

U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission
Washington, DC 20207

Consumer
Dept

Vulnerable Populations and Product Hazards

Fire

Each year, 3,800 people die from residential fires in the U.S. The risk for blacks is roughly twice as high as the risk for whites. Older housing stock and no or few smoke detectors are often the cause of this increased risk.

Old Cribs

Each year, 50 babies die in old, hazardous cribs. These cribs do not comply with CPSC safety standards. Low-income people may re-use older cribs. The hazards of old cribs include strangulation related to corner posts and missing or inadequate spacing of slats; and broken or missing hardware causing cribs to collapse.

Charcoal/Carbon Monoