How to report unsafe products or review recalls


Convertible cribs

Baby’s Dream Furniture Inc., of Buena Vista, Ga., is recalling 4,600 wooden convertible cribs to repair the three hinges along the fold-down drop gate because they can crack or break and pinch babies’ fingers.

Baby’s Dream has received 38 reports of broken or cracked hinges, but no injuries have been reported. The recalled cribs were sold under the Baby’s Dream Furniture label or the National Baby Furniture label in five models: Always Crib, Crib 4 Life, Legendary Crib, Set 4 Life and Crib-2-College. The cribs were made from January to April 2001, and the model names and date of manufacture appear on a label on the lower inside of the frame. The wooden cribs are honey, amber or cherry in color, and juvenile furniture and retail stores nationwide sold these cribs for $300 to $400.

In addition, Baby’s Dream cribs made between 1996 and 2002 may have drop-gate trigger latches that are not aligned correctly to fit securely into the strike plate on the crib post. Baby’s Dream has received two reports of injuries to children when the latches did not hold and five additional reports of children falling out of cribs who were not injured.

To receive a repair kit for hinges and/or latches, or for instructions for examining the latches, contact Baby’s Dream at (800) TEL-CRIB (835-2742), www.babysdream.com or Baby’s Dream Furniture Inc., P.O. Box 579, Buena Vista, GA 31803-0579.

Toy drumsticks

Battat Incorporated, of Plattsburgh, N.Y., is recalling 300,000 sets of toy drumsticks sold with the Parents Bee Bop Band drum sets because the end piece of the drumstick handle can break off and the screw at the end of the drumstick can detach, both posing choking hazards to young children.

Battat has received 240 reports of drumsticks breaking and children mouthing the small pieces, including one report of a child who began to choke.

The centipede-shaped drumsticks are lime green or blue with black stripes. The model numbers, found above the UPC code on the packaging, are PM91372 and PM91372.

Target, Sam’s Club and smaller retailers sold the drum sets nationwide from November 2001 through March 2003 for about $25. Drum sets sold with a sticker that reads, “new 2003” are not subject to the recall.

Consumers should take these drumsticks away from young children, and call Battat toll-free at (866) 617-9137 for a replacement set.

Animal sounds farms

Fisher-Price, of East Aurora, N.Y., is recalling 67,000 Little People Animal Sounds Farms because two small metal screws that hold the toy “stall doors” in place can come off, posing an aspiration or choking hazard to young children.

Fisher-Price has received 33 reports of screws coming off the toy, including four reports of screws found in children’s mouths and one report of a child who aspirated a screw into his lung.

The model number of the recalled toys is 77973 or 77746, and the six-character manufacturing date code begins with 168 through 212, followed by the number 2 as the fourth digit. Both the model number and date code are on the underside of the green ramp. The recalled toys were manufactured in Mexico from June 17 through July 31, 2002.

Mass merchants and toy stores nationwide sold these toys from July to December 2002 for about $30. Consumers should take the toy away from young children and contact Fisher-Price toll-free at (866) 259-7873 to receive a free repair kit or order one online at www.service.mattel.com.

BMX bicycles

Dynacraft Industries Inc., of San Rafael, Calif., is recalling 52,900 BMX bicycles because their stems can loosen during use, causing riders to lose control and fall.

Dynacraft has received 35 reports of stems loosening on these bicycles, resulting in one report of an injury.

The recall includes two models of 20-inch BMX bicycles. The Next Voltage model bicycles are metallic green, model number 8535-99, manufactured between March and June 2002. The Vertical Street Blade model bicy-

icles are dark blue and chrome colored, model number 8527-99, manufactured between March and April 2002. A label on the frame near the crank housing shows the model number and manufacture date.

Wal-Mart stores sold the Next Voltage model bicycles nationwide and in Puerto Rico from May through November 2002 for about $70. Pamida stores sold the Vertical Street Blade model bicycles nationwide from April 2002 through April 2003 for about $80.

Consumers should stop using these bicycles and contact Dynacraft Industries at (800) 288-1560 or www.dynacraftbike.com to receive a replacement stem.

Crawl ‘n Stand toys

Playskool, of Pottawetucket, R.I., is recalling 300,000 Magic Start Crawl ‘n Stand toys because they can tip during use and strike falling babies in the head, face or neck.

The toy is designed to encourage crawling babies to pull themselves up and stand.

Playskool has received 44 reports of the toys tipping over during use and 26 reports of injuries.

The multicolor plastic toy has a round base and three arched legs that support an electronic activity center. When crawling babies touch the frame of the toy, music, lights and spinning balls are activated. A notation under the activity center reads “item # 06952.”

Wal-Mart stores nationwide sold these toys from November 2002 through April 2003 for about $14. Consumers should take this toy away from children and contact Playskool at www.playskool.com or (800) 509-9554 for information on how to return the product to receive a free replacement item of similar value.

Popping toys

American Promotional Events Inc., doing business as TNT, of Florence, Ala., is recalling 4,000 Party Poppers because the cone-shaped tops can pop off rapidly, injuring children and adults.

No injuries have been reported.

The recalled TNT Big Fun Party Poppers, packaged in units of four, are rocket-shaped devices that shoot into the air when the string is pulled. Wal-Mart stores sold these Party Poppers nationwide from January through March 2003 for about $2.

Consumers should stop using these items and return them to the store where purchased for a refund. For more information, call TNT at (800) 243-1189.

