



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.

You can submit fatality reports and reports of harm or potential harm involving consumer products to our website called: www.SaferProducts.gov. 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
- Fax number: 1-301-504-0038
- E-mail faxes via pdf to: 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. 510
Bethesda, MD 20814

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. Raising awareness of longstanding, hidden, and emerging product safety hazards is crucial to empowering consumers and reducing the risk of death and injury.

The following pages summarize a few medical examiner and coroner reports received during the period October 2012 through February 2014. The entries 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 20-month-old male was found unresponsive at an in-home licensed daycare. He was wedged between a wall and child security gate in the basement of the residence. The decedent was transported to a hospital where he was pronounced dead. The cause of death was complications of mechanical asphyxia.

*A 1-year-old male decedent was found in a bedroom unresponsive with the lid of a toy box on his neck. He crawled into the bedroom and after a few minutes, the parents discovered the child entrapped between the side edge of a “wooden trunk” and its lid. His head was inside the toy box with the toy box lid resting on the back of his neck. The decedent was air-lifted to a major hospital where the child died. The cause of death was hypoxic ischemic encephalopathy-compression of neck. Entrapment of head/neck in a wooden trunk used as a toy box.

A 5-week-old male was found deceased in the bed while co-sleeping with his parents. He was placed in a bed with three pillows, a comforter, and sheets. The infant’s cause of death was asphyxia while co-sleeping.

A 7-month-old female decedent accidentally inhaled a balloon containing water. Fire-Rescue arrived on the scene to remove the balloon from the victim’s airway and transported the victim to a local medical facility. She was placed in pediatric intensive care unit where she was diagnosed with severe anoxic brain injury. Life support was withdrawn, and the victim died.

A 4-year-old male decedent accidentally swallowed a battery (button). The cause of death was foreign body ingestion due to swallowed battery button.

*A 5-month-old female was found between the adult-size bed and wall. The decedent was found with her head down and feet up. Multiple pillows were found pushed down between the mattress and wall. Fire-Rescue pronounced the infant dead at the scene. The cause of death is positional asphyxiation.

Carbon Monoxide Poisoning

*A 53-year-old male was found deceased in his travel trailer from exhaust fumes from a defective propane heater. The decedent, three dogs, and a cat were all found deceased in the trailer. The cause of death is chemical asphyxiation due to carbon monoxide poisoning.

*A 61-year-old male was found dead in his home. He died at the scene and toxicology results revealed a CO level of 49%. A CO reading was taken at the house and was 80ppm. A CO detector was in the home with new batteries but was still non-functioning. The source of the CO was an improperly installed furnace.

Submersion/Drowning

A 9-month-old male was found in a small collapsible pool in the back yard. Despite medical efforts to revive him, the child was pronounced dead at the hospital. The cause of death was drowning.

*A 2-year, 6-month-old male was found submerged underwater in a swimming pool by his grandfather. He was left unattended for 5 to 15 minutes. Paramedics responded and transported the decedent to the hospital where he was pronounced a few days later. The cause of death was anoxic brain injury secondary to drowning.

Fires

*A 54-year-old female died in a house fire that was caused by a defective electrical outlet. The decedent went back into the home to get her three grandchildren and was overcome by smoke. The three grandchildren also died in the fire. The cause of death was inhalation of combustion products; CO Poison – thermal burns 100 percent.

*A 60-year-old male decedent died in a house fire. The fire was caused by faulty electrical coffee pot which was left on in the kitchen. The decedent awoken from the smoke detector alarm. He tried to get out of the house but was overcome by smoke. The cause of death was 2nd and 3rd degree burn to 60% of his body.

*A 54-year-old man died in a house fire that started in the back bedroom. The Fire Marshal suspected that the electrical outlet was the cause of the fire. Toxicology results revealed that the victim was intoxicated (.14 ethanol) and that he died from carbon monoxide poisoning (greater than 60% saturation).

Tip-Over Incidents

*A 9-month-old male died from a skull fracture due to a blunt impact to the head. A television set was sitting on a nightstand. The toddler pulled himself up on the night stand and the television tipped over on top of him. He died two days later.

*A 3-year-old male was found hanging from a bedpost in a bedroom at home. The boy tried to climb onto the nightstand to reach the television on the dresser, and in doing so, his clothing got caught on the bedpost and knocked over the nightstand. His 11-year-old sister walked into the bedroom and found him hanging. She screamed for her mother to come. He was transported by ambulance to a hospital where he was pronounced dead.

All-Terrain Vehicles (ATVs)

*A 64-year-old male died from crushing chest injuries when his 4-wheel ATV fell from a 14-foot drop. He was not wearing a helmet. The ATV went down in a nose dive with the deceased falling in front of the ATV. He impacted the ground first and the 750-pound ATV landed on top of him. Paramedics arrived and resuscitation efforts were discontinued when there were no signs of life.

*A 9-year-old male was riding a 4-wheel ATV on a hillside, and the ATV overturned and landed on top of him. The cause of death was crushing injuries.

*A 52-year-old female was the lone operator of an ATV. She drove up to a steep driveway, the ATV had flipped, and she was found deceased in a supine position nearby. The police reports that she was going around a corner and she hit a bump, losing control. She was wearing a helmet. The accident occurred on a gravel driveway.

Fatalities Involving Other Hazards

A 58-year-old male was at home standing on scaffolding when the scaffolding gave way. The decedent fell, and broken pieces of the scaffolding fell on top of him. Emergency rescue transported the decedent to the hospital where he was pronounced dead. The cause of death was multiple injuries due to blunt force trauma.