suffered varying degrees of burns. More than 10 million of these vehicles have been recalled.

Bean bag chairs. Five children suffocated on the small-pellet foam filling of bean bag chairs, and at least 27 children recovered from injuries involving zippered bean bag chairs. More than 12 million zippered bean bag chairs have been recalled.

Cedar chests. Between 1977 and 1999, seven children became entrapped and suffocated inside Lane cedar chests that latch (lock) automatically when the lid is closed. Lane recalled 12 million chests made before 1987 and offered a redesigned latch that allows the lid to be opened from the inside.

Infant swings are associated with four deaths and 50 injuries resulting from strangulation, hardware failure, and seat support failure. More than 1 million have been recalled, including Century's Lil' Napper, Cosco's Quiet Time, and several Graco models.

Bunk beds are associated with 57 entrapment deaths from 1990 to 1999. Fifty-five of these were to children 3 years or younger when the children became entrapped and strangled in the bed's structure or were wedged between the upper bunk and wall and suffocated. More than a half million bunk beds have been recalled. CPSC and manufacturers worked together to develop a safety standard to reduce this risk. In addition, CPSC recently issued a mandatory standard on bunk beds. (See *Safer Bunk Beds*, page 6.)

Loops in window blind cords pose a strangulation hazard to children. CPSC is aware of about 200 deaths since 1980 from this hazard. Safety tassels and tie-downs for vertical and continuous loop blinds are available free by calling 1-800-506-4636. Because of CPSC's work with the industry, all loops on mini-blind cords sold new in retail stores have been eliminated.

Child safety gates can protect children from hazards, especially falls down stairs. But old accordion-style baby gates are dangerous because a child's head can become entrapped in the gate's openings. CPSC knows of nine deaths and 25 near misses because of the entrapment hazard of these gates.

Further Actions

CPSC prepared a *Thrift Store Safety Checklist* for consumers and thrift store owners and managers. (See page 3.) The checklist should be consulted before making purchases or donating consumer products to thrift stores.

Thrift store owners and managers also should use the checklist before accepting donations and consignments or purchasing inventory for the store. CPSC is distributing this checklist to the National Association of Resale and Thrift Shops and other national organizations. CPSC also is giving this information to state and local governments for distribution to local and independently-owned and operated thrift stores.

CPSC has drafted *model legislation* for state governments to adopt making it illegal for commercial entities, such as thrift stores, to sell or distribute certain hazardous children's products. CPSC has distributed this model legislation to organizations such as the National Association of Attorneys General, the National Governors Association, and the governors of states that have not already adopted state statutes regulating thrift store sales of defective cribs and other products.

— *Debra Sweet, Directorate for Epidemiology and Carol Cave, Directorate for Field Operations*

For More Information

For a complete copy of the thrift store study, checklist, or model legislation, please visit CPSC's website at: www.cpsc.gov.

Babies in Adult Beds

Placing babies to sleep in adult beds puts infants at risk of suffocation or strangulation, according to a CPSC study in the *Archives of Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine*¹. The study revealed an average 64 deaths per year to babies under the age of 2 years placed to sleep in adult beds, including waterbeds and daybeds.

Medical authorities, such as the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and the SIDS Alliance, also have concerns about placing babies to sleep in adult beds.

AAP believes that bedsharing or co-sleeping may be hazardous under certain conditions and suggests, as an alternative, that parents consider placing the infant's crib near their bed for more convenient breast feeding and parent contact.

The SIDS Alliance recently issued a statement that stated, "... not only has bedsharing not been proven to be protective against SIDS but that it can, under a number of conditions, actually be hazardous."

A CPSC review of incident data from January 1990 to December 1997 linked adult beds to at least 515 baby deaths. Analysis of the deaths revealed four major hazard patterns (*Figure 1*). These included:

- Suffocation associated with the co-sleeping of adult and baby.
- Suffocation where an infant becomes entrapped or wedged between the mattress and another object.
- Suffocation due to airway obstruction when the baby is face down on a waterbed mattress.
- Strangulation in rails or openings on beds that allow a baby's body to pass through while entrapping the head.

