



## **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](http://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](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. 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 June 2014 through September 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 4-month-old male decedent was found unresponsive with a plastic-covered sport coat over his head and upper body. The infant was placed in his crib for a nap. The crib was located in a walk-in closet in his parent's bedroom. He was pronounced dead at the scene. The cause of death was asphyxia.

\*A 3-year-old male was found deceased while co-sleeping with his mother on an inflatable air mattress. The decedent was lying supine between the wall and the inflatable mattress. His arms were outstretched and raised over his head. The inflatable mattress was partially covering the decedent on his eyelids. The mother lay down next to the child. When she awoke, she found the child under her unresponsive and not breathing with blood coming out of his mouth. The cause of death was asphyxia.

\*A 3-month-old male died when he became entrapped in a playpen. The decedent was lying beside his twin. He became wedged between the mesh side and the upper mattress pad and died. The parents were using a 2003 model playpen and installed two pads in the playpen. The cause of death was suffocation.

A 2-year-old male decedent was found by his parents hanging from a pull cord for a window blind in their motor home. The cause of death was suffocation.

\*A 2-year-old female decedent was found unresponsive in her parent's bedroom sitting in a secured car seat. The straps of the car seat were twisted around her neck. She was transported to a local hospital where she died a few days later. The cause of death was positional asphyxia.

A 5-month-old female decedent was placed on a day bed with a pillow and blanket in the bed. She was found unresponsive with the blanket and bedding tangled around her head and chest area. The cause of death was asphyxia.

### Carbon Monoxide Poisoning

A 60-year-old male was found deceased by his wife on the floor in the garage. The decedent was running a generator in a closed garage near the door that opens into the house. The cause of death was carbon monoxide intoxication.

\*A 76-year-old male died in his home due to carbon monoxide poisoning. The furnace exhaust vent pipe became disconnected in the basement causing fumes to be exhausted into the residence.

\*A 36-year-old male was found unresponsive in a van with a gas generator running in the van. The generator was used outside of the van to power Christmas lights where the decedent was working as a Christmas tree vendor. When the site closed down, he took the generator inside the van to keep himself warm. He was pronounced dead at the scene. The cause of death was carbon monoxide poisoning.

### Submersion/Drowning

\*A two-year-old male drowned in a backyard residential in-ground swimming pool. The decedent was left unattended by his grandfather who fell asleep. He was found in the neighbor's yard face down underneath the plastic bubble cover of the swimming pool. Despite resuscitative efforts, the decedent was pronounced deceased at the hospital. The cause of death was drowning.

A 3-year-old male died while swimming in an apartment complex in-ground swimming pool. He was with a group of children when he moved into an area of the pool that dropped off suddenly over the deepest end of the pool. The decedent's mother noticed the child go underwater. She went into the pool and pulled him out and started resuscitation. He was transported to the hospital where he did not regain consciousness. The cause of death was drowning.

A 3-year-old male was found unresponsive by his parents floating face up in a pool. The back door was left unlocked by the decedent's older sibling and he reportedly wandered out the door. The child was found in an above-ground pool that was connected to the deck of the house. Despite resuscitative efforts, the child died eight days later in the hospital. The cause of death was drowning.

## Fires

Three residents died from a house fire, a 3-year-old male, a 7-year-old male, and a 21-year-old female. The fire ignited as a result of failure of a printer and/or power strip. The cause of death for all three decedents is anoxia from smoke and carbon monoxide poisoning.

\*A 61-year-old male died after his clothing caught on fire after he fell asleep on his living room couch with a lit cigarette. The decedent ran into the bathroom and also caught the shower curtain on fire. He was discovered by neighbors who responded to his screams and the sound of a smoke alarm. The cause of death was acute myocardial infarction and burns over 25% of his total body surface.

\*A 42-year-old female and a 5-year-old female died in a house fire. The origin of the fire was the child playing with a cigarette lighter and lighting a clothes hamper on fire. The 5-year old decedent was found lying on the bedroom floor underneath the bed in the house. The cause of death was carbon monoxide intoxication.

