



U.S. CONSUMER PRODUCT SAFETY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, DC 20207

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Manufacturers, Importers and Retailers of Baby Walkers

Dear Sir or Madam:

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) is an independent federal regulatory agency responsible for protecting consumers from unreasonable risks of injury and death from consumer products. Our authority is set forth in the Consumer Product Safety Act (CPSA), 15 U.S.C. § 2051 *et seq.* and the Federal Hazardous Substances Act (FHSA), 15 U.S.C. § 1261 *et seq.*

I am writing this letter to urge you to make certain that all baby walkers you import, manufacture, distribute or sell in the United States comply with all applicable federal requirements and voluntary consensus safety standards. The mandatory regulations are in the Code of Federal Regulations (16 CFR §§ 1500.18(a)(6) and 1500.86(a)(4)) and can be found at www.cpsc.gov. The applicable consensus standard, ASTM F-977 Standard Consumer Safety Specification for Infant Walkers, can be ordered from ASTM International (www.astm.org).

Young children can be seriously injured or killed if a walker they are in falls down stairs. One of the major thrusts of the ASTM standard is stair fall protection, whereby a walker either stops at the edge of a step or is too wide to fit through a standard size doorway. In 1992, an estimated 25,700 children younger than 15 months of age were treated in hospital emergency rooms for injuries associated with baby walkers, most from stair falls. In 2003, there were an estimated 3,200 such injuries, an 88 percent reduction. We believe that many of the remaining injuries would be prevented if all walkers met the stair-fall protection requirement of the ASTM standard.

Inasmuch as the ASTM standard has been in place for several years, the CPSC Office of Compliance staff considers baby walkers without stair-fall protection to be defective and to present a substantial risk of injury to young children under section 15(c) of the FHSA, 15 U.S.C. § 1274(c). However, some firms continue to import or manufacture for sale in the United States baby walkers that do not conform to this nationally recognized standard. Should the staff encounter such products, it will seek a recall of these products from the marketplace. There is no

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persuasive reason for baby walkers to be manufactured without stair-fall protection since products with stair fall protection have been on the market for many years.

In view of the foregoing, I urge you to review your product line and assure that you manufacture, import, distribute and sell only baby walkers with stair fall protection. The CPSC staff will continue to follow up as appropriate to assure that firms are meeting their obligations in this area.

Sections 15(b) of the CPSA, 15 U.S.C. § 2064(b) and 16 CFR §1115.6(a), requires every manufacturer (importer), distributor, and retailer of consumer products to report immediately to the Commission when it obtains information that reasonably supports the conclusion that a product distributed in commerce contains a defect that could create a substantial product hazard or creates an unreasonable risk of serious injury or death. The statute also provides for the imposition of civil penalties for failing to report the required information. The enclosed *Recall Handbook* provides information to assist firms to understand their obligations and responsibilities under the CPSA.

Sincerely,

/s/

John Gibson Mullan

Enclosure: [*Recall Handbook*](#)