

A p a r t m e n t

SAFETY NOTES



SPOKANE FIRE DEPARTMENT

AUGUST 2010

Consumer Product Safety

When we buy something new we expect it to be safe, but that's not always the case. With mass-produced goods, one faulty design can quickly have an impact on thousands of lives.

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission maintains a handy website for apartment managers at www.cpsc.gov. You can check out the most current product recalls by product type, brand name, store of purchase or by potential injury or hazard (e.g. fire, suffocation, fall).

If you have young families with infants and toddlers, alert them to the current problems with cribs and cords in window blinds. As you will notice at the CPSC website (under Product/Crib), there have been more than 2 million baby cribs recalled in the past several months because of suffocation hazards. The beds range in price from \$100 to \$700. Parents who purchased new crib should be advised of the manufacturer's recall But those who received second-hand cribs from family or friends or who purchased them at garage sales do not have that safety feature without checking the CPSC website for details.

Window safety for young families has at least two aspects: (a) secured windows / screens that a small child could not fall out of and (b) blinds without looped drawstrings that could choke small



Drop side cribs pose a safety hazard to babies

children. Search the www.cpsc.gov homepage for "window safety" to find a June 2010 article and poster that can inform you and your tenants on this safety issue. Also be aware that millions of Roman, roller and roll-up blinds have been recently recalled. As you will see at the CPSC website (under Product/ Blinds, shades & cords), these window coverings range in price from \$5 IKEA blinds to \$1,000 Ethan Allen versions. As a wise woman once remarked, in some cases "the best is none too good"!

It's a quick and easy step to check on product recall information. This simple action can prevent heart-break and injury

The March recall of 100,000 Therma Scarf microwaveable heat packs sold for about \$20 between October 2009 and January 2010 would be of interest to seniors. (View the CPSC website for March 2010 or search Release # 10-043 for a full description and photo of the scarf with pockets.) Recent fires in Wenatchee and Spokane at senior



apartments were caused by overheating towels and heat packs in a microwave. Depending on the population in your rental units, you may want to alert tenants to a specific recall by printing out and posting the news and photo sheet from the www.cpsc.gov website. This page will tell where the products were sold and provide information for a refund or repair. Samples of recalled products that can cause fires or burns:

- ✓ #10-238 12-cup GE-brand coffeemakers sold at Wal-Mart
- ✓ #09-252 Black and Decker Spacemaker Coffeemakers #10-043 Gas grills sold at Lowe's
- ✓ #10-184 Bright-way extension cords and power strips
- ✓ #10-284 Sony VAIO laptops
- ✓ #10-240 HP Lithium-Ion batteries
- ✓ #10-259 GE frontload washers
- ✓ #10-255 Maytag, Amana, Jenn-Air, Admiral, Magic Chef and Crosley dishwashers with specific serial numbers

The Neighborhood Safety Network can also be accessed from the homepage of www.cpsc.gov. They provide additional safety information, posters and links to other recall sites for items such as autos, food or cosmetics that are not under jurisdiction of the U.S. Consumer Products Safety Commission.

SUMMER BURN RESTRICTIONS

Warm, dry weather has prompted the annual restrictions on outdoor recreational fires in the City of Spokane and Spokane County. Open campfires or BBQ pits are not allowed.

However portable fireplaces, chimineas and barbecue appliances are allowed. For multi-family dwellings with three or more living units, there must be at least a 15 foot distance of clearance between the hot appliance and any structure or combustible material. Only approved fuels (i.e. natural gas, propane, charcoal briquettes or dry, seasoned firewood) are allowed.

If approved devices are used, there must be a responsible adult on scene at all times. Fire extinguishing equipment that must be close at hand may include a garden hose, dirt, sand, bucket, shovel or a minimum 4A rated portable fire extinguisher.

The rule is that "ash and charcoal remnants must be safely disposed of in noncombustible waste containers." Unfortunately, there still are people who put hot coals in cardboard boxes or plastic trash cans stored on wooden decks or next to the house!

You can sign up for this monthly newsletter, ask a fire-related question or suggest a specific safety topic by contacting Jan Doherty at jdoherty@spokanefire.org or by calling 625-7058.



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