Death Data

CPSC's study is the first to quantify the number of fatalities resulting from the practice of co-sleeping with babies. Of the 515 deaths, 121 were reported to be due to a parent, caregiver or sibling rolling on top of or against the baby while sleeping. More than three-quarters of these deaths occurred to infants younger than 3 months.

The other 394 deaths resulted from suffocation or from strangulation caused by entrapment of the child's head in various structures of the bed. Entrapments occurred between the mattress and the wall, bed frame, headboard, footboard, bed railings or adjacent furniture. Of the 394 entrapment deaths, 296 were on adult beds, 79 were on waterbeds, 10 were on daybeds, and 9 in bed railings.

Bed rails, which are portable railings that can be installed on toddler and adult beds to keep toddlers from falling out of beds, accounted for nine baby deaths. CPSC is working with the bed rail industry on the design of these products to reduce the hazard.

For 1998 and 1999, CPSC staff is aware of at least 76 additional deaths, 35 due to suffocation associated with co-sleeping and 41 due to entrapments.

— *Suad Nakamura, Ph.D., Directorate for Health Sciences*

Reference:

1. Nakamura S, Wind M, Danello MA. Adult beds are unsafe places for children to sleep. *Arch Pediat Adolesc Med* 1999;1019-1023.

Deaths of Children in Adult Beds (1990-97)

FATALITY SCENARIO	SLEEPING ENVIRONMENT				Total
	Adult Bed	Waterbed	Daybed	Portable Bed Rail	
Wedging between mattress and wall	125	3			128
Wedging between mattress and bed frame, headboard or footboard	128	8	6		142
Entrapment between mattress and adjacent furniture	20				20
Strangulation between bed railings	23		4		27
Entrapment between portable bed rail and mattress				9	9
Suffocation on a waterbed mattress		68			68
Total (entrapment)	296	79	10	9	394
Co-sleeping death (rolling on top of or against baby while sleeping)	108	13			121
Total (entrapment + co-sleeping)	404	92	10	9	515

Figure 1

Safer Bunk Beds

Saving children from becoming entrapped in bunk beds is the goal of CPSC's new safety standard for adult and child bunk beds.

From January 1990 through August 9, 1999, CPSC had received reports of 57 children who became fatally entrapped in bunk beds. Over 96% (55 out of 57) of the entrapment fatalities were of children ages 3 and younger; all but one were of children younger than 5 years old.

One of these children was 3-year-old Whitney Starks, who was found by her mother hanging from the top slats of the upper bunk of her bunk bed. Mrs. Lynn Starks later was instrumental in successfully lobbying for the first mandatory state bunk bed safety statute in Oklahoma and testified in favor of CPSC's standard on bunk beds.

Background

An American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) voluntary standard for bunk beds was first published in 1992. While the ASTM standard has requirements addressing the entrapment hazard to children, it is not as stringent as the new CPSC standard.

Over the years, there has been a continued pattern of non-conformance with the voluntary standard by some manufacturers in the bunk bed industry. Since November 1994, CPSC has announced recalls of more than 630,000 bunk beds posing entrapment hazards to young children.

The new mandatory federal standard will enable CPSC to hold retailers and distributors accountable, seek civil penalties against manufacturers for non-complying bunk beds, and stop shipments of non-complying beds made by foreign manufacturers at the docks.

CPSC Bunk Bed Standard

About 500,000 bunk beds, retailing for an average price of about \$300, are sold for household use each year. By June 19, 2000, all bunk beds manufactured for sale in the United States will have to meet these requirements.

- Any bed in which the underside of the foundation is over 30 inches from the floor must meet the new standard. The upper bunk must have guardrails on both sides, and the wall side rail must be continuous.
- Openings in the upper bunk structure must be small enough (less than 3.5 inches) to prevent passage of a child's torso.
- Openings in the lower bunk end structures must be small enough to prevent entry by a child's head or torso, or large enough to permit the free passage of both the child's torso and head.
- The bed must have a label identifying the manufacturer, distributor or seller, the model number, and the date of manufacture.
- Warnings must be on a label affixed to the bed and in instructions that must accompany the bed. The label warns not to place children under 6 years old on the upper bunk and specifies mattress size.

