



U.S. CONSUMER PRODUCT SAFETY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20207

CPSC/OFFICE OF
THE SECRETARY

1998 DEC 21 A 11: 12

CPSA 6 (b)(1) Cleared
12/21/98
No Mfrs/PrvtLbrs of
Products Identified
Excepted by _____
Firms Notified,
Comments Processed.

Ms. Allison Rand, MPH, MSW
Project Manager
American Academy of Pediatrics
Division of Child & Adolescent Health
141 Northwest Point Boulevard
P.O. Box 927
Elk Grove Village, Illinois 60009-0927

Re: Liaison Report

Dear Allison:

In preparation for the October 31-November 1, 1998, meeting of the AAP's Committee on Injury and Poison Prevention, I've prepared a summary of current U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) activities that may be of interest to the group. These activities are described below:

ATVs. In April 1988, CPSC entered into consent decrees with the manufacturers and/or distributors of all-terrain vehicles (ATVs) to make the use of ATVs safer. In April 1998, these agreements expired. CPSC published draft "Letters of Undertaking," which would replace the expired consent decrees, in the Federal Register on September 9, 1998. The period for public comment closes October 26, 1998. After considering the public comments, the Commission will decide whether to accept the letters of undertaking. Also in April 1998, CPSC published a report containing ATV exposure, injury, death, and risk studies.

Baby Safety Showers. In recent years, this partnership activity with CPSC and the Gerber Products Company has been widely promoted to and used by members of Congress, private groups, and public organizations, to educate new and prospective parents about baby safety issues in the home. This program is ongoing.

Baby Walkers. In June 1994, the Commission voted to publish an Advance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (ANPR) to initiate a rulemaking proceeding for baby walkers to address the hazard of falls down stairs. Since that time, however, CPSC staff participated in the revision of a voluntary ASTM standard for baby walkers. In early 1997, ASTM published performance requirements to address stair-fall hazards. Walker designs that conform to the new requirements are on retail shelves now. They either have features that stop the walker on

a top step or are wider than 36 inches to prevent the walker from going through a standard size interior doorway. The Commission's mandatory rulemaking is still open pending evaluation of industry conformance with the voluntary stair-fall requirements.

Bicycle Helmets. On February 5, 1998, CPSC voted unanimously to issue a new federal safety standard for bicycle helmets. Beginning in March 1999, all bicycle helmets manufactured or imported for sale in the United States must meet the new mandatory standard, which for the first time will provide a uniform set of requirements. The standard ensures that bike helmets will adequately protect the head and that chin straps will be strong enough to prevent the helmet from coming off in a collision or fall. In addition, the new standard requires that helmets intended for children up to age five cover more of the head to provide added protection to the more fragile areas of a young child's skull. Helmets meeting the new requirements will carry a label stating that they meet CPSC's safety standard. Currently, CPSC staff is working with the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) to develop consumer literature about the new standard and what it means for consumers.

Bunk Beds. On January 14, 1998, CPSC voted to publish an ANPR to begin the process of developing a mandatory standard to address the hazard of children's entrapment in bunk beds. Since January 1990, CPSC has received reports of 57 children who died as a result of entrapment in bunk beds. The ASTM voluntary standard for bunk beds requires that all spaces between the guardrail and bed frame and spaces in the head and foot boards be less than 3.5 inches. The standard also requires that bunk beds have guard rails on both sides of the top bunk. While the voluntary standard addresses the entrapment hazard to children, there has been a continued pattern of non-conformance by some manufacturers in the bunk bed industry. Since November 1994, CPSC has announced recalls of more than 500,000 bunk beds for nonconformance with the voluntary standard and posing entrapment hazards to young children. Staff is currently analyzing comments received in response to the ANPR and developing options for Commission consideration.

Children's Voluntary Standards. This year, staff is assisting in the development and revision of a variety of voluntary safety standards for children's products. Product areas include: bassinets and cradles, bed rails, cribs, high chairs, home playground equipment, hook-on chairs, infant bedding, infant carriers, infant swings, playground equipment for children under two years, playground surfacing, play yards, public playground equipment, soccer goals, soft contained play equipment, stationary activity centers, strollers, toys, trampolines, unstable furniture, window guards, and other products.

Child-Resistant Multi-Purpose Lighters. CPSC is currently involved in a mandatory rulemaking activity to address the need for child-resistant mechanisms on multi-purpose lighters. On September 30, 1998, the Commission published the proposed requirements and requested public comments. The Commission should decide whether to publish a final rule by mid-1999.

Consumer Product Safety Review. CPSC's quarterly publication, the Consumer Product Safety Review, contains information on CPSC studies, data analyses, and product recalls. It also incorporates information formerly included in MECAP News and NEISS Data Highlights. Subscriptions are \$9.00 per year, and can be ordered from the Superintendent of Documents, P.O. Box 371954, Pittsburgh, PA 15250-7954; ph. (202) 512-1800. It can also be accessed through the World Wide Web at www.cpsc.gov. The Summer 1998 issue contains an article about CPSC efforts to address stair-fall hazards associated with baby walkers.