Bamboo stick sparklers

Fireworks of Alabama Inc., of Adamsville, Ala., is recalling 72,000 boxes of bamboo stick sparklers because their handles can catch fire and emit burning fragments, presenting a fire hazard and a risk of
HEALTH ALERTS

Ban on lead-cored wicks, candles

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) is banning the manufacture and sale of lead-cored wicks and candles with lead-cored wicks because they present a lead poisoning hazard to young children. The federal ban, which becomes effective in October, applies to all domestic and imported candles.

Because consumers cannot tell if a metal-cored Wick contains lead or an alternative, they may wish to contact retailers for information about the materials used in their candles.

Toy chests

Raymond Oak Inc., of Fountain Valley, Calif., is recalling 200 toy chests because the support hinges on the lid can fail, allowing it to fall onto a child’s head, neck, fingers or hands. In addition, spaces at the end of the hinge on the lid can pinch, crush or cut children’s fingers.

Raymond Oak Inc. has received one report of a 7-year-old who suffered a bruised finger after the toy chest lid slammed shut.

The wooden toy chests, manufactured with a natural birch or oak finish, have a sticker that reads, in part, “SC51CT-MP.” Furniture stores nationwide sold the recalled toy chests from May 2000 through January 2002 for about $99.

Children should not use the toy chests, and consumers should contact the firm at (866) 614-1281 to receive a $7 refund.

Cookie sets

Easy-Bake of Pawtucket, R.I., a brand of Hasbro Inc., is recalling 155,000 Easy-Bake ’n Design Cookie Sets because the cookie mix included in the sets contains milk proteins and may contain peanuts, both of which were not declared on the label. People who have an allergy or severe sensitivity to milk proteins or peanuts run the risk of a serious or life-threatening allergic reaction if they consume these products.

One illness has been reported in Canada. The cookie set includes a white cookie mix, icing mix, two food decorating pens and four cookie cutters. Product number 60813/60821 or 60814/60821 is featured on the lower right corner of the package’s front panel.

The sets were sold in the United States at major toy stores and mass merchandise outlets nationwide beginning in November 2001 for about $7.

Contact the company at (800) 327-8264 or www.easybake.com for information on how to return these products for a replacement item of comparable value.

Infant seats

The U.S. Department of Transportation’s National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) reminds consumers that Graco Children’s Products is recalling 650,000 SnugRide infant car seats because some of these seats may have missing hardware that is used to attach the carrier to the base. In the event of a sudden stop or vehicle crash, the carrier may detach from the base, possibly resulting in serious injury or death.

This recall involves infant seats with model numbers 8402, 8412, 8442, 8442L, 8443, 8443L, 8444, 8444L, 8446, 8446L, 8447, 8447L, 8448, 8448L, 8457, 8458, 8459, 8601, 8463, 8464, 8470, 8471, 8478 and C844342 that were manufactured between March 1, 2002, and March 6, 2003.

Consumers with SnugRide infant seats missing hooks or pins should not use the base and should call Graco toll-free at (866) 473-0163 for a new base. For inspection instructions, access www.gracobaby.com.

The infant carrier may be used in the car without the base. Consult the instruction manual for details on how to install the carrier in the car without the base or access instructions at www.gracobaby.com.

For more information, write: Graco Children’s Products Inc., 150 Oaklands Blvd., Exton, PA 19341, or call NHTSA’s toll-free Auto Safety Hotline, (888) 327-4236.

Tragedy can strike quickly for kids left alone in cars

The temperature was only in the low-60s in early June 2000 when a New Jersey mother left her 13-month-old son in the car while she visited a friend. “Jack” was in his car seat with the windows up for more than two hours. Though his mother periodically came out to check him, the third time was too late. She found him unresponsive and he later died. An hour after his death, Jack’s body temperature was 108 degrees.

Experts say there is no safe time alone inside a car for a child, even with the windows “cracked.” Permanent brain damage or death can occur in a short time, even when outdoor temperatures are relatively mild.

So far in 2003, 34 U.S. children who have been left unattended in or around vehicles have died, according to Kids ‘n Cars, a project of the nonprofit Trauma Foundation based at San Francisco General Hospital. In 2002, 30 children died of hyperthermia (heat stroke) after being left inside a vehicle.

Children’s developing respiratory system makes them more vulnerable to heat exhaustion, which occurs when heat stress causes depletion of fluids. If left untreated, heat exhaustion can lead to heat stroke, the most severe form of heat illness and a life-threatening emergency. If a child who is dehydrated can’t sweat enough to cool his body, internal temperature may rise to a dangerous level and cause heat stroke. Symptoms of heat stroke can include lethargy and loss of consciousness; babies can appear to be sleeping when they are actually in distress.

A survey last year by the National Safe Kids Campaign and an auto manufacturer found that while more adults overall have a greater awareness of the hazards of leaving children in or around a car, one in five younger parents said they thought it was OK to leave kids alone.

A recent study at San Francisco State University showed that even on a 73-degree day, a dark sedan reached 100 degrees after 15 minutes and 110 degrees at 30 minutes, while a white mini-van took 35 minutes to reach 100 degrees.

Parents and caregivers should follow these precautions from safety organizations:

• Never leave a child unattended in or around a car. Be sure relatives and caregivers follow the same precautions.
• Keep vehicles locked at all times, even in the driveway or garage. Kids have climbed into cars to hide or explore, and parents don’t always know to check their vehicles.
• Always ensure that all child passengers have left the car after it has been parked.
• Keep car keys and remote openers out of the reach of children.
• If a child is missing, check vehicles and trunks right away.
• For parents concerned they might forget they are carrying a child in the car seat behind them, leave a stuffed animal in the seat. Then remove the toy and place it in the front seat every time a child is riding in the car. It can serve as a reminder that “precious cargo” is being carried.

– Alyson Sulaski Wyckoff

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