



U.S. CONSUMER PRODUCT SAFETY COMMISSION
ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND 20850

Arthur Lee
Electrical Engineer
Division of Electrical Engineering
Directorate for Engineering Sciences

Tel: (301) 987-2008
Email: alee@cpsc.gov

August 16, 2021

Paul Loret
Project Manager, UL 217 Smoke Detectors and Alarms and
UL 2034, Carbon Monoxide Alarms and Gas Detectors
Paul.E.Lloret@ul.org
UL LLC
333 Pfingsten Road
Northbrook, IL 60062

Dear Mr. Loret:

This letter presents an update on the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (“CPSC”) staff’s efforts on the Smoke and Carbon Monoxide (CO) Alarm (SCOA) Survey Project.¹

The goal of the survey is to provide a current national estimate on the implementation and operability of smoke alarms and carbon monoxide alarms using direct observation. The survey is collecting data on the number and types of smoke and CO alarms installed in U.S. households, the proportion of working versus non-working smoke and CO alarms, the characteristics of residences and residents, perceptions of residents related to the cause of “false” alarms, or causes of faulty alarms, consumer hazard awareness, and consumer behavior related to alarm use and smoke and CO hazards. CPSC contracted with EurekaFacts to design and execute the survey. The proposed information collection was approved by OMB under Control No. 3041-0180, which will expire on October 31, 2021 (renewal is in process).

EurekaFacts launched the survey in 2019, following the same methodology as the 1992 survey, as published in the 1994 report, *Consumer Product Safety Commission Smoke Detector Operability Survey Report on Findings*. In fall 2019, due to low response rates, the recruitment effort was redesigned extensively, implementing a random door-to-door knocking sample methodology.

Under the new procedure, field teams first distribute door hangers as a pre-notification that researchers will be knocking on doors asking for participation in a survey. The field teams provide households with a distinctive piece of literature with vital information about the study and sources to seek out more information. A map of the tract where the door hangers were left provides field interviewers the path to recruit from those households a few days later.

A pilot for this new methodology was fielded in the Washington, D.C., area in early 2020, to evaluate whether the new methodology will improve response rate. This area was selected for the pilot study because it is near the survey contractor’s office and the contractor was able to monitor and efficiently execute the new trial methodology. The successful pilot program with the new methodology in the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area ended in early March 2020. EurekaFacts compiled the results of the pilot survey in a report that is posted

¹ The views expressed in this letter are those of the CPSC staff, and they have not been reviewed or approved by, and may not necessarily reflect the views of, the Commission.

on the CPSC website.² However, COVID-19 pandemic lockdown halted the survey before the new methodology could be implemented nationally. EurekaFacts resumed the survey in April 2021, in multiple metropolitan areas, to complete the study within the contracted periods, no later than fall 2022.

On July 23, 2021, the Commission issued a notice seeking comment on the proposed extension of approval for the information collection (86 Fed. Reg. 39006).³ The comment period ends on September 21, 2021, and the CPSC will consider all comments before requesting extension of approval of the collection of information from OMB.

Thank you for the opportunity to update UL on this important effort. Please feel free to share this information with the STP 217 and 2034 members. We look forward to participating in additional discussions when the final report is published in 2023.

Sincerely,



Arthur Lee
Electrical Engineer
Directorate for Engineering Sciences

Cc: Jaqueline Campbell, Voluntary Standards Coordinator; Diane Haithcock, STP Chairs for UL 217 Smoke Detectors and Alarms and UL 2034 Carbon Monoxide Alarms and Gas Detectors

² The direct link [CPSC-Survey-Revised-DiagnosticReport_11_18_20206b6.pdf](https://www.cpsc.gov/Regulations-Laws--Standards/Voluntary-Standards/Topics/Smoke-Alarms) or the report is listed under our smoke alarm or voluntary standards page <https://www.cpsc.gov/Regulations-Laws--Standards/Voluntary-Standards/Topics/Smoke-Alarms>

³ [Federal Register :: Agency Information Collection Activities; Proposed Collection; Comment Request; Survey on Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarms](https://www.federalregister.gov/agencies/cpsc/2021/07/23/2021-14441)