

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

*Dist*  
U.S. CONSUMER PRODUCT  
SAFETY COMMISSION

# Memorandum

TO The Commission  
Through: Sadye E. Dunn, Acting Secretary DATE: June 9, 1978  
Through: Margaret A. Freeston, Deputy General Counsel  
Through: Stephen Lemberg, Assistant General Counsel  
FROM Beatrice Pitkin, OGC *BP*

*RECEIVED  
JUN 9 3 37 PM '78  
U.S. CONSUMER PRODUCT  
SAFETY COMMISSION*

SUBJECT: Final resolution of petition CP 74-15 -- flammability of  
tents - BALLOT VOTE DUE: June 16, 1978

On April 15, 1974, the legislature of Rockland County, New York petitioned the Commission to prohibit the use of flammable materials in the manufacture of tents. The petition was granted on June 20, 1974. Among the materials assembled by the staff in preparation for development of a mandatory standard was information on the efforts of industry to develop a voluntary standard.

The staff summarized these data and other relevant information on tent flammability in a Product Profile published in October 1976. Upon reviewing this information and other Product Profiles considered during the setting of project priorities, the Commission omitted tents from any priority classification because the Commission preliminarily determined that regulatory action was not warranted for tents. During this period much of the tent manufacturing industry adopted a voluntary standard, CPAI-84 which substantially addressed flammability risks.

Commission priorities for 1978 published on September 22, 1977 (42 FR 47859) did not include tents; nor are they included among Commission priorities for 1979 (not yet published).

As is indicated in the attached HIEA memorandum, the staff's recent follow-up of injury data indicates that the frequency of flammable tents causing injury and death appears to be low.

If the Commission wishes to finally resolve the petition and issue a denial formally reversing the earlier decision to grant, it would be necessary to publish a notice of denial in the Federal Register, with reasons for denial, and advise the petitioner of the Commission action. A draft notice and letter to the petitioner are attached for Commission review.

SUBJECT: Final resolution of petition CP 74-15 --  
flammability of tents - BALLOT VOTE DUE -  
June 16, 1978

Please indicate your vote below:

1. APPROVE FR NOTICE OF DENIAL.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature) (Date)

APPROVE FR NOTICE WITH SPECIFIED CHANGES.

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\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature) (Date)

DISAPPROVE FR NOTICE.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature) (Date)

ABSTAIN.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature) (Date)

2. APPROVE LETTER TO PETITIONER.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature) (Date)

SUBJECT: Final resolution of petition CP 74-15 --  
flammability of tents - BALLOT VOTE DUE -  
June 16, 1978

APPROVE LETTER WITH SPECIFIED CHANGES.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature) (Date)

DISAPPROVE LETTER.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature) (Date)

ABSTAIN.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature) (Date)

Other Comments/Instructions:

Attachments

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

# Memorandum

U.S. CONSUMER PRODUCT  
SAFETY COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20207

DATE: May 24, 1978

TO : Rory Fausett, EX-P

FROM : Elaine Tyrrell/Barbara Collins, HIEA  
*ETA BC*

SUBJECT: Update of Injury Data Related to Tent Flammability

This memo is in response to your request for an update of the injury data related to the flammability of tents as the Commission is reconsidering a June 1974 decision which prohibited the use of flammable materials in the manufacture of tents. The injury data discussed below should be considered in conjunction with the information presented in the April 1976 Hazard Analysis of Tents.

Tents may be classified under NEISS product code 1229, camping equipment, or product code 1322, children's tents. The information presented below relates only to items in product code 1229, camping equipment. There were no relevant data for product code 1322, children's tents.

Through NEISS, it is estimated that for calendar years 1976 and 1977, 139 and 137 people, respectively, received emergency room treatment for thermal burns related to camping equipment. These estimates are based on sample sizes of 7 and 5, respectively. Only one of these thermal burn injuries can be identified positively as involving a tent fire, and this victim was hospitalized for treatment of his injuries. This case was followed up with an in-depth investigation and is discussed in the next paragraph. There are no thermal burn injuries through April for 1978. This absence of burn injuries thus far for 1978, may be due in part, to the fact that the main camping season has not yet arrived. In the 1976 Hazard Analysis, 2 thermal burn injuries were reported for camping equipment for 1975, but it is not known whether or not either of these two injuries were related to tent fires specifically.

In the Commission's in-depth investigation files, there are four investigations involving tent fires that occurred since the date of the last report (April 1976). Summaries of these investigations accompany this memo. The tent in each of these investigations was totally consumed by the fire; however, one of the tents was labeled fire resistant. Three incidents resulted in six injuries and three deaths. In the remaining investigation which involved a tent labeled to be fire resistant, the tent was unoccupied at the time of the fire. Possibly 2 of the tents involved in these investigations were manufactured since

the original Commission decision. No major injuries resulted in either case, however, neither tent was occupied at the time of ignition.

