



U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission

# MECAP<sup>news</sup>

MEDICAL EXAMINERS AND CORONERS ALERT PROJECT



April 2022

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Asphyxia/Suffocation

Carbon Monoxide

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Submersion

Fire

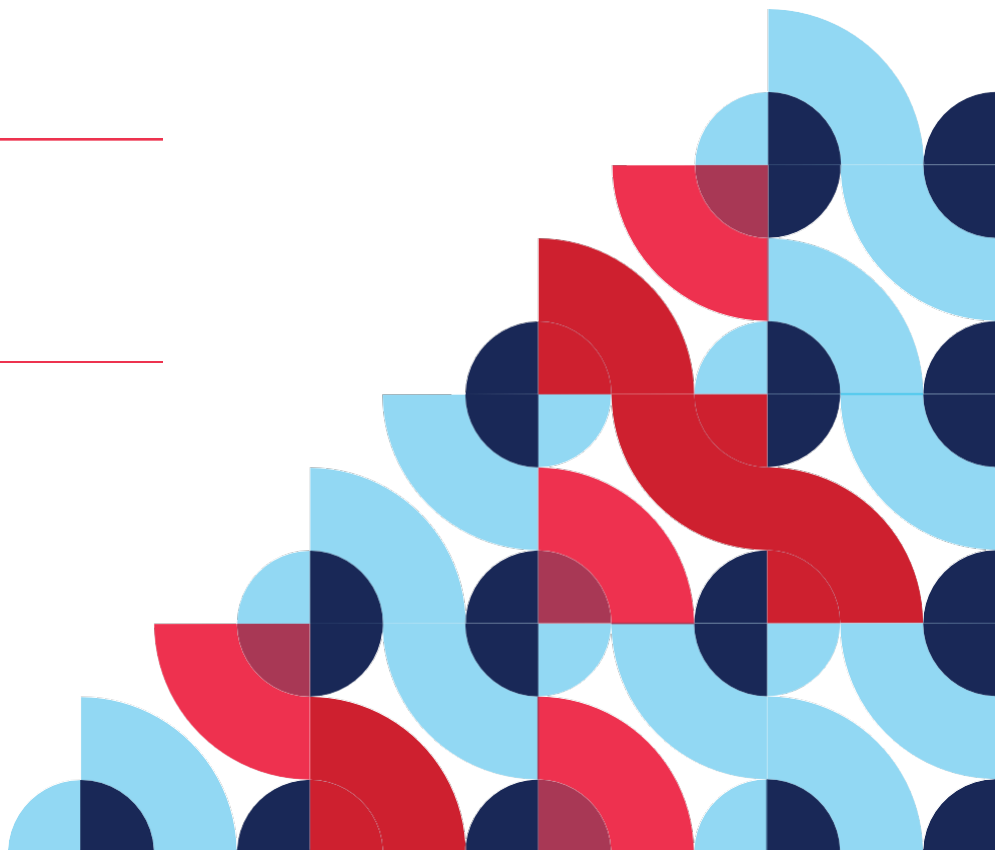
All-Terrain Vehicles (ATVs)

Electrocution

Fatalities Involving Other Hazards

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The following pages summarize a few MECAP reports received by CPSC and selected for follow-up investigations. 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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*This report has not been reviewed or approved by the Commission and may not reflect its views.*

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

#### **Asphyxiation/Suffocation**

\*A mother found her 2-week-old male infant unresponsive and covered with a baby blanket. The decedent was placed to sleep on his back on an adult-size bed. The mother was beside the decedent and awoke to find the decedent unresponsive facedown and covered with a baby blanket. Fire Rescue transported the decedent to a local medical facility, where he was pronounced dead. The cause of death was sudden unexplained death in the setting of co-sleeping.

\*A 6-month-old male was found unresponsive on a queen-sized bed with a soft mattress. The decedent was co-sleeping with his parents and 3-year-old brother. The bed contained five adult

pillows, an extra-large stuffed animal, queen-size comforter, adult blanket, and sheets. The cause of death was suffocation.

#### **Carbon Monoxide Poisoning**

\*A 73-year-old male was found unresponsive in bed. The Fire Department found a gas generator running inside the house with high levels of carbon monoxide detected. The generator was in the hallway by the door. The decedent was pronounced dead at the scene. The cause of death was carbon monoxide poisoning.

