



## **MECAP NEWS**

**MEDICAL EXAMINERS AND CORONERS ALERT PROJECT**

***The Medical Examiners and Coroners Alert Project (MECAP) is designed to collect timely information on fatalities involving consumer products. There are thousands of types of consumer products under the Consumer Product Safety Commission's (CPSC's) jurisdiction, and we need your help in identifying hazardous or potentially dangerous products. The CPSC collects death, injury, and incident information from many sources, including medical examiners and coroners; the nation's hospital emergency rooms; and other sources, such as news clips, the Internet, our toll-free hotline, and death certificates.***

***MECAP News is no longer sent via mail. However, you can access it at our CPSC website: <http://www.cpsc.gov/whatsnew.html#mecap>.***

***We have launched a new website, called [SaferProducts.gov](http://www.saferproducts.gov), where you can submit fatality reports and reports of harm or potential harm involving consumer products. Guidelines for completing a MECAP report are located at: <https://www.saferproducts.gov/CPSRMSPublic/Incidents/ReportIncident.aspx>.***

***There are several ways you can report a MECAP case:***

- ***ONLINE MECAP reporting at link:***  
***<https://www.saferproducts.gov/CPSRMSPublic/Incidents/ReportIncident.aspx>***
- ***Phone: 1-800-638-8095***
- ***Toll-free fax number: 301-504-0038***
- ***Email faxes via pdf to: [epdsfax@cpsc.gov](mailto:epdsfax@cpsc.gov)***
- ***Mail: U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission***  
***Medical Examiners and Coroners Alert Project (MECAP)***  
***Attn: Yolanda Nash***  
***4330 East-West Highway, Ste. 604***  
***Bethesda, MD 20814***  
***[ynash@cpsc.gov](mailto:ynash@cpsc.gov)***  
***1-800-638-8095 x7502 or 301-504-7502***

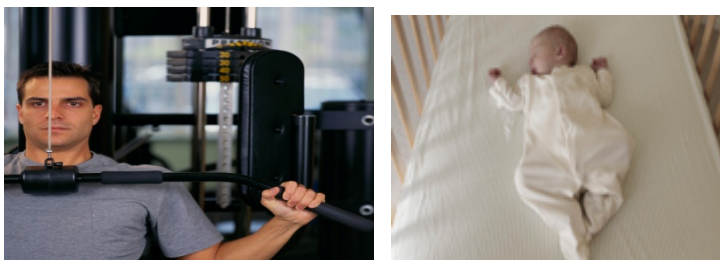
***Please contact us whenever you encounter a fatal incident that may be related to a consumer product. Every MECAP report is important to us and is included in the CPSC's incident database. All it takes is one MECAP report to alert the CPSC to a potentially hazardous product.***

***The following pages summarize a few medical examiner and coroner reports received during the months of October 2011 through September 2012. They include a brief description of the incident to illustrate the type and nature of the reported fatalities. This important information helps us to carry out our mission to protect the public from product-related injuries and deaths.***

***We appreciate your support, and please continue to report your product-related cases to us.***

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\* Cases selected for CPSC follow-up investigation



## **Asphyxiation/Suffocation**

**\*A 2-month-old male was found unresponsive by his mother. He was face down on a beanbag bed in a basement bedroom of the home. The bed that he was lying on was a beanbag bed covered by a very soft blanket. The cause of death was asphyxia by suffocation. (Kent County Medical Examiner's Office, Grand Rapids, MI)**

**A 58-year-old male decedent was lifting weights at a fitness gym. He was using a steel-encased weightlifting apparatus with safety pins for self-spotting exercises. Another member walked by and observed him unresponsive with a weightlifting bar pressing down on his anterior neck area. A gym member and an employee of the gym lifted the bar off of the decedent's neck and called 911. EMS responded to the scene and transported him to the hospital. His prognosis was poor, and his condition continued to decline. The cause of death was anoxic brain injury due to asphyxiation from weightlifting. (Travis County Medical Examiner's Office, Austin, TX)**

**A 2-month-old male decedent was found face down in a crib after being placed on his side to sleep. The crib was cluttered with numerous objects, including a pillow, blanket, and a bag of diapers. The decedent could not roll over due to items in the crib. The cause of death was suffocation due to mechanical obstruction of the nose and mouth by the bedding. (Commonwealth of Virginia, Department of Health, Office of the Chief Medical Examiner, Central District, Richmond, VA)**

