U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission

Reporting Guidelines for the Medical Examiners and Coroners Alert Project - MECAP

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The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission’s mission is protecting the public against unreasonable risks of injury from consumer products through education, safety standards activities, regulation, and enforcement.
CPSC’S Need for Death/Injury/Incident Data

- Set priorities
- Support ban or recall of hazardous products
- Convince industry and others of need for product standard
- Support development of product standards
- Evaluate the effectiveness of product standards
- Develop information and education campaigns to raise public awareness of product safety
Sources of Data

1. National Electronic Injury Surveillance System
2. Internet Complaints – SaferProducts.gov
3. Hotline Calls
4. News Clips
5. Death Certificates
6. MECAP (Medical Examiners and Coroners Alert Project)
7. Compliance Reports
8. Federal/State Agency Referrals
9. Other Incident Reports
Medical Examiners and Coroners Alert Project abbreviation is MECAP. It is pronounced as “MEE-CAP.”
WHAT IS MECAP?

- MECAP is a program designed to collect timely reports from medical examiners and coroners about fatalities involving a consumer product.
- CPSC staff uses these reports to identify deaths related to the use of a hazardous product.
- CPSC staff reviews and screens each fatality report.
MEDICAL EXAMINERS AND CORONERS, WE NEED YOUR HELP!

- We have found that medical examiners and coroners provide the most timely death information.
Medical Examiners and Coroners
Partnering with CPSC

We can make a difference!
WHO PARTICIPATES?
Any medical examiner or coroner can participate in the MECAP Project.

Reporting unsafe products is easy!
WHY IS MECAP SO IMPORTANT?

MECAP is the most valuable reporting source that we have for collecting fatality reports. 
1. Witness memories of details are fresh. 
2. Products involved may still be intact and available for testing. 
3. Prevention strategies can be implemented more quickly.
WHY IS MECAP SO IMPORTANT (cont’d)?

- Additionally, the faster an incident is reported, the faster we can act to remove hazardous products from the marketplace. This translates into injuries prevented and lives saved.
Accidental Death
Is a leading cause of death in the nation, especially for those under 35.
Each year, there are more than 37,200 accidental deaths and more than 38 million injuries related to consumer products.
What does participation involve? When should you file a report? How do you file reports?
- The simple act of filing a report may save lives.
COLLECT JUST THE FACTS

- Date of incident
- Cause of death
- Type of consumer product involved
- Location of the incident
- Description of the incident scenario
- Coroner or Medical Examiner case number
- Availability of the product for inspection
- Contact information for any state or local officials (e.g., police, fire department) who investigated the incident
- Your name, address, and phone number
Details, Details, Details!

- Our main focus is to receive as much detail as possible about the incident.
- We are looking for any case involving an accidental death associated with a consumer product under the CPSC’s jurisdiction.
- We are very interested in products that are defective or hazardous.
WHAT IS A PRODUCT?

- A consumer product is any article produced or distributed for use by a consumer in or around a home, school, or recreational area.
Examples of Product-Related Deaths Include

- Deaths related to poisonings (ingestions) and chemical burns to children under 5 associated with drugs, medications, or any other substance;
- Sports or recreational activities
- Stairs, ramps, floors or walls wherever available for use by consumers;
- Infant or nursery equipment
- Toys and games
- Burns or anoxia, which results from fires of fabrics, household goods and home heating and cooling equipment.
EXAMPLES OF SPECIAL STUDIES

- ATVs
- ROVs
- UTVs

- Electrocutions

- Tip-over incidents
  - Televisions
  - Furniture
  - Appliances

- CO Poisoning
- Portable Generators

- Novelty Lighters

- Safety Packaging (PPPA)

- Powered Equipment

- Flammability
  - Fires
  - Upholstered Furniture
  - Candles
  - Mattresses & Bedding

- Safe Sleep

- Submersions
  - Pool & Spa
  - At-home
- Drain Entrapments

- Toys
If in doubt,

...please report the case,

and we will make the final determination of whether the case is in scope.
REPORTING OPTIONS

Reports of product-related deaths can be submitted in several ways:

- PHONE – 1-800-638-8095
- FAX – 301-504-0038
- INTERNET – http://www.saferproducts.gov
- E-mail (Excel, MS-Access, Scanned Reports, or Electronic Files of Database)
SaferProducts.gov – Website

CPSC main site (www.cpsc.gov)
MEDICAL EXAMINER’S/CORONER’S REPORTING FORM

To report a case by telephone, call (toll free) 1-800-638-8095. Say “THIS IS A MECAP REPORT.” You will then be placed in contact with the MECAP Project Manager for your state, who will ask for the information noted below, or send by e-mail to ynash@cpsc.gov, fax to 1-800-809-0924, or file a report at www.saferproducts.gov.

Date of accident __________________________ Date of Death __________________________

Location of Accident: City __________ State __________

Type of consumer product involved

Manufacturer, Model, Brand name, and Serial No. of product __________________________

Is product available for examination? _____ Yes _____ No. If Yes, where? __________________________

Cause of Death: __________________________

Location of Death: City __________ State __________

Brief description of accident sequence: (Please include the AGE and SEX of the VICTIM(S).)

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Contact Information: Please include the name, address and telephone number of any state/local personnel who investigated the accident.

Medical Examiner’s/Coroner’s Case No. ________________ Telephone No. ________________

Reporter’s Name __________________________ Date Reported __________________________

Reporter’s Off. (incl. City, county, & state) __________________________

Medical Examiner’s/Coroner’s Name __________________________

For processing at CPSC: Report received by __________________________

Chief Med. Exam. Rpt () Copy for MECAP News ()

Regular MECAP () Document No. __________________________
WHAT CPSC CAN DO FOR YOU?

1. We can provide data on cases of hazards or special interest to you and your community.

2. We can provide press releases/other materials to help warn area consumers of hazards.

3. We can pay your office for providing product-related death information to CPSC.
BENEFITS OF MECAP SUBSCRIPTION

1. Educates and alerts the public
2. Provides the opportunity to investigate the incident
3. Facilitates networking with colleagues on shared challenges.
4. Offers greater opportunity to remove hazardous products from the marketplace.
5. Provides multiple reporting options, including possibility for payment.
6. Free subscription.
Working together, we can all make a difference in reducing the unreasonable risk of injury and deaths from consumer products.
You can help prevent injuries and save lives by participating in MECAP

... and help the CPSC make consumer products safer for everyone.
Please join us in this worthwhile endeavor

Together, we can help America become a marketplace where consumer products are reasonably free from defects and hidden hazards.
CPSC Stands For Safety

• Websites:
  www.cpsc.gov
  www.saferproducts.gov
  www.recalls.gov

• Office of Communications
• Toll-free hotline 1-800-638-CPSC (1-800-638-2772)
• National Injury Information Clearinghouse
• Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)
• Additional links
  www.cpsc.gov/library/data.html - Hazard Analysis reports for a variety of hazards
  http://www.youtube.com/uscpsc - CPSC YouTube Channel
  https://twitter.com/USCPSC - Twitter
  http://www.flickr.com/photos/uscpsc - view photos of unsafe products
  http://www.cpsc.gov/cgi-bin/javascripts/widgetrss.html - widget that can be added to your website
  http://www.cpsc.gov/onsafety/category/safety-blogs/ - CPSC safety blog
QUESTIONS?

- YOLANDA NASH
- ynash@cpsc.gov
- 1-800-638-8095 ext. 7502
- www.saferproducts.gov
WE COULD NOT DO THIS WITHOUT YOUR HELP!

Thank You!