

# Consumer Federation of America • Kids In Danger • Public Citizen

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Rachel Weintraub, CFA, [rweintraub@consumerfed.org](mailto:rweintraub@consumerfed.org), (202) 904-4953  
Nancy Cowles, KID, [nancy@kidsindanger.org](mailto:nancy@kidsindanger.org), (312) 218-5593  
Remington A. Gregg, PC, [rgregg@citizen.org](mailto:rgregg@citizen.org), (202) 454-5117

## **New CPSC Report: Injuries Related to Some Products Rose During Pandemic, Even as Overall ER Visits Dropped**

### ***Groups Warn Consumers of Hazards at Home Exacerbated During Pandemic***

Washington, DC – New data shows an increase in emergency room (ER) treatment for certain product-related injuries such as batteries, fireworks, all-terrain vehicles (ATVs), and skateboards during the pandemic. Although ER treatment for all product-related injuries decreased by 24%, perhaps due to consumers avoiding hospitals overrun with COVID-19 cases, ER treatment only dropped by 1% for the most severe injuries.

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) released a [report](#) yesterday analyzing product-related ER visits during the first six months of the pandemic from March to September 2020 compared with March to September 2019.

Injuries related to button batteries rose significantly (93%) among young children ages 5-9. Ingestion of these batteries, such as those found in TV remotes, can cause severe tissue burns and death.

The largest increases in ER-treated injuries across all age ranges occurred with fireworks and flares (56%), skateboards, scooters, and hoverboards (39%), and ATVs, mopeds, and minibikes (39%).

ER-treated injuries related to cleaning agents rose by 84%, while injuries related to soaps and detergents rose by 60%, including liquid laundry packets, which pose a severe ingestion hazard for small children as well as seniors.

“The CPSC’s important new report on consumer product injuries during the COVID-19 pandemic documents that stay-at-home orders have fundamentally impacted product safety injuries in the United States,” stated Rachel Weintraub, legislative director and general counsel at Consumer Federation of America. “The CPSC needs significantly more resources to address these hazards; consumers should wear protective equipment when using skateboards, scooters, bicycles, OHVs, and hoverboards; consumers should not operate OHVs on roads and should operate OHVs that are approved for their age; check products to make sure batteries are secured and not missing; and consumers should lock up cleaning supplies.”

“These findings show that everyday products are posing more of a hazard than before due to the pandemic as children are spending more time at home, and parents are juggling childcare and working remotely,” said Nancy Cowles, executive director of Kids In Danger. “Protect your children by securing battery compartments of electronics and other products and lock away cleaning supplies from children.”

“With so many more people at home all day, the risks of injuries are even greater,” said Remington A. Gregg, counsel for civil justice and consumer rights at Public Citizen. “As we continue making progress against the pandemic, greater, not less, vigilance is important. Working together, we can keep our families safe.”

The CPSC’s report offers safety tips for consumers:

- Keep cleaning products in their original bottles. Lock them up and away from younger children.
- Wear a helmet before riding a scooter, skateboard, hoverboard, or bicycle. When buying a helmet look for the label that reads “Complies with U.S. CPSC Safety Standards for Bicycle Helmets.
- Don’t allow young children to play with or ignite fireworks, including sparklers.
- Keep products with small batteries, including TV remotes, away from kids, and make sure that the battery compartments on children’s toys are secured properly.

View this [consumer guide](#) detailing common hazards at home that have been exacerbated during the pandemic while sheltering in place, created by KID, CFA, and U.S. PIRG.

The injury data was analyzed from the National Electronic Injury Surveillance System (NEISS), which represents a scientifically selected sample of hospitals nationwide. Non-ER-treated injuries were not included in the dataset, so it does not include consumers who feared going to the ER for possible COVID-19 exposure. View the [full CPSC report](#) and [key highlights](#).

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