A 59-year-old male died in a house fire reportedly caused by a wood stove igniting the wooden panel on the walls. The cause of death is carbon monoxide poisoning and thermal burns.

## Tip-Over Incidents

A 2-year-old female was crushed by a 36-inch television that fell on her. The TV was resting on a pedestal stand approximately two feet from the floor. The TV was larger than the flat surface of the pedestal stand and overhung the edges. The decedent's mother and aunt found her lying on the floor with the TV lying on top of the subject's chest, abdomen, and legs. Emergency Rescue transported her to the hospital where she was pronounced dead. The cause of death is hemopericardium transmural tear of the left cardiac ventricle.

\*A 94-year-old male died from blunt trauma to the head when he stumbled out of bed in the middle of the night. He grabbed the wall unit cabinet containing a television to break his fall. The decedent pulled the cabinet and television over onto himself. He died two weeks later from blunt force trauma to the head.

\*An 11-month-old male attempted to pull himself up using a three legged table with a television on it. The television and table tipped over onto the decedent causing blunt force trauma to the head.

## All-Terrain Vehicles (ATVs)

A 6-year-old male died while driving a four-wheel ATV. The decedent attempted to make a left turn beside a field sprayer when the back tire of the ATV came in contact with the sprayer causing the ATV to flip over. The decedent was pinned under the ATV and sustained head injuries. The cause of death was blunt force head injuries.

\*A 13-year-old male died while driving a four-wheel ATV at state park sand dunes. The decedent lost control, and the ATV rolled end-over-end, landing on his head and neck. He was wearing a helmet. Despite EMS efforts,

the decedent never regained consciousness. The cause of death was neck fracture and multiple abrasions.

\*A 25-year-old male died while riding a four-wheel ATV. He was wearing a full-faced helmet and goggles with a chin strap. The ATV rolled over, and the decedent was thrown on a dirt path in the field. He sustained an open fracture to the posterior of the skull. The decedent died on the scene. The cause of death was open skull fracture posterior aspect of the skull.

A 20-year-old male decedent was riding an ATV on a trail when a deer ran into his path. The decedent was ejected from the ATV and suffered a traumatic brain injury. He was transported to a local hospital where he died. The cause of death was traumatic brain injury sustained from the ATV accident.

A 41-year-old female was riding a four-wheel ATV on a paved private road when her ATV was struck from behind by another four-wheel ATV. The decedent was not wearing any protective gear. EMS initiated CPR before pronouncing the decedent dead. The cause of death was blunt head and neck trunk trauma.

### Fatalities Involving Other Hazards

A 35-year-old male decedent was watching the Superbowl football game, and he became agitated with his team losing. He punched a glass window sustaining a vascular injury to his right upper extremity. He lost a significant amount of blood. Paramedics transported him to a hospital where he was pronounced dead.

The cause of death was incised wound of the right arm with exsanguination.

A 15-year-old male decedent was at football practice when he suffered a concussion blunt head trauma. He died from internal injuries to the head. The cause of death was acute chronic subdural hematoma.

A 29-year-old male died from a snow skiing accident. The decedent was skiing for the first time with his wife, where he was traveling on the edge of the path that was icier than the main slope. He was estimated to be traveling approximately 40 mph when he fell forward and hit his head. The cause of death was blunt force injuries to the head and neck.

A 70-year-old male died while operating a riding lawnmower. The decedent attempted to drive under a partially opened garage door. He reached out to push the button for the garage door to close. The door came down on the decedent pinning him between the bottom of the closing garage door and riding lawn mower. The cause of death was blunt force injuries of the chest and compressional asphyxia.

A 51-year-old male was critically injured by a firework device that exploded in his hand. The victim found the device while doing yardwork in his yard. He picked up the device to inspect it when it exploded. The victim sustained an amputation to his fingers, and laceration to the palm of his hand. He was in critical condition due to prior medical conditions aggravated by the explosion.