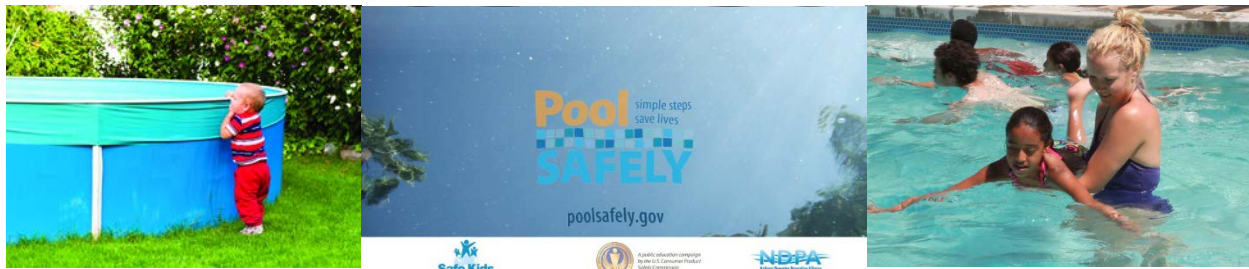
**A 9-month-old male died after he was found unresponsive in a faulty crib. The decedent fell between the mattress support and crib frame. The metal frame for the mattress was held up by four plastic straps, and one of the straps was broken. The decedent's head was stuck on the metal frame, and his face was in the mattress. The cause of death was suffocation. (Collin County Medical Examiner's Office, McKinney, TX)**



## **Carbon Monoxide Poisoning**

**\*A 48-year-old female turned on a generator and went to sleep. The victim was found deceased after the generator was left running without proper ventilation. The cause of death was carbon monoxide poisoning. (Office of the Medical Examiner, District 7 & 24, Daytona Beach, FL)**

**\*A 57-year-old male and his girlfriend were found unresponsive at home in bed. A propane tank with an attachment that turned the tank into a heater was in the bedroom. The heater reportedly was not running, but officers did not want to turn it on out of fear that it would ignite the room. The cause of death was asphyxia due to CO poisoning. (Travis County Medical Examiner's Office, Austin, TX)**



## **Submersion/Drowning**

**\*A 2-year-old male was found submerged in a bathtub. The cause of death was drowning. (Yavapai County Medical Examiner's Office, Prescott, AZ)**

**\*A 3-year-old male unknowingly gained entry to a family friend's backyard in-ground pool. He was found submerged in the deep end of the pool. Despite medical efforts, the child did not respond to treatment and was pronounced dead. The cause of death was drowning. (San Bernardino County Sheriff-Coroner Division, San Bernardino, CA)**

**\*An 18-month-old was found face down at the bottom of an above-ground pool. The child had been in the living room playing with his 3-year-old sister. The decedent's mother fell asleep and woke up when she heard the front door slam. The mother ran outside and saw the 3-year-old climbing up the pool steps to the above-ground pool. The decedent's mother asked where the decedent was, and**

the child pointed to the decedent face down in the swimming pool. Resuscitation was attempted, but the child died shortly thereafter at the hospital. The cause of death was anoxic encephalopathy, following resuscitation from cardiac arrest due to drowning. (Hillsborough County Medical Examiner Department, Tampa, FL)

A 27-year-old-male decedent was found submerged in the bathtub. The decedent had a seizure in the morning and had another prior to going to take his bath. The cause of death was asphyxia by submersion. (Connecticut Medical Examiner's Office (S-58), Farmington, CT)



## **Electrocution**

\*A 38-year-old male was electrocuted while using a staple gun to install insulation in his attic. He accidentally hit an electric wire, causing him to be electrocuted. The cause of death was electrocution. (Corpus Christi Medical Examiner's Office, Corpus Christi, TX)

\*A 14-year-old male was playing hide-and-seek with his cousin when he attempted to hide behind an electric clothes dryer and was electrocuted. His clothes were wet from playing outside, and he was electrocuted when he came in contact with the junction box. The cause of death was electrocution. (Office of the Coroner, Wilkes-Barre, PA)

A 36-year-old male was electrocuted and fell 30 feet while working on a fiberglass ladder. The decedent climbed the power pole to trip the main breaker. He wrapped tape around the handles of a pair of pliers, and while attempting to throw the breaker, the decedent was shocked and fell 30 feet, landing in the grass. (State of West Virginia, Charleston, WV)

**\*A 24-year-old male decedent was electrocuted while working on a light fixture and falling off the ladder. The cause of death was electrocution/blunt impact head trauma. (City of Philadelphia Medical Examiner's Office, Philadelphia, PA)**



## **Fire**

**\*A 79-year-old female decedent was found trapped in her powered chair with her hands on the control wand. The fire department determined that the origin of fire was a defective breaker that caused an electrical short in the panel box. The cause of death was thermal burns and smoke inhalation. (Commonwealth of Virginia, Office of the Chief Medical Examiner, Tidewater District, Norfolk, VA)**

**A 52-year-old male was found deceased at home when a passing motorist reported a house engulfed in flames. The decedent was found on the bedroom floor. The fire marshal determined that the origin of the fire was a faulty electrical breaker. (Georgia Bureau of Investigations, Decatur, GA)**

