

2/2/96

**LOG OF MEETING**

SUBJECT: Mattress and Bedding Fires

DATE: December 9, 1995

PLACE: Holiday Inn Riverwalk North, San Antonio, Texas

NON-COMMISSION ATTENDEES: Registrants at Safety Conference of the Sleep Products Safety Council, see attached list

COMMISSION ATTENDEES: James F. Hoebel, Engineering Sciences

LOG ENTRY SOURCE: James F. Hoebel *James F. Hoebel*

SUMMARY: This was the annual meeting of the Sleep Products Safety Council. The meeting covered open-flame mattress fires and test methodology, status of the CPSC bedding fire project investigation, materials development, product liability, and indoor air quality.

After background presentations, Mr. Hoebel reviewed the CPSC activities. A copy of Mr. Hoebel's viewgraphs are attached. The project intends to determine why the cigarette ignition fire toll remains high and to investigate the feasibility of an open-flame ignition standard. The open-flame issue was emphasized. The CPSC plans to report to the Commission in the summer of 1996 with options for appropriate future directions, including voluntary or mandatory standards, consumer information and education, or no action. Cooperation with the industry throughout the process was highlighted. Questions received from the floor included: potential impact on consumer acceptance of the product, including cost impacts; what constitutes acceptable level of industry conformance with a voluntary standard; possible effects of mattress aging on susceptibility to ignition; relative contribution of mattresses and bedding items to the ignition and fire; whether the Commission would consider regulation of bedding items as an option; whether the data showed that the fire problem was focussed on the economically disadvantaged; and when are we going to stop protecting people from themselves.

The panel that followed presented various products and technology available to help control open-flame ignition of mattresses. These included foam technology (Dr. Stone), fire blockers (Dr. Forsten), ticking materials (Mr. Goldberg), and cotton batting (Mr. Wolf).

An attorney specializing in product liability litigation, J. Fetterly, spoke. He recommended that industry, in order to avoid punitive damages, develop their own voluntary standard for resistance of mattresses to open-flame ignition and institute widespread conformance with such a standard. He also emphasized that "safety sells".

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Gordon Damant, a consultant to the industry, reviewed extensive testing sponsored by the International Sleep Products Association (ISPA) to evaluate emissions of potential pollutants from mattresses. A risk assessment of the emissions data concluded that levels of important emissions did not constitute a toxic hazard.

The speakers returned to the platform to answer any further questions. An official of ISPA said they would likely not recommend development of an industry voluntary standard at this time. They want to better define the fire hazard in order to support the need for such action and to insure that any hazard is directly addressed. It appeared clear that they hope to rely on the results of the Commission's current field investigation project to help define the hazard.

The keynote speaker, Dr. Jack Snell of the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), provided a systems perspective on mattress flammability and recommended that the industry collaborate with NIST to address the hazard.

cc: A. Stadnik  
R. Medford  
L. Saltzman  
R. Frye  
M. Boudreault

Attachments: Registrants  
Viewgraphs

**SPSC SAFETY CONFERENCE**  
**December 8-9, 1995**  
**Holiday Inn Riverwalk, San Antonio**

**Registration as of December 5, 1995**

**SPSC Board of Directors**

Patrick Coughlin, Operation Life Safety, Shawnee, KS  
Gordon Damant, Inter-City Testing & Consulting Corp. of CA, Sacramento, CA  
Paul Dillon (Diane Dillon), Simmons Company, Norcross, GA  
Al Klancnik (Pat Klancnik), Serta Inc., Itasca, IL  
Donald Robb, Chittenden & Eastman Company, Burlington, IA  
Walt Thomas, Apparel & Textile Engineering Technology, Marietta, GA  
Dave Young, Verlo Mattress, Whitewater, WI

**SPSC Combustibility Committee**

Paul Dillon (Diane Dillon), Simmons Company, Norcross, GA  
Ron Hutchinson, Simmons Company, Norcross, GA  
Al Klancnik (Pat Klancnik), Serta Inc., Itasca, IL  
Wayne Matchen, Burlington House Fabrics, Burlington, NC  
Tom McLean, Kingsdown, Inc., Mebane, NC  
Bert Simpson, Hanes Industries, Conover, NC  
Steve Wolf, Wolf Corporation, Fort Wayne, IN