— *Scott Heh, Directorate for Engineering*

Skiing Safely

To prevent head injuries while skiing or snowboarding, CPSC recommends wearing helmets specifically designed for these sports. A CPSC study released last year concluded that helmet use could prevent or reduce the severity of head injuries to both children and adults.

In 1998, there were more than 16,000 head injuries associated with skiing and snowboarding. CPSC estimates that each year more than 7,000 head injuries could be prevented or reduced in severity with helmet use.

In addition to wearing helmets while skiing or snowboarding, CPSC recommends these safety tips.

- Select the right equipment, making sure items such as bindings and boots are adjusted to fit properly.

- Make sure you have the proper training, and do not ski or snowboard beyond your ability.
- Ski and snowboard in control, and follow the rules of the slopes.
- Never ski or snowboard alone. Make sure someone is there to help you if you get hurt.
- Get in shape before you hit the slopes. Making sure you are physically fit before you ski or snowboard can help prevent injuries.
- Wear warm, close-fitting clothing. Loose clothing can become entangled in lifts, tow ropes, and ski poles.

— *Scott Heh, Directorate for Engineering*

Consumer Product Incident Report

Please contact us about any injury or death involving consumer products. Call us toll free at: 1-800-638-8095. Visit our website at www.cpsc.gov. Or, fill out the form below. Send it to: U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission/EHDS, Washington, DC 20207 or fax it to: 1-800-809-0924. We may contact you for further details. Please provide as much information as possible. Thank you.

YOUR NAME _____

YOUR ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

YOUR TELEPHONE _____

NAME OF VICTIM (IF DIFFERENT FROM ABOVE) _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

TELEPHONE _____

DESCRIBE THE INCIDENT OR HAZARD, INCLUDING DESCRIPTION OF INJURIES _____

VICTIM'S AGE _____ SEX _____ DATE OF INCIDENT _____

DESCRIBE PRODUCT INVOLVED _____

PRODUCT BRAND NAME/MANUFACTURER _____

IS PRODUCT INVOLVED STILL AVAILABLE? YES NO PRODUCT MODEL AND SERIAL NUMBER _____

WHEN WAS THE PRODUCT PURCHASED? _____

This information is collected by authority of 15 U.S.C. 2054 and may be shared with product manufacturers, distributors, or retailers. No names or other personal information, however, will be disclosed without explicit permission.



U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission
Washington, DC 20207

MECAP NEWS

Medical Examiners and Coroners Alert Project and Emergency Physicians Reporting System

The MECAP-EPRS Project is designed to collect timely information on deaths and injuries involving consumer products. Please contact us whenever you encounter a death or situation that you believe should be considered during a safety evaluation of a product.

To report a case or ask for information about MECAP, please call our toll-free number, 1-800-638-8095, or our toll-free fax number, 1-800-809-0924, or send a message via Internet to AMCDONAL@CPSC.GOV.

*Indicates cases selected for CPSC follow-up investigations. Cases reported but not selected for follow-up also are important to CPSC. Every MECAP report is included in CPSC's injury data base and will be used to assess the hazards associated with consumer products.

During the months of September, October, and November 1999, 557 cases were reported to CPSC. Included here are samples of cases to illustrate the type and nature of the reported incidents.

ASPHYXIATIONS/ SUFFOCATIONS

A female, 5 months, was sleeping with her mother in a waterbed. The victim's crib was located next to the waterbed. Her mother awoke to find the victim, unresponsive, hanging between the waterbed and the crib. Her chin was resting on the waterbed's frame. The cause of death was asphyxiation. (William Shutze, M.D., Medical Examiner, District 5, Leesburg, FL)

A male, 5 months, was placed to sleep on the top of a bunk bed. The child's mother found the child, not breathing, with his head down between the bed's mattress and the wall. The cause of death was asphyxiation. (Bruce O. Parks, M.D., Medical Examiner, Tucson, AZ)

