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CPSC CUTS CORDS: UNANIMOUS DECISION FOR TWO LIFESAVING WINDOW COVERING RULES

Will Address Hazardous Cords on Both Stock and Custom Window Coverings

Washington, D.C. – The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission finalized two rules today through a vote of 4-0 to address unsafe accessible cords in both stock and custom window coverings. Both new rules address the risk of strangulation that can cause serious injury and death to children 8 years old and younger posed by accessible cords of custom and stock window coverings.

The new mandatory rule addressing custom window coverings requires strong safety standards for the safe operation of custom products. This rule goes into effect 180 days after publication in the Federal Register. The other new rule finalized today “deems the presence of hazardous operating cords and inner cords on stock window coverings and hazardous inner cords on custom window coverings to be a substantial product hazard.” This means that if a stock window covering has an unsafe operating and inner cord and a custom window covering has an unsafe inner cord, that the CPSC can take action to protect consumers. This second rule goes into effect 30 days after publication in the Federal Register for window coverings manufactured after that date.

Hazardous corded window coverings sold in the United States create unsafe sleep and play environments for children. Consumers who rent and have no buying choice are especially at risk for exposure to unsafe window coverings.

“It took 20 years to the day for this mandatory rule to finally happen. My daughter, Cheyenne, died from a cord that runs between the slats of a window blind in 2002. By the time we wrote the petition in 2013, over 100 children had been injured and killed. The saddest thing for me is talking to a parent who lost a child on a product that was professionally installed or labeled child safe,” stated Linda Kaiser, founder of Parents for Window Blind Safety. “Strangulation incidents can happen quickly even when parents can be in the same room. Due to the vagus nerve being compressed during these incidents, the impact of injury is severe and the chance of survival after entanglement is less than one minute.”

For nearly two decades, Parents for Window Blind Safety, Consumer Federation of America, and Independent Safety Consulting, LLC have prioritized window blind safety through participation in the voluntary and mandatory standards processes in the United States and Canada. The organizations participated in the United States WCMA/ANSI voluntary standards process in 2010, 2012, 2017, and 2021; Health Canada's 2013 standard update; and the United States CPSC mandatory standards process through petitioning the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission in 2014 to ban unsafe accessible window covering cords.

In 2017, when advocates participated in the voluntary standard development process with CPSC and the window coverings industry, the Window Covering Manufacturers Association (WCMA) stated that hazards on custom cords would be addressed by initiating an additional safety standard within six months after the December 31, 2018 enforcement date. That deadline was not met.

“We petitioned the CPSC in 2014 because of the failure of the voluntary standard to adequately address the hazard posed by accessible window covering cords,” stated Rachel Weintraub, legislative director and general counsel with Consumer Federation of America. “In the last eight years, that failure has only become starker, and the need for a mandatory standard has become even more necessary. We deeply appreciate the promulgation of these critical safety rules and applaud the CPSC for effectively addressing these hazards.”

“CPSC's action to ban hazardous, corded window coverings will finally turn the tide and prevent deaths on new products. It saddens me that industry did not step up sooner, and on its own, despite decades of infant and child fatalities,” stated Carol Pollack-Nelson, Ph.D, a human factors psychologist specializing in consumer product safety and owner of Independent Safety Consulting, LLC. “As a result, there will undoubtedly continue to be strangulation deaths on corded products already in consumers' homes for many years to come.”

“Window covering cords are a lethal hazard in our homes,” said Nancy Cowles, executive director of Kids In Danger. “Today's new rules from the Consumer Product Safety Commission will close loopholes and protect all children from deadly cords.”

[Consumer Federation of America](#) is an association of more than 250 non-profit consumer and cooperative groups that was founded in 1968 to advance the consumer interest through research, advocacy, and education.

[Parents for Window Blind Safety](#) is a non-profit organization that supports parents whose children have been seriously injured or killed by dangerous cords, educates consumers about the dangers of accessible window covering cords in homes, daycare facilities, and military housing, helps create safer standards in the industry, encourages innovation of safer products in the industry, and tests window covering products for safety.

[Kids In Danger \(KID\)](#) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to protecting children by fighting for product safety. Our mission is to save lives by enhancing transparency and accountability through safer product development, better education, and stronger advocacy for children.