\*A 60-year-old male died of carbon monoxide intoxication after he used a portable generator in the basement of his home. The decedent was using the

portable generator to supply power to the air-conditioner in his bedroom. Fire officials found CO levels more than 600PPM.

\*An 11-year-old female died from exposure to high levels of carbon monoxide, which poisoned her. The decedent and her mother slept in the same bedroom. The mother woke up feeling nauseous and dizzy. The mother attempted to wake the decedent and found her unresponsive in bed and lying in a prone position. Fire and Rescue arrived and found high levels of carbon monoxide in the bedroom. The exhaust on top of the hot water tank was disconnected and dislodged in two separate places. The decedent was pronounced dead on the scene. The cause of death

was carbon monoxide poisoning.

### Submersion

\*A 1-year-old male died from drowning in an in-ground swimming pool. The family was hosting a pool party for friends. Everyone had been swimming and the children had been using life vests. Everybody went inside to eat, including the decedent. Someone noticed the decedent missing after an unknown amount of time. They discovered the sliding glass door was left open, and the pool gate was not closed securely. The decedent was found submerged in the pool. The cause of death was anoxic encephalopathy.

\*A 3-year-old female was found submerged and unresponsive at the bottom of an in-ground swimming pool. The decedent had been wearing a flotation device that was removed before she was retrieved from the pool. Emergency personnel were called and transported the decedent to a medical facility where she was pronounced dead. The cause of death was drowning.

### Fire

A 79-year-old female died from injuries sustained in a house fire. The decedent's spouse was cooking on the stove and accidentally started a fire. The decedent was incapacitated by health conditions diagnosed before the fire. She was airlifted to a nearby hospital and admitted with multiple burns and grade-three inhalation injury. The cause of death was inhalation burns and carbon monoxide toxicity.

\*A 79-year-old male died when his clothing caught fire. The decedent was at home when he used a lighter and ignited a piece of gauze, and his flannel jacket caught fire. Fire and Rescue arrived at the scene and found him with thermal burns over 17 percent of his body. The decedent was pronounced dead at the hospital.

### ATV/UTV

A 70-year-old male was killed while riding an ATV. The non-helmeted decedent collided with the rear of another ATV, causing him to be ejected from the ATV and fall onto the asphalt roadway. The cause of death was blunt impact head injury.

### Electrocution

\*A 67-year-old male died from electrocution from contact with a wood-pellet

fueled outdoor grill. The grill was plugged in on an outdoor patio. The decedent attempted to light the grill in the rain with an electric igniter and was shocked. He grabbed the handle and the grill fell on him. Bystanders unplugged the grill and removed it from the decedent. The cause of death was low-voltage electrocution.

A 19-year-old male died from electrocution when he contacted a 120-volt string of lights on a metal fence. The decedent was at a friend's house using their swimming pool. The decedent exited the pool and attempted to climb a section of the fence near the pool that had lights strung on them. When he got to the top of the fence, he was electrocuted and fell to the ground on the other side of the fence. He was taken to the hospital and diagnosed with an anoxic brain injury. The decedent remained in hospice where he died a couple weeks later. The cause of death was anoxic encephalopathy, cardiac arrest, ventricular fibrillation electrocution.

## **Fatalities Involving Other Hazards**

A 52-year-old female was riding on a dirt bike with her boyfriend when they lost control and tipped over on the roadway. The decedent suffered multiple head and neck injuries. She was airlifted to a medical center and diagnosed with an orbital fracture and subdural hematoma. The decedent's condition deteriorated, and she was pronounced at the hospital. The cause of death was blunt Injuries with orbital fracture and subdural hematoma.





The Medical Examiners and Coroners Alert Project (MECAP) is designed to collect timely information on fatalities associated with consumer products. There are thousands of types 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: <https://www.saferproducts.gov/CPSRMSPublic/Incidents/ReportIncident.aspx>

There are several ways you can report a MECAP case:

- ONLINE MECAP reporting at Internet portal  
SaferProducts.gov: <https://www.saferproducts.gov/CPSRMSPublic/Incidents/ReportIncident.aspx>
- Phone: 1-800-638-8095

- Fax number: 301-504-0038
- E-mail to: [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, Ste. 510  
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1-800-638-8095 x7502 or 301-504-7502

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