**Attendees**

Randy Bancroft, Restonic Mattress Company, Fayetteville, NC  
Billy Bowles, Bowles Mattress Co., Jeffersonville, IN  
George Bowles, Bowles Mattress Co., Jeffersonville, IN  
Steve Burge, Serta Mattress Company, Oklahoma City, OK  
Reb Burwinkle, Sichel Sleep Products, Norristown, PA  
Curtis B. Cantwell, Cantwell Mattress Co., Corpus Christi, TX  
J. Curtis B. Cantwell, Cantwell Mattress Co., Corpus Christi, TX  
Scott Cecil, Kingsdown, Inc., Mebane, NC  
Gerald Crudup (Jacqueline Crudup), Meridian Mattress Factory, Meridian, MS  
A. Michael Dawson, Blumenthal Print Works, New Orleans, LA  
Patrick Dinan (Barbara Dinan), Bassett Bedding, Walworth, WI  
David Dombar, Serta Mattress Co., Cincinnati, OH  
Mike Ellmo, Meridian Mattress Factory, Meridian, MS  
Priscilla Feasel, Wolf Corporation, Fort Wayne, IN  
Lonny Gold, Adams Foam Rubber Co., Chicago, IL

## **Speakers**

Russ Abolt, International Sleep Products Association, Alexandria, VA  
Gordon Damant, Inter-City Testing & Consulting Corp. of CA, Sacramento, CA  
Tony Essaye, Rogers & Wells, Washington, DC  
James Fetterly, Fetterly & Gordon, Minneapolis, MN  
James Hoebel, U.S. Consumer Products Safety Commission, Washington, DC  
Jack Snell, National Institute of Standards & Technology, Gaithersburg, MD

## **Exhibitors**

Cumulus Fibres, Inc., Charlotte, NC  
Tom Taylor

The Govmark Organization, Inc., Farmingdale, NY  
Sal Messina

Hickory Springs, Hickory, NC  
Bobby Bush

Omega Point Laboratories, Elmendorf, TX  
Javier Trevino

SGS U.S. Testing Company Inc., Fairfield, NJ  
Bob Smith

SPSC - Sleep Products Safety Council, Alexandria, VA  
Patricia Martin  
Wanda Gregory

Springs Industries: Firegard Brand Products, Honea Path, SC  
Mark Anderson  
George Booth

Ventex Inc., Reston, VA  
Harrison Murphy

## **SPSC Staff, Alexandria, VA**

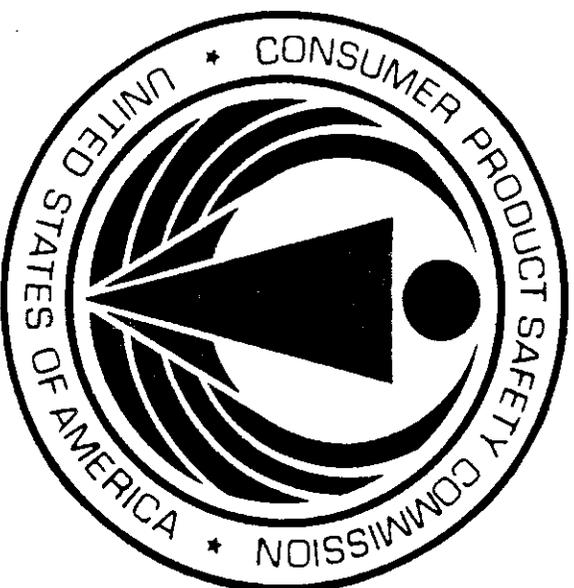
Patricia Martin, Executive Director  
Wanda Gregory, Assistant

## **ISPA Staff, Alexandria, VA**

Russ Abolt, Executive Vice President  
Andrea Herman, Vice President/Communications  
Marcia Eldredge, BedTimes Editor