In the April 1976 Hazard Analysis, 12 incidents covering 6 years were reported. There were 18 injuries in 11 of these incidents: 8 were deaths, 8 were injuries requiring hospitalization, and 2 were injuries for which the disposition is unknown. In the remaining case, a child was in the tent which was located in the family yard. The mother was able to pull the child from the burning tent before he was injured. One of these incidents involved a tent possibly manufactured since the Commission's decision in June 1974. In this incident the victim died.

The Commission's computerized death certificate file, dating from January 1973, collects death certificates from 54 health jurisdictions in the United States. This file reflects 32 death certificates involving camping equipment. Information from all death certificates on file for tents is discussed in this memo, as this data source was not included in the April 1976 Hazard Analysis of Tents. Twenty-six of these deaths involved tents; 17 of which were fire-related. The tents ignited in 16 cases. The remaining fire-related death was caused by asphyxiation when a lantern blew up in a tent. It could not be ascertained from the information provided on the death certificate whether or not the tent in this case ignited. Seven of the 16 tent fire deaths occurred in the year before the Commission's decision June 20, 1974. The remaining 9 deaths occurred in the 4 years since the Commission's decision.

Over the past two years, we have made every attempt to follow-up on all known tent flammability cases using both CPSC and outside data sources. While the nature and severity of those cases recently investigated are similar to the ones in the hazard analysis, the frequency of flammable tents causing injury and death appears to be low.

Attachment

# Summarization of Four In-Depth Investigations of Fires Involving Tents

Task No. Date of Accident	Age and Sex of Victim	Injury Diagnosis Disposition	Synopsis	Product Information
* 771101BEP 0004 10/28/77	6 M	2° & 3° burns - feet, chest, back, face, arms T&A (60+ D)	The door of the tent was ignited when hot coals and ashes were blown on to it by the wind. The victim, who was sleeping inside the tent, was burned as he awoke and ran out of the tent. The tent was totally consumed.	Tent approximately 20 yrs. old.
770420BEP 7009 4/16/77	20 M	Singed leg hair no treatment	The two victims found a burning tent and received minor injuries as they extinguished the flames. The tent and its contents, which were ignited by an unknown ignition source, were totally consumed.	Rented tent - Canvas, water repellant. Two to three years old. Instruction sheet stated "Fire should be made away from tent."
770426BEP 7016 7/17/76	No Victim	Not Applicable	A tent which was ignited by a near campfire was totally consumed. The fire fighter who found the tent, which was flame resistant, stated that the "fire resistant fabric would be consumed by flames of the proportion involved in the tent fire."	Tent - one-month old. Tent Box labelled - flame resistant. Tent Materials: Nylon Sides, Canvas Top, Polypropylene Floor. Instruction sheet stated that tent was flammable and should not be pitched near open flame.

# Summarization of Four In-Depth Investigations of Fires Involving Tents (Continued)

Task No. Date of Accident	Age and Sex of Victim	Injury Diagnosis Disposition	Synopsis	Product Information
760726BEP 7004 7/25/76	32 M	2° burns, hands right foot, UNK Disposition-UNK	A tent was ignited by an unknown ignition source (possibly a cigarette) resulting in the injury of three people and the deaths of three others. The tent had been waterproofed 13 hrs. before the fire. The label on the waterproofing material stated that the solvent was combustible and should be allowed to dry overnight.	Tent - four years old.
	30 F	Spotty 2° burns - hand & feet, UNK Disposition-UNK		
	7 F	Spotty 1° burns Disposition-UNK		
	5 M	98% BSA 2° & 3° burns DOA		
	3 M	50% BSA 2° & 3° burns Expired (23D)		
	2 F	45% BSA 2° & 3° burns Expired (18D)		

\*Cases originating from the National Electronic Injury Surveillance System (NEISS).

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

# Memorandum

U.S. CONSUMER PRODUCT  
SAFETY COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20207

TO : Rory Fausett, OPM  
THRU: James I. Price, Director, ESEM

DATE: MAR 7 1978

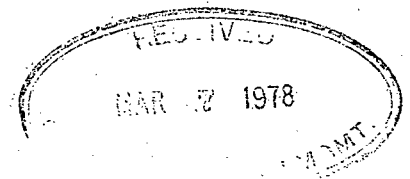
FROM : Margaret Neily, ESEM *MM*

SUBJECT: Federal Register Notice and Letter of Denial - Tent Flammability -  
CP 74-15

ESEM has reviewed the attached drafts from Bea Pitkin, OGC, as you requested. Two changes are suggested on page 3 of the FR Notice. The following brief description of CPAI-84 may be acceptable for inclusion in the Supplementary Information Section.

