

Check your home for deadly products recalled by CPSC

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission is announcing a "recall round-up" of 10 hazardous products, most of which have been involved in deaths to children. The goal of this recall round-up is to get hazardous products out of people's homes. Despite recall notices and public warnings, CPSC has found that many products with the potential to seriously injure or kill are still being used by consumers.

CPSC is launching this year's recall round-up with a news conference and release of a "Recall List" of products. The Alabama Department of Public Health supports this effort.

"We urge everyone to pause, read the following recall notices, and stop using products which have the potential to kill or seriously injure their users," said Carol Mysinger, director of the Injury Prevention Division of the Bureau of Health Promotion and Chronic Disease. "We know consumers continue to use these dangerous products, and the challenge is to remove them from families' homes."

Some of the hazardous products that might be in consumers' homes are the following:

--GE and Hotpoint dishwashers that present a fire hazard. General Electric Appliances Co. is voluntarily offering a free repair option in the form of a rewiring for its recalled GE and Hotpoint dishwashers. With the free rewire option, a GE-authorized technician will rewire the slide switch at no cost to consumers. This supplements the original rebate program which the company offered. The dishwashers have a slide switch that can melt and ignite, presenting a fire hazard. CPSC is aware of approximately 90 incidents associated with these dishwashers. GE manufactured 3.1 million of these dishwashers between 1983 and 1989. Call GE at

(800) 599-2929.

--Whirlpool (Kenmore) dishwashers that present a fire hazard. Whirlpool Corporation is providing free repair for 500,000 recalled Whirlpool and Kenmore brand dishwashers. Wiring in

the door latch may overheat and catch fire. There have been 20 claims of property damage. Whirlpool brand owners should call (800) 874-9481 and Kenmore brand owners should call

(800) 927-1625 for the free repair.

--Window blind cords with loops that can strangle children. Window blinds may have pull cords and inner cords that can form a loop and cause strangulation if children become entangled in the pull cords or the inner cords. CPSC knows of 130 strangulation deaths to children since 1991. In 1995, CPSC worked with the industry to eliminate the pull cord loops on new window blinds. However, old window blinds with looped pull cords and inner cords must be repaired. There were about 85 million units sold each year. Call the Window Covering Safety Council for free repair kit: (800) 506-4636, or go to their web site: <http://www.windowcoverings.org>.

--Halogen torchiere floor lamps need a wire or glass guard to help reduce the fire risk. Over 40 million halogen floor lamps made before 1997 were recalled because they have no guard to protect against fire. CPSC knows of 436 fires and 35 deaths since 1992 related to halogen lamps. People can get the wire guards by sending a postcard to Catalina Lighting Consumer Services, 18191 NW 68th Ave., Miami, Fla. 33015.

--Playpens that can collapse and entrap a child in the V-shape folded top rails because the top rails must be turned to set up the playpen. CPSC is aware of 15 deaths to children when the top rails of playpens collapsed. A new industry standard requires that the top rails of these playpens automatically lock into place when the playpen is fully set up. CPSC obtained voluntary recalls of the following playpens with top rails that people had to turn into place when setting up the playpen: Evenflo "Happy Camper, Happy Cabana, and Kiddie Camper; Century Models 10-710 and 10-810; Baby Trend "Home and Roam, Baby Express;" and Kolcraft "Playskool Travel-Lite Model." CPSC also issued a safety warning about All Our Kids Models 742 and 762 playpens imported by a firm that is out of business.

--Lane cedar chests with lids that automatically latch shut when closed, made by The Lane Co. between 1912 and 1987. CPSC and Lane are aware of 12 children suffocating inside the chests when the lid closed and automatically latched shut. Only those made between 1912 and 1987 are involved. Contact the company to get a free replacement lock to prevent entrapment. Call

(888) 856-8748 or go to <http://www.lanefurniture.com>.

--Old cribs made before CPSC's safety standards can entrap, strangle or suffocate children. Old cribs with more than 2-3/8 inches between crib slats, corner posts, or cut-outs on the headboard or footboard present suffocation and strangulation hazards. CPSC estimates there are 35 deaths per year in old cribs. Destroy old cribs. Get a crib that meets current safety standards.

--Old chest freezers made between 1945 and 1970 have heavy lids that latch. Children can suffocate in old chest freezers (and in other products with heavy lids that latch). CPSC knows of 27 deaths between 1980 and 1999. Destroy the old freezer, take the door off, or remove or disable the latch. Contact (800) 267-3138 or http://www.aham.org/freezer_safety.htm.

--Hairdryers without immersion protection devices to prevent electric shock. Since the early 1990s, hairdryers have had built-in shock protection devices to prevent electrocution if submerged in water. However, there are still one or two electrocutions per year from old hairdryers. Replace the old hairdryer with a new one with a large rectangular plug and the mark of a recognized testing laboratory.

--Drawstrings around the neck on children's jackets and sweatshirts can catch and strangle children. In 1995, CPSC worked with industry to eliminate hood and neck drawstrings on kids'

jackets and sweatshirts. CPSC knows of 22 deaths and 48 non-fatal incidents between 1985 and 1999. Pull out or cut all neck drawstrings on children's jackets and sweatshirts. Do not sell them at garage sales or give them to thrift stores. CPSC found that many thrift stores are selling recalled, hazardous products.

CPSC's toll-free telephone hotline and web site provide information about recalled products and information on what to look for when buying products. Consumers can reach the hotline at 800-638-2772 or visit the web site at <http://www.cpsc.gov>. To get a list of major recalls, consumers should send a postcard to "Recall List," CPSC, Washington, D.C. 20207.

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