A female, 2, swallowed a balloon at her home. When emergency medical services arrived, the child was in cardiac arrest with the balloon obstructing her upper airways. Although the balloon was removed with forceps, efforts to revive the child were unsuccessful. The cause of death was asphyxia. (Alexander Melamund, M.D., Associate Medical Examiner, District 10, Bartow, FL)

*A male, 11 months, was left unattended in his high chair. The seat safety straps had been cut from the chair. The victim slipped out of the chair between the seat and the side arm. The victim's head became wedged between the seat and the bottom of the food tray. The cause of death was asphyxiation. (James A. Baroni for Janice Frank, M.D.,

Medical Examiner, Ventura County, Ventura, CA)

A male, 7, was found unresponsive with a plastic bag over his head. When the child arrived at the hospital emergency room, the plastic bag had been removed from his head, but the victim had no vital signs. The cause of death was asphyxia. (Sawait Kanluen, M.D., Chief Medical Examiner, Wayne County, Detroit, MI)

*A male, 9 months, was found by his mother wedged between his crib's railing and the wall. A bolt was missing from the rail, creating a gap for the child to become entrapped. The cause of death was asphyxia. (Carol Koop for Michael B. McGee, M.D., Chief Medical Examiner, Ramsey County, St. Paul, MN)

DROWNING

A female, 2, was found unresponsive, facedown in an above-ground pool. Prior to the incident, other children were playing in the pool. They left the pool leaving the gate closed but unlocked. The cause of death was drowning. (Marie H. Hansen, M.D., Associate Medical Examiner and Joan E. Wood, M.D., District Medical Examiner, District Six, Largo, FL)

A male, 4, climbed over a fence and fell into a community pool. The pool was closed at the time of the incident. The cause of death was drowning. (Mary Coffman for Jeffrey Barnard, M.D., Medical Examiner, Dallas County, Dallas, TX)

A male, 2, was left unattended by his mother in a swimming pool. The victim was later found floating face down in the pool. The victim was wearing arm flotation devices at the time of the incident. The cause of death was drowning. (Alvin Omori, M.D., Medical Examiner, Honolulu, HI)

*A male, 2, was found floating face down in a hot tub in his grandparents' backyard. There was a small plastic pail next to him. The family had been doing yard work, and the child had probably been trying to get some water for the plants. The victim entered the pool/hot tub area through a broken gate. The cause of death was drowning. (Richard Harruff, M.D., Chief Medical Examiner, King County, Seattle, WA)

A female, 2, was found, unresponsive, floating in an above-ground swimming pool by her mother. The child's father was outside working on his car, and the mother was inside the house. The child had wandered outside onto the pool's deck and fallen into the pool. The cause of death was drowning. (Nancy Moore for John Butts, M.D., Chief Medical Examiner, Chapel Hill, NC)

FIRES

A female, 46, died in a house fire when faulty electrical wiring caught a sofa on fire. The cause of death was smoke and soot inhalation. (Delores Butler for I.C. Hood, M.D., Medical Examiner, Philadelphia, PA)

A female, 61, died in a house fire caused by a toaster oven. The cause of death was smoke inhalation. (Laura S. Hair, M.D., Associate Medical Examiner and Joan E. Wood, M.D., District Medical Examiner, District Six, Largo, FL)

A female, 60, died in a house fire caused by an electrical fire in a window air-conditioning unit. The cause of death was thermal burns and smoke inhalation. (Mary Coffman for Jeffrey Barnard, Dallas County, Dallas, TX)

A male, 37, died in a house fire caused by a microwave oven plugged into a faulty extension cord. The vic-

tim received burns to 51% of his upper body. The cause of death was complications of thermal burns. (Thomas Young, M.D., Chief Medical Examiner, Jackson County, Kansas City, MO)

A male, 70, was trying to light a gas wall heater when it caught on fire. The heater had a faulty regulator. The victim suffered burns to over 70% of his body. The victim's wife also was burned in the fire. The cause of death was smoke inhalation and thermal burns. (Larry E. Gay for John Hunt, M.D., Medical Examiner and Richard Tooker, M.D., Chief Medical Examiner, Kalamazoo County, Kalamazoo, MI)