**U.S.**

**CONSUMER PRODUCT  
SAFETY COMMISSION**



**PROTECT THE PUBLIC FROM  
UNREASONABLE RISK OF INJURY  
AND DEATH ASSOCIATED WITH  
CONSUMER PRODUCTS**

**May 1973**

**Five Commissioners  
(now three)**

**Independent Regulatory  
Agency**

**~480 Staff/ ~\$40 million**

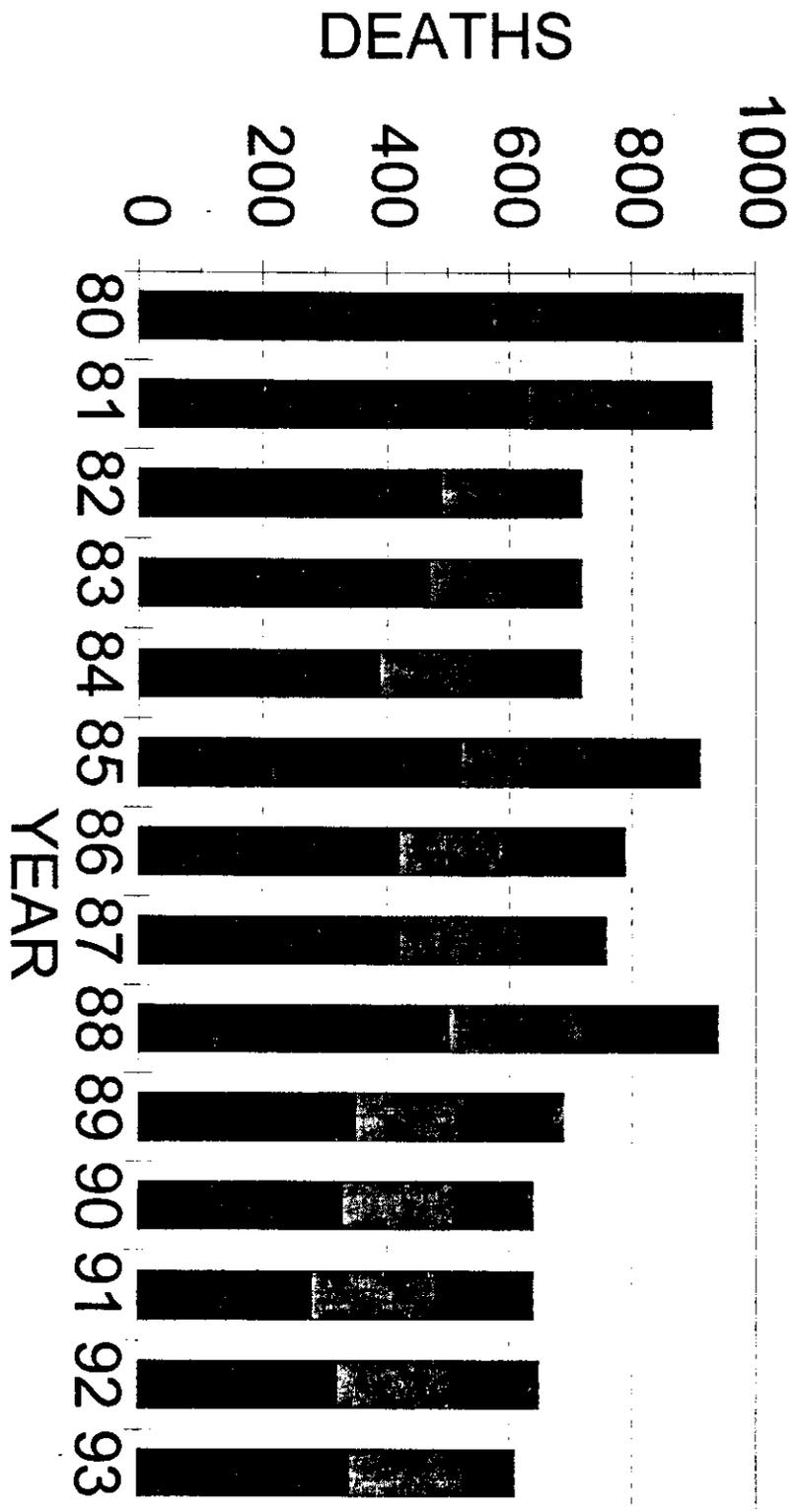
**Bethesda and Field**

## MATTRESSES

- 1970 *Commerce announced possible need for mandatory standard*
- 1972 *Commerce issued mandatory flammability rule*
- 1972- *Industry developed "cookbook" of materials and*  
1973 *constructions that would resist cigarette ignition*

