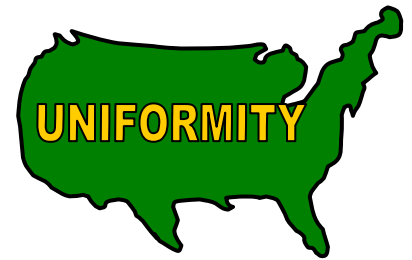




I.A.B.F.L.O.



International Association of Bedding and Furniture Law Officials, Inc.

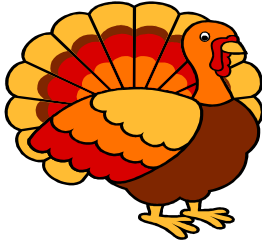
Founded in 1936 as a National Forum for Uniformity, Enforcement, Testing and Terminology within the various state programs

NOVEMBER, 2003

www.abflo.org

Issue 16

HAPPY THANKSGIVING



NEW CPSC PROPOSED STANDARDS

On October 21st, 2003 the Consumer Product Safety Commission voted unanimously to expand its regulatory proceedings to develop a possible federal standard for upholstered furniture flammability performance. The action would address the risk of residential fires ignited by cigarettes and small open-flame sources.

The CPSC staff will be developing a draft performance standard and assessing a number of different ways for upholstered furniture to pass the tests. Recently, the National Association of State Fire Marshals and some industry groups agreed upon the desirability of a federal standard to address both cigarette and open-flame fire hazard scenarios.

Records indicate that ignitions of upholstered furniture account for more fire deaths than any other category of products under CPSC jurisdiction. In 1998, furniture fire losses that could be addressed by a standard included 420 deaths, 1080 injuries, \$120 million in property damage and estimated societal costs were about \$2.5 billion.

Presently there is a voluntary industry standard for cigarette ignition resistance and most U.S. furniture manufacturers meet the voluntary standard.

However, according to the U.S. International Trade Adm. upholstered furniture imports have been growing at a compounded annual rate of 21 percent since 1998. This growth gives rise to concerns that the present voluntary approach is unlikely to continue to generate high levels of conformance.

At a Sept. 24th, 2003 public meeting between CPSC, furniture manufacturers and other related industries it was recommended that CPSC promulgate a mandatory rule addressing both cigarette and small open flame ignition. A federal mandatory standard would apply to imports as well as domestic products.

FR BEDDING READY TO GO

Two bedding manufacturers, Serta and Carolina Mattress Guild introduced their new line of open-flame fire resistant mattresses at the Furniture Market in N.C. on Oct. 19th, 2003.

Both companies reported that a number of retailer were very anxious to get the products. They went on to say the retailer understands the benefits to the consumer and they are seeing the consumers interested as well.

Serta will introduce its FireBlocker system in its Perfect Sleeper, Perfect Night and Masterpiece models early in 2004.

Carolina Mattress Guild was the first manufacturer to offer a FR-protected products to the consumer. Its line of Safe Dreams came out this past April.

The Guild also introduced a line of Chinese produced Viscoelastic mattresses that it says also meets the open-flame standard.

FLAMMABILITY WORKSHOPS

The Sleep Products Safety Council has set four flammability workshop dates. The workshops are designed to help manufacturers better understand how to comply with the new open-flame standards. The schedule for the workshops is as follows:

Feb. 3rd, 2004 Northern California
(Location to be announced)

Feb. 4th, 2004 Southern California
(Location to be announced)

Feb. 10, 2004 Chicago
(Location to be announced)

Feb. 12, 2004 Charlotte, N.C.
(Location to be announced)

ASTM TOY REVISIONS

ASTM has announced that their toy safety standard F 963 is currently under revision. Final review of the standard is anticipated to take place around the first of November and publication of the new standards is scheduled for mid-month.

The new specifications relate to possible hazards that may not be readily recognizable by the consumer but may be encountered during normal use, they include the following items:

Battery Operated Toys, Battery Powered Ride-On Toys, Toys with Spherical Ends, Hemispherical Shaped Toys, Acoustics, Miscellaneous Items and Labeling.