A female, 56, received thermal burns to 90% of her body from an explosion that occurred at her residence. A gas line to a heater was not properly connected, and the victim lit a cigarette, causing the explosion. The cause of death was thermal burns. (Jacqueline Dobbins for Edmund R. Donoghue, M.D., Chief Medical Examiner, Cook County, Chicago, IL)

A female, 1, was sleeping in her crib when her 2 year-old brother set the crib on fire with a butane lighter. The family had been using the lighter to light a gas grill for cooking during a power outage from Hurricane Floyd. The victim suffered 77% body burns. The cause of death was complications of thermal burns. (Nancy Moore for John Butts, M.D., Chief Medical Examiner, Chapel Hill, NC)

A male, 29, died in a house fire that started when a power strip in his living room overheated. The cause of death was smoke inhalation. (Sandra Hickey for Kriten Sweeney, M.D., Medical Examiner and Margaret Greenwald, M.D., Chief Medical Examiner, Augusta, ME)

*A female, 77, died in a house fire caused by an improperly installed oil-burning furnace. The victim was trapped in the second floor of the house and experienced severe burns trying to escape. The cause of death was burns and smoke inhalation. (R.F. Clark, M.D., Medical Examiner, Norfolk, VA)

*A female, 79, died in a house fire caused by an electrical short in a refrigerator. Her husband escaped the fire. The cause of death was smoke inhalation. (Kenneth Ries, M.D., Medical Examiner, Richmond, VA)

MISCELLANEOUS

A male, 28, was doing flips jumping on a trampoline when he landed on his head on the trampoline. The cause of death was complications of blunt neck injury. (Mary Coffman for Jeffrey Barnard, M.D., Medical Examiner, Dallas County, Dallas, TX)

A male, 1, leaned against a window screen at a day care center. The screen fell out, and the child fell 25 feet to the ground below. The cause of death was multiple blunt force injuries. (Chris McNeil for Thomas Gilchrist, M.D., Medical Examiner, Farmington, CT)

A male, 8 months, fell from a bed onto a space heater. He was found by his babysitter wedged between the bed and the wall. The cause of death was complications of thermal injuries. (Carol Koop for Michael B. McGee, M.D., Chief Medical Examiner, Ramsey County, St. Paul, MN)

— *Suzanne Newman, Directorate for Epidemiology*



CPSC Recalls

The following product recalls were conducted by firms in cooperation with CPSC. For more information about recalls, visit CPSC's website at www.cpsc.gov.

CPSC AND NHTSA RECALL

Product: About 754,000 **infant car seat/carriers** by Kolcraft Enterprises. These car seat/carriers have model names Infant Rider, Secura, Travel-About, Plus 4, Plus 5, Kolcraft Infant Restraint, Kolcraft Infant Car Seat, and Playskool Infant Car Seat and were made from January 1, 1993 through June 30, 1999. The 5-digit model number and manufacturing date (mo/day/yr) are on a label on the side of the seat. If the first digits of the model number match the following numbers, then it is recalled: 1312X, 1382X, 1383X, 1384X, 1385X, 368XX, 43XXX, or 7700X. These products were sold nationwide beginning in January 1993 for about \$30 to \$60 sold alone, or \$100 to \$150 sold with a stroller. Kolcraft seats made from July 1, 1999 and Kolcraft Rock 'N Ride seats have different handle mechanisms and are not part of this recall.

Problem: When used as a carrier, the handle can unexpectedly move from the intended carrying position, causing the seat to suddenly rotate. The infant can fall to the ground and suffer serious injuries. There have been more than 3,000 reports of handle-related problems, resulting in 42 injuries to infants, ranging from a skull fracture and concussions to scrapes and bruises. These carriers can continue to be used as car seats.

What to do: Call Kolcraft for a free repair kit at **1-877-776-2609** anytime. Do not carry the seat by the handle until it has been repaired. Consumers can continue to use the seats as car seats or in combination with the stroller.

Product: About 25 million **Pokemon™ balls** included with Burger King kids' meals. These are red and white or hot pink ball-shaped, plastic containers between 2-3/4" and 3" in diameter. They open to reveal one of 57 different Pokemon™ toys inside. Packaging described them as safety-tested and recommended for all ages of children. Burger King restaurants nationwide distributed the Pokemon™ balls from early November through December 1999.

