



U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission

**MECAP** news

MEDICAL EXAMINERS AND CORONERS ALERT PROJECT

April 2024

The following pages summarize a few MECAP reports received by CPSC and selected for follow-up investigation. The entries include a brief description of the incident to illustrate the type and nature of the reported fatalities. This important information helps CPSC carry out its mission to protect the public from product-related injuries and deaths.

We appreciate your support; please continue to report your product-related cases to us.

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**U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission**

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*The Commission has not reviewed or approved this report and may not reflect its views.*

**\*Cases selected for CPSC follow-up investigation**

## Asphyxiation/Suffocation

A three-month-old male was found unresponsive by his father while lying on his back propped up by a pillow while co-sleeping on his parent's bed located in the master bedroom. The victim died from pulmonary congestion because of accidental suffocation/strangulation.

A three-week-old female was found unresponsive on an adult mattress. The decedent was co-sleeping with two siblings. The 3-year-old sibling was co-sleeping with the baby, resembling the way one cuddled a stuffed animal. The cause of death was suffocation due to unsafe sleep arrangement.

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## Carbon Monoxide Poisoning

A 35-year-old male was found deceased in the back of a van at a service station parking lot. The decedent was found alongside a running generator, used to power a portable heater and rice cooker. The cause of death was carbon monoxide inhalation due to improper use of the gas generator within an enclosed space.

A 46-year-old female was discovered deceased inside her residence, along with her husband and dog. First Responders detected high levels of carbon monoxide (CO) at 600 PPM within the home. A generator was identified as the source of the CO. the cause of death was determined to be carbon monoxide poisoning.

A 54-year-old male was found deceased inside the shed behind his house. It was determined that the victim had been running a gasoline-powered portable generator inside the shed, with an extension cord providing power to electronics. The cause of death was determined to be carbon monoxide toxicity.

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## Fire

A 79-year-old died while cooking outside on the grill at her home when her shirt caught fire. The decedent was using a grill with a propane tank. Despite her husband's efforts to extinguish the flames, she suffered thermal burns to her face, neck, arms, hands, and torso. She was transported to the hospital where her condition continued to decline until her passing. The cause of death was thermal burns.

A 28-year-old male died in a house fire caused by a candle. The open flame ignited the bed sheets, nightstand table, and bed mattress. Despite all rescue efforts, the decedent was pronounced dead at the hospital. The cause of death was carbon monoxide poisoning due to smoke inhalation.

A 68-year-old female was cooking in the kitchen when cooking grease ignited a nearby

plastic grocery bag. The fire spread to the decedents' clothing, resulting in burns to 38% of her body, with severe legs injuries. The cause of death was complications of thermal injuries, clothing fire while cooking.

\*A 45-year-old-male died from carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning inside his apartment bedroom. The decedent was unconscious when a fire started from overloaded extension cords powering many TV monitors. The decedent succumbed to excessive alcohol consumption and exposure to CO from the fire. Fire responders transported him to a local hospital where he was pronounced dead. The cause of death was CO poisoning.

An 88-year-old female died from burns caused by a toaster oven. She was discovered during a welfare check, incoherent with third-degree thermal burn injuries to 45% of her body. A toaster oven was found in the "on" position with burned toast nearby. The decedent's pajamas ignited from the toaster oven. She was transported to the hospital via air ambulance. The cause of death was thermal burn injury shock due to face, neck, torso, and right arm burns.

## Submersion

\*A 4-year-old male was found face down in 2.5 feet of water in a ground level hot tub jacuzzi. The grandparent returned from the bathroom and discovered the decedent submerged in the jacuzzi. Fire rescue arrived and performed CPR, but he remained unresponsive. The cause of death was drowning.

\*A 2-year-old male drowned in a pool. The decedent was placed inside of a playpen in the rear screened-in patio of the residence. During a brief period of unattended, he exited the playpen, walked out of an unlocked and ajar rear patio door, and entered the backyard pool. Later he was found by his grandmother, submerged. Fire Rescue responded and transported the decedent to hospital where he was pronounced dead in the emergency room. The cause of death was drowning.

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## ATV/UTV

A 25-year-old male died while driving an ATV. The decedent lost control of the vehicle, jumped the curb, and struck a tree, ejecting him onto the street, where he struck his head on impact. He was not wearing a helmet. Fire Rescue transported him to the hospital, where he was admitted for treatment. His condition declined, and he was pronounced dead in the emergency room. The cause of death was subdural hematoma and subarachnoid hemorrhage.

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## Other Hazards

A 55-year-old female died while hanging Christmas lights at her residence. The decedent was descending the ladder as she lost her footing and fell to the ground, hitting her head. She was transported to the hospital and diagnosed with traumatic subdural hematoma. Despite all efforts, her health continued to decline, and she was pronounced dead. The cause of death was blunt head trauma.



The Medical Examiners and Coroners Alert Project (MECAP) is designed to collect timely information on fatalities associated with consumer products. There are thousands of consumer products under the Consumer Product Safety Commission's (CPSC's) jurisdiction, and the Commission staff needs your help in identifying potentially hazardous products or hazard patterns that contribute to deaths of consumers.

Medical examiners and coroners should submit fatality reports and reports of harm or potential harm involving consumer products to CPSC. Guidelines for completing and submitting a MECAP report are located at [saferproducts.gov/IncidentReporting](https://www.saferproducts.gov/IncidentReporting)

There are several ways you can report a MECAP case:

- ONLINE MECAP reporting at Internet portal [saferproducts.gov](https://saferproducts.gov)
- Phone: 1-800-638-8095
- Fax number: 301-504-0038
- E-mail: [mecaps@cpsc.gov](mailto:mecaps@cpsc.gov)
- Postal Mail:  
U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission  
Medical Examiners and Coroners Alert Project (MECAP)  
Attn: Yolanda Nash  
4330 East-West Highway  
Bethesda, MD 20814

Please contact CPSC to report fatalities that are associated with a consumer product. Every MECAP report is important to CPSC investigators and will be included in the CPSC's incident database. The MECAP reports help CPSC staff identify longstanding, hidden, and emerging product safety hazards. All it takes is one MECAP report to alert the CPSC to a potentially hazardous product. The data is crucial to reducing the risk of death and injury to consumers.

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