CPAI-84, as revised in 1976, specifies test methods for evaluating the flame resistance of fabric and other pliable materials used in camping tents. It includes requirements for the flame resistance of these materials to be durable after leaching and accelerated weathering. Wall and top materials, tested in a vertical configuration, must be essentially self-extinguishing when the ignition source is removed. Flooring materials, tested horizontally, must not continue to propagate flame from a small ignition source. The standard also provides for cautionary labeling of tents and certification of camping tentage.]

Attachments





CONSUMER PRODUCT SAFETY COMMISSION

[CP 74-15]

FLAMMABILITY OF TENTS

Denial of Petition

AGENCY: Consumer Product Safety Commission.

ACTION: Denial of petition.

SUMMARY: The Commission denies a petition to regulate the flammability of materials used in the manufacture of tents. The petition is denied because, from the information considered concerning this product, and in view of Commission resources available to regulate the products <sup>under</sup> ~~in~~ its jurisdiction, the Commission does not believe that a mandatory standard addressed to the flammability of tents is necessary at this time.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: George Anikis, Office of Program Management, Consumer Product Safety Commission, Washington, D.C. 20207, (301)492-6453.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Section 10 of the Consumer Product Safety Act (15 U.S.C. 2059) provides that any interested person may petition the Consumer Product Safety Commission to commence a proceeding for the issuance of a consumer product safety rule. Section 10 also provides that if the Commission denies such a petition, it shall publish its reasons for denial in the Federal Register.

On April 15, 1974, the Commission was petitioned by the legislature of Rockland County, New York to prohibit the use of flammable materials in the manufacture of tents. (CP 74-15) On June 20, 1974, the Commission granted the petition and directed the staff to take steps to begin regulatory development. In addition to assembling data that would assist in developing a mandatory safety standard addressing flammability hazards associated with tents, the staff also followed the progress of a voluntary industry effort on tent flammability conducted by the Canvas Products Association International (CPAI) which developed a voluntary standard, CPAI-84.

In a Product Profile published for distribution to the public in October 1976, the staff summarized and presented to the Commission information on the voluntary standard effort, information needed for developing a mandatory standard, and materials needed for an information and education effort directed toward strengthening public awareness of fire hazards associated with tents.

During late 1976 and early 1977, the Commission evaluated a series of Product Profiles, summarizing hazard, economic and other information on many consumer products, as an aid to setting project priorities for Commission action, so that the most efficient allocation of Commission resources could be made. During the Commission's Mid-Year review in the spring of 1977, 46 projects and products were assigned High

and Medium Priority classifications for action (42 FR 47859, Sept. 22, 1977). Tents were not included in these classifications and, in fact, the Commission preliminarily determined at that time that further regulatory action was not warranted for the flammability of tents.

In addition to considering the matter of priorities in evaluating the tent flammability issue, the Commission has considered information indicating that the voluntary standard, CPAI-84, as revised in 1976, specifies test methods for evaluating the flame resistance of fabric and other pliable materials used in camping tents. It includes requirements for the flame resistance of these materials to be durable after leaching and accelerated weathering. Wall and top materials, tested in a vertical configuration, must be essentially self-extinguishing when the ignition source is removed. Flooring materials, tested horizontally, must not continue to propagate flame from a small ignition source. The standard also provides for cautionary labeling of tents and certification of camping tentage. Further, it appears that the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) Task Force D13.52.07 on Tents, Tarpaulins and Outdoor Fabrics has approved CPAI-84. This means that the voluntary standard, which is now followed by 90 to 95% of tent manufacturers, will undergo ASTM consensus procedures, and be presented for adoption by ASTM.

The Commission's April 1976 Hazard Analysis of Tents and more recent followup analysis of injury data by Commission staff indicate that the frequency of flammable tents causing injury and death appears to be low.

As a result of considering all this information, and in light of the resources available for Commission action on all consumer products, the Commission concludes that a mandatory standard addressed to tent flammability is not necessary at this time. Therefore, the Commission reverses its earlier decision and denies the petition.

Copies of the petition and related materials may be seen in, or obtained from the Office of the Secretary, CPSC, 1111 18th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20207.

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SADYE E. DUNN, Acting Secretary  
Consumer Product Safety Commission



U.S. CONSUMER PRODUCT SAFETY COMMISSION

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20207

The Legislature of Rockland County  
County Office Building  
New City, New York 10956

Dear Legislators:

This is in reference to the resolution of the Rockland County, New York legislature, received in the Office of the Secretary, of the Commission on April 15, 1974, requesting that the Commission prohibit the use of flammable materials in the manufacture of tents. The request was designated petition CP 74-15.