Crib Slats. In 1996, CPSC established a project to address slat disengagement hazards associated with baby cribs. From January 1985 to September 1996, CPSC has received reports of 138 incidents in which crib slats appeared to detach from the side panels of the crib. Twelve incidents resulted in deaths and five in injuries. Neither existing Commission standards nor the current voluntary standard appeared to adequately address the risks of injury and death associated with slat disengagement. Thus, on December 16, 1996, the Commission published an ANPR that could result in the issuance of a rule requiring that crib sides pass a performance standard to assure the structural integrity of crib slats and side panels. Since that time, industry has developed new performance requirements to address crib slat hazards and is in the process of incorporating them into a voluntary ASTM standard. The Commission's mandatory rulemaking will remain open pending revision of the voluntary standard and evaluation of industry conformance.

Escalators. In April 1997, CPSC was petitioned to develop a mandatory safety standard for escalators. The petitioners alleged that escalators are associated with unreasonable risks of serious injuries to children resulting from entrapment of feet, toes, and other body parts in openings between the moving stairs and the sides of escalators. Specifically, they requested changes with regard to 1) design, or closing the gap between the moving stair and the sidewall; 2) notifying the public how dangerous escalators can be and what type of accidents can occur while riding one; and 3) creating better warning signs that will educate and inform riders. CPSC staff is analyzing public comments received in response to its publication of the petition and evaluating industry testing and voluntary standards activities intended to address the entrapment hazard. The staff is preparing a briefing package with options for Commission consideration.

Furniture Tipover. CPSC staff has been working with ASTM to develop a voluntary safety standard to address the hazard of furniture tipping over onto young children who climb on these products. A provisional standard (ASTM PS 110-98) was passed in February 1998, and requires that dressers and chests of drawers, when empty, not tip over when a 50 lb weight is hung over any drawer when the drawer is opened 2/3 of its operating length.

Household Products with Fluoride. In June 1998, the Commission finalized a rule, under the Poison Prevention Packaging Act (PPPA), to require Child Resistant (CR) packaging for household products containing more than the equivalent of 50 mg of elemental fluoride and more than the equivalent of 0.5 percent elemental fluoride. Examples of such products are some rust removers, toilet cleaners, metal cleaners, and etching products. Dental products, such as toothpaste, contain lower levels of fluoride and would not be affected. For consistency, the Commission is also proposing to modify the oral prescription drug exemption for sodium fluoride preparations. The rule will become effective on March 2, 1999.

Lead Policy. In January 1998, CPSC issued guidance for manufacturers, importers, distributors, and retailers to protect children from hazardous exposures to lead in consumer products.

Methacrylic Acid. The staff is reviewing toxicity and child ingestion/exposure data related to methacrylic acid. This corrosive chemical is found in acrylic nail primers and does not currently require CR packaging. The staff is preparing a briefing package for the Commission's consideration.

Minoxidil Preparations. In October 1998, the Commission finalized a rule to require CR packaging for minoxidil preparations containing more than 14 mg of minoxidil in a single package, under the authority of the PPPA. The Commission based this finding on the toxic nature of minoxidil products and their accessibility to children in the home. This regulated dose level is expected to reasonably protect children under five years of age from serious personal injury or illness. The rule will be published in the Federal Register in early November.

Petroleum Distillates. In February 1997, the Commission published an ANPR on certain household products containing petroleum distillates and other hydrocarbons. Existing PPPA standards require CR packaging for some products that contain petroleum distillates or other hydrocarbons, but CPSC is considering the possibility of requiring CR packaging for additional consumer products that contain these substances. Such product areas include adhesives, automotive chemicals, workshop chemicals, metal polishes, spot removers, cleaning fluids, shoe polishes, and lubricants. The staff is now evaluating public comments on the risks of injury or illness associated with products containing petroleum distillates, in an effort to define the scope of a possible requirement for CR packaging.

Playground Equipment. An updated edition of CPSC's Handbook for Public Playground Safety was published in November 1997. In November 1998, staff will begin a study of playground-related injuries treated in U.S. hospital emergency rooms. This study is intended to provide current information about the products, locations, and circumstances involved in these incidents.

Recall Roundup. In April 1998, CPSC conducted its annual effort to urge consumers to dispose of previously recalled unsafe products, including cribs and other juvenile products, to prevent their second-hand use by other consumers.

Ms. Allison Rand

Page 5

Shopping Cart Safety. This past year, CPSC joined in partnership with the Food Marketing Institute, the National SAFE KIDS Campaign, Johnson and Johnson, and the Safe-Strap Company, to encourage the use of child seat belts in shopping carts.

Soccer Goals. Commission staff is working with ASTM to develop a voluntary standard for moveable soccer goals. CPSC is aware of 22 deaths to children since 1979 from soccer goals which tipped over onto the victim.

Window Guards. CPSC staff has been working with ASTM to develop voluntary standards for window guards to prevent falls from windows. A draft standard has passed subcommittee ballot and should become a provisional standard following ASTM review. This standard is for permanently affixed window guards for use in high-rise settings. A second standard for window guards which can be opened to allow escape in fires or other emergencies will be balloted this fall.

Strategic Goals. As part of the Government Performance and Results Act, CPSC has defined quantifiable goals for the agency in several safety areas. One of these goals is to reduce consumer product-related head injury to children by 15 percent by the year 2006. Many of the activities described above contribute toward this goal.

Please let me know if you would like additional information. I can be reached at (301)504-0470, extension 1276, or through e-mail at dtinsworth@cpsc.gov. I look forward to seeing you at the meeting.

Sincerely,

Deborah K. Tinsworth
Senior Statistician, Children's Hazards
Directorate for Epidemiology and Health Sciences