# MATTRESS FIRE DEATHS

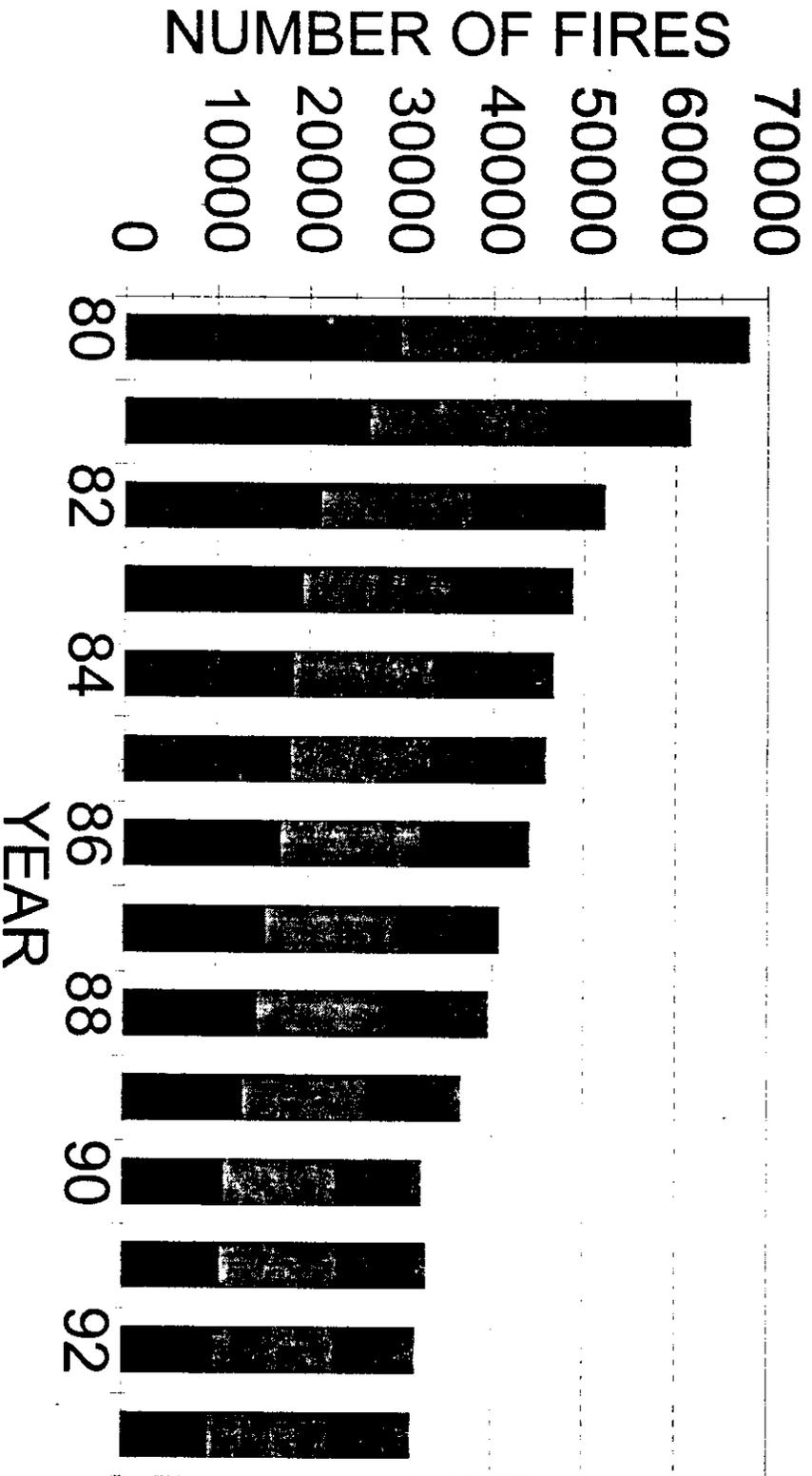
1980-1993



■ CIGARETTE ■ OPEN-FLAME ■ OTHER

# MATTRESS FIRES

1980-1993



# **GOALS**

- ▶ **determine why cigarette ignition fire toll remains high**
- ▶ **investigate feasibility of an open flame ignition standard**

# **OPEN-FLAME IGNITION**

## **APPROACH**

**Field investigations**

**Review Existing Standards**

**Market Sketch**

# **SCHEDULE**

**Data Collection  
through December 1995**

**Options to Commission  
Summer 1996**

## **POSSIBLE OPTIONS**

- **Mandatory Standard**
- **Voluntary Standard**
- **Consumer Information & Education**
- **No action**