As you are aware, on June 20, 1974, the Commission granted the petition and directed its staff to take steps to initiate a standard development effort concerning tent flammability. Since that time, however, the Commission has considered information on voluntary standards activities concerning tent flammability, and has also taken steps to allocate its limited resources among many products and projects which present hazards to consumers. As a result, the Commission has concluded that a mandatory standard on tent flammability is not necessary at this time and that, therefore, petition CP 74-15 is denied.

Enclosed for your information is a pre-publication copy of the Federal Register notice which describes the reasons for Commission denial. In addition, we enclose a copy of the Federal Register notice setting forth projects designated as High and Medium Priority matters for Commission action during fiscal year 1974.

Your interest in consumer product safety is appreciated.

Sincerely,

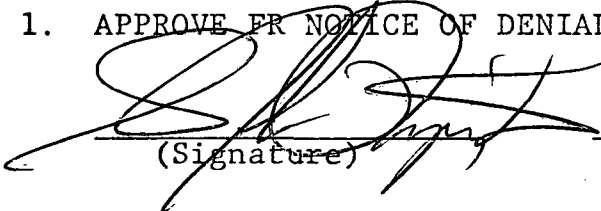
Sadye E. Dunn  
Acting Secretary

Enclosure

SUBJECT: Final resolution of petition CP 74-15 --  
flammability of tents - BALLOT VOTE DUE -  
June 16, 1978

Please indicate your vote below:

1. APPROVE FR NOTICE OF DENIAL.

 6/15/78  
(Signature) (Date)

APPROVE FR NOTICE WITH SPECIFIED CHANGES.

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\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature) (Date)

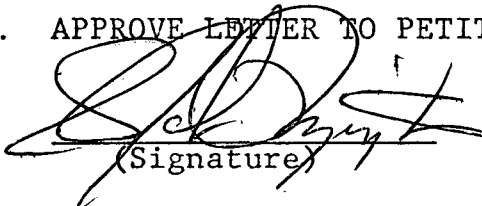
DISAPPROVE FR NOTICE.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature) (Date)

ABSTAIN.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature) (Date)

2. APPROVE LETTER TO PETITIONER.

 6/15/78  
(Signature) (Date)

SUBJECT: Final resolution of petition CP 74-15 --  
flammability of tents - BALLOT VOTE DUE -  
June 16, 1978

Please indicate your vote Below:

1. APPROVE FR NOTICE OF DENIAL.

Barbara H. Frank      6-16-78  
(Signature)                      (Date)

APPROVE FR NOTICE WITH SPECIFIED CHANGES.

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\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature)                      (Date)

DISAPPROVE FR NOTICE.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature)                      (Date)

ABSTAIN.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature)                      (Date)

2. APPROVE LETTER TO PETITIONER.

Barbara H. Frank      6-16-78  
(Signature)                      (Date)

SUBJECT: Final resolution of petition CP 74-15 --  
flammability of tents - BALLOT VOTE DUE -  
June 16, 1978

Please indicate your vote below:

1. APPROVE FR NOTICE OF DENIAL.

Luan B. King  
(Signature)

6-16-78  
(Date)

APPROVE FR NOTICE WITH SPECIFIED CHANGES.

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\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)

DISAPPROVE FR NOTICE.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)

ABSTAIN.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)

2. APPROVE LETTER TO PETITIONER.

LB King  
(Signature)

(per instructions by phone 6/17/78)  
(Date)



SUBJECT: Final resolution of petition CP 74-15 --  
flammability of tents - BALLOT VOTE DUE -  
June 16, 1978

Please indicate your vote below:

1. APPROVE FR NOTICE OF DENIAL.

R. D. Pittle  
(Signature)

6/16/78  
(Date)

APPROVE FR NOTICE WITH SPECIFIED CHANGES.

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(Signature)

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(Date)

DISAPPROVE FR NOTICE.

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(Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)

ABSTAIN.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)

2. APPROVE LETTER TO PETITIONER.

R. D. Pittle  
(Signature)

6/16/78  
(Date)

SUBJECT: Final resolution of petition CP 74-15 --  
flammability of tents - BALLOT VOTE DUE -  
June 16, 1978

Please indicate your vote below:

1. APPROVE FR NOTICE OF DENIAL.

Edith Barakdeh 6/16/78  
(Signature) (Date)

APPROVE FR NOTICE WITH SPECIFIED CHANGES.

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\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature) (Date)

DISAPPROVE FR NOTICE.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature) (Date)

ABSTAIN.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature) (Date)

2. APPROVE LETTER TO PETITIONER.

Edith Barakdeh 6/16/78  
(Signature) (Date)