Problem: The balls may pose a suffocation hazard to children under 3 years old. Either half of the ball-shaped container can become stuck on a child's face, covering the nose and mouth and may cause suffocation. A 4-month-old boy reportedly suffocated when one-half of a Pokemon ball in his crib became stuck on his face, and a 13-month-old girl reportedly suffocated when one-half of a Pokemon ball covered her nose and mouth. In addition, an 18-month-old girl reportedly also had a ball half stuck over her face causing her distress. The child's father pulled the ball from her face on the second attempt.

What to do: Immediately take the balls away from children under 3 years of age and throw them away or return them to any Burger King restaurant for a free small order of fries.

Product: About 26,000 **backpack child carriers** by Kelty. The six Kelty K.I.D.S. models are: Expedition, Trek, Explorer, Country, Elite, and Town. The model name is on the side of the carrier. The recalled carriers are blue and have the Kelty K.I.D.S. logo on the back rest of the seat. Also included is a model sold by L.L. Bean under its L.L.Kids label with the Kelty logo on the black frame hinge. Specialty and sporting good retailers, including L.L. Bean, REI, and Eastern Mountain Sports, sold these backpack carriers nationwide from March 1999 through December 1999 for between \$100 and \$250. Kelty and L.L.KIDS carriers purchased prior to March 1999 have a different strap and are not included in this recall.

Problem: The seat height adjustment strap on these carriers can slip out of its buckle. A child can slide downward unexpectedly and could fall out of the carrier. There are two reports of children slipping down in the carrier; neither fell out and there are no reports of injury.

What to do: Stop using these backpack carriers and contact Kelty toll-free for a free repair kit at 1-800-423-2320 between 10:30 a.m. and 7:30 p.m. ET, Monday through Friday, or go to Kelty's web site at www.kelty.com.

Product: About 231,000 pairs of **children's pajamas** sold at Gap and Old Navy stores. The six styles of pajamas recalled are made with 100 percent polyester fabric and have style numbers: 353558, 353554, 733002, 733032, 466291 and 67060. The style numbers are located on labels sewn into the side seams or collar of the garments. GapKids, babyGap, Gap Outlet, and Old Navy stores nationwide sold these pajamas from August 1999 through December 1999 for between \$20 and \$39.

Problem: The pajamas fail to meet federal children's sleepwear flammability standards. Failure to meet these standards presents a risk of serious burns to children.

What to do: Stop using these pajamas and return them to any Gap or Old Navy location for a refund and a \$10 gift certificate. For more information call **1-800-GAPSTYLE** or **1-800-OLDNAVY** between 7 a.m. and 6 p.m. PT, Monday through Friday or go to the web site at www.gap.com or www.oldnavy.com.

Product: About 58,000 model T-2 **hand-held electrical voltage and continuity testers** by Fluke Corp. These testers measure 24 to 600 volts alternating current (VAC) and 6 to 220 volts direct current (VDC). "Fluke" and "T2" are on the front of the unit. The tester's body is yellow and black and measures 6.25" long by 1.75" wide by 1.25" thick. The wire leads are black and have one black and one red probe. Recalled units have serial numbers lower than 74165430 on the back of the unit. Home centers, hardware stores, and industrial distributors nationwide sold these testers between December 1997 and September 1999 for about \$45. Fluke previously recalled some T2 testers in November 1998 for a different reason. Even if consumers had these repaired, the testers are part of this recall and need to be repaired again.

Problem: Batteries in the tester could fail to maintain proper contact due to corrosion within the battery compartment, causing the device to lose power. The testers could fail to warn consumers using them of the presence of live current if the tester is not powered, posing a risk of shock, electrocution, and thermal burns. There are two reported incidents of consumers receiving a mild electric shock.

What to do: Stop using these products immediately and contact Fluke for a free repair kit or arrange to send your unit to Fluke for repair. Consumers may call toll-free **1-800-753-8646** between 5 a.m. and 4 p.m. PT, Monday through Friday, or access the web site at www.fluke.com.