**A 68-year-old male decedent accidentally set his clothes on fire while attempting to prime a carburetor with gasoline. Sparks caught a portion of his clothing on fire. He thought he grabbed a bucket of water to extinguish the flame, but instead, it was a container of gas. He suffered third-degree burns to 33 percent Total Body Surface Area TBSA of his body. (Sacramento County Coroner's Office, Sacramento, CA)**

**An 8-year-old male died in a trailer fire. The origin of the fire was determined to be a window-mounted air conditioner. Several other occupants were able to escape, but the decedent succumbed to smoke inhalation. (Office of the Chief Medical Examiner, Roanoke, VA)**

**\*A 3-year-old male died from smoke inhalation due to a house fire. The child may have caused the fire by playing with a lighter and accidentally lighting the living**



room sofa. The cause of death was carbon monoxide intoxication due to inhalation of smoke/soot in the sofa. (Cook County Coroner's Office, Chicago, IL)

A 65-year-old male was found unresponsive by fire fighters as they were extinguishing a house fire. The decedent was pronounced dead at the scene. The house was abandoned, and candles were being used as lighting because there was no electricity. (Office of the Chief Medical, New York, NY)

An 87-year-old male was found deceased as a result of smoke residue that filled a house. A fire had burned itself out in the kitchen. The origin of the fire was in the area of the microwave in the kitchen. Damage was limited to the point of origin. There was damage and heavy smoke throughout the home. The decedent was pronounced dead at the scene with the cause of death as carbon monoxide poisoning. (Michigan Public Health Institute, Okemos, MI)



### **Tip-Over Incidents**

\*A 20-month-old female died when a large television set fell and struck her on her head and caused extensive damage. She was transported to the hospital but never was stable enough for head imaging. The cause of death was blunt force trauma to the head. (North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services, Chapel Hill, NC)

\*A 60-year-old male decedent leaned onto his dresser while getting out of the bed, and the decedent ended up pulling the television down on himself. Paramedics transported the victim to the hospital where he died. The cause of death was blunt impact head trauma. (City of Philadelphia Medical Examiner's Office, Philadelphia, PA)

A 4-year-old female was hanging on a table when a 46-inch television fell, striking the subject on the head. She was admitted to the hospital with a brain injury. The cause of death was due to crushing craniocerebral injuries due to the falling television. (Cook County Coroner's Office, Chicago, IL)



## **All-Terrain Vehicles (ATVs)**

**\*A 27-year-old male was riding on a 4-wheel ATV when he lost control down a steep trail, which caused the ATV to overturn. He was ejected, struck a log, and sustained a head injury. He died at the scene. The cause of death was blunt head trauma. (State of West Virginia, Office of the Chief Medical Examiner, Charleston, WV)**

**\*A 49-year-old male was killed when he was thrown forward off of an ATV. He hit his head on the ground and broke his neck. (Thurston County Coroner's Office, Olympia, WA)**

**\*A 14-year-old male died as a result of injuries he sustained when his 4-wheel ATV rolled over on him. The incident occurred when the victim attempted to cross a 1-foot drainage ditch. (Georgia Bureau of Investigations, Decatur, GA)**

**\*A 3-year-old male decedent was ejected from a 4-wheel ATV that he was riding on as a passenger and seated between his mother and the handlebars. They were riding on a gravel road headed uphill. The decedent grabbed the throttle of the ATV, causing the ATV to eject them. The child was severely injured and taken to a hospital, where he was pronounced dead. The cause of death was blunt force injuries. (Office of the Chief Medical Examiner, Charleston, WV)**

**\*A 50-year-old female died from internal injuries sustained when the 4-wheel ATV she was operating tumbled down a rocky slope into a lake. The decedent had been pulling branches of dead trees with the vehicle and is believed to have struck the throttle, causing a loss of control of the vehicle. (Travis County Medical Examiner's Office, Austin, TX)**



## **Fatalities Involving Other Hazards**

**A 52-year-old male was crushed by a car that fell from a faulty jack supporting the car. The decedent was working on a vehicle at home. Police officers were unable to lift the vehicle off of the victim. The Fire Department used air bags to lift the vehicle and extricate the decedent from under the vehicle. He was transported to the hospital, where he died from his injuries. The cause of death was hypoxic-ischemic encephalopathy due to compressional asphyxia caused by a car falling from a jack. (Summit County Medical Examiner's Office, Akron, OH)**

**An 83-year-old male was found deceased in his residence where temperatures exceeded 110 degrees Fahrenheit. He previously had his air conditioner and furnace repaired because they were not working properly. When the police arrived at his residence, the air conditioner was set to cool but was blowing out heat. The cause of death was complications from hyperthermia. (The State of Maryland Office of the Chief Medical Examiner, Baltimore, MD)**

**A 64-year-old male was struck by a vehicle while riding his bike. The decedent was found lying in the middle of a busy road with his damaged bike next to him. The cause of death was craniocerebral trauma. (Office of the District Medical Examiner, District 21, State of Florida, Fort Myers, FL)**