Product: About 5,300 **infant and girls' sweatshirts** with heart-shaped zipper pulls sold by Nordstrom. The garments are cotton/polyester blend, long-sleeve, half-zipper sweatshirts. They are pink or blue and sold in infant size 6 months through big girl size 16. They have collar-labels reading, "Baby N" or "N Kids." Nordstrom stores nationwide sold these sweatshirts in December 1999 for \$22 to \$28.

Problem: The heart-shaped zipper pulls can detach from the garments, posing a choking hazard to young children. There is one reported incident in which an infant choked on a zipper pull, but suffered no permanent injuries.

What to do: Stop using these garments and return them to any Nordstrom store for a refund. For information call Nordstrom at **1-800-695-8000** between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. any day of the week.

CASH REWARD FOR REPAIR OF PREVIOUSLY RECALLED INFANT SWING

Product: About 125,000 **Lil' Napper infant swings** by Century Products Co. The swings, made from 1991 through 1997, have shoulder harness straps and the following model numbers on the bottom of the seat: 12-344, 12-345, 12-347, 12-475 or 12-476. The Century brand name is on the motor assembly at the top of the swing. Each swing has a 2-position seat and a removable plastic tray. There are 4 white tubular metal legs.

Problem: The swings were recalled in 1997 following reports of three deaths and one near-strangulation from entanglement in the harness straps. There has been one additional report of a fourth death. If the shoulder harness straps loosen or are unbuckled, an infant can become tangled in them and strangle.

What to do: Stop using these swings immediately and contact Century for a free repair kit and a \$30 cash reward. Call toll-free **1-800-231-1448** anytime or access the web site at www.centuryproducts.com.

— Marc Schoem and Terri Rogers, Office of Compliance



NHTSA Recalls

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) is the government agency responsible for improving safety on the nation's highways. As part of its efforts to achieve this goal, NHTSA is authorized to order manufacturers to recall and repair vehicles or items of motor vehicle equipment (including air bags, tires, and child safety seats).

The following safety recall campaigns are being conducted in cooperation with NHTSA. For more information about NHTSA recall activities, you can access NHTSA on the Internet at www.nhtsa.dot.gov or call the NHTSA Auto Safety Hotline at 1-888-DASH-2-DOT (1-888-327-4236).

American Honda Motor Company

Honda is recalling **101,159 1998-1999 CR-V vehicles** manufactured from November 1997 through November 1998. An improperly routed underdash wire harness could be damaged by contact with the brake light switch, possibly resulting in a blown fuse. If this occurs, operation of critical components can be lost, including windshield wipers, headlights, turn signal and hazard lamps, tail lamps, the anti-locking function of the brakes, and the battery charging system. Dealers will install a protective, corrugated plastic tube over the wire harness, in the area of the brake stop switch. If any wire or wires are damaged, they will be repaired. Owners who do not receive the free remedy within a reasonable time should contact Honda at 1-800-999-1009. [NHTSA Recall No. 99V282]

DaimlerChrysler Corporation

DaimlerChrysler is recalling **334,047 1992-1995 Jeep Cherokee and 1994-1995 Jeep Grand Cherokee** model vehicles. The front disc brake rotors can experience severe corrosion. If the rotors are not replaced, the corrosion can eventually compromise the structural integrity of the stamped steel center hub section of the rotor. The reduced strength can allow the cast iron wear surface to separate from the hub, reducing the brake effectiveness of the vehicle. Dealers will replace these rotors with rotors that are coated with the corrosion protection. Owners who do not receive the free remedy within a reasonable time should contact DaimlerChrysler at 1-800-992-1997. [NHTSA Recall No. 99V-340/DaimlerChrysler Recall No. 747]

Ford Motor Company

Ford is recalling **164,731 1991-1993 Thunderbird vehicles and 1992-1993 Mercury Cougar vehicles**. On certain vehicles equipped with fog lights, the headlights may go out for various intervals as a result of the circuit breaker opening. Drivers could experience a loss of visibility, increasing the risk of a crash. Dealers will install a headlight switch, which incorporates a circuit breaker of revised design, and install a wiring harness connector, if needed. Owners who do not receive the free remedy within a reasonable time should contact Ford at 1-800-392-3673.

[NHTSA Recall No. 99V275/Ford Recall No. 99S30]

Ford Motor Company

Ford will also recall **475,000 1993-1995 Explorer sport utility vehicles** because the hydraulic lift cylinder bracket welds could fracture. With a broken bracket weld, there is a potential for the lift gate bracket to gradually bend inward allowing the lift cylinder ball stud to disengage. Dealers will install lift gate reinforcement brackets. Depending upon the condition of the lift gate sheet metal in the area of the bracket, dealers may also install a larger reinforcement. Owner notification is expected to begin during January 2000. Owners who do not receive the free remedy within a reasonable time should contact Ford at 1-800-392-3673. [NHTSA Recall No. 99V310.001/Ford Recall No. 99S34]

General Motors Corporation

GM is recalling **265,522 1999-2000 Saturn SC, SW and SL model vehicles** manufactured from April 1998 through August 1999, for failing to comply with requirements of FMVSS No. 210, A "Seat Belt Assembly Anchorages." Some of the vehicles were produced with seat belt shoulder guide anchor bolts that were not adequately tightened at the center pillar and could fall out, making the seat belt inoperative. Dealers will inspect these vehicles for proper installation and torque of the seat belt shoulder guide anchor bolts. Owners who do not receive the free remedy within a reasonable time should contact Saturn at 1-800-553-6000, Prompt #3. [NHTSA Recall No. 99V280/GM Recall No. 99067/Saturn Recall No. 99C02]

Kia Motors America, Inc.

Kia is recalling **90,054 1999 Sephia vehicles** manufactured from September 1997 through January 1999 because the ball socket on the windshield wiper link may be out of tolerance, resulting in the link disengaging from the wiper motor drive under load, such as pushing against ice, snow or other resistance. Also the wiper arm retaining nut could be inadequately tightened, allowing the wiper arm to slip and/or stop functioning. This condition could cause impairment of visibility in inclement weather, increasing the risk of a crash. Dealers will replace the windshield wiper link and also properly tighten the wiper arm retaining nuts. Owners who do not receive the free remedy within a reasonable time should contact Kia at 1-949-470-7000. [NHTSA Recall No. 99V271]

Mercedes-Benz USA, Inc.

Mercedes-Benz is recalling **85,970 1998-1999 M Class vehicles** manufactured from January 1997 through November 1999, because the latching mechanism on the seat belt assembly was not assembled correctly. If the plastic cover is loose during the engagement of the buckle tongue to the latch mechanism, the buckle could unlatch. Dealers will inspect the seat belt buckles. If either the driver or front passenger seat belt buckle is found to be defective, it will be replaced. Owners who do not receive the free remedy within a reasonable time should contact Mercedes-Benz at 1-800-367-6372. [NHTSA Recall No. 99V328/ Mercedes-Benz Recall No. 1999110005]

Mitsubishi Motor Sales of America, Inc.

Mitsubishi is recalling **101,360 1999-2000 Galant and 2000 Eclipse model vehicles** manufactured from May 1998 through October 1999, because the steering column multi-function switch levers can become loose or break over time. Loosening or cracking of the levers can cause directional lamps that do not self-cancel or operate, head lamps that do not turn off, windshield washers that operate continuously and/or windshield wipers that do not operate. Dealers will install a redesigned switch. Owners who do not receive the free remedy within a reasonable time should contact Mitsubishi at 1-800-222-0037. [NHTSA Recall No. 99V305/Mitsubishi Recall No. 990WND0093]

Toyota Motor Company, Ltd.

Toyota is recalling **540,037 1995-1998 Camry and 1994-1998 ES300 model vehicles** manufactured from July 1994 through July 1998, because the steering wheel set nut may not have been sufficiently tightened, allowing the nut to loosen. This can cause steering vibration and looseness in the steering wheel, ultimately resulting in separation of the steering wheel. Dealers will tighten the steering wheel set nut. Owners who do not receive the free remedy within a reasonable time should contact Toyota at 1-800-255-3987. [NHTSA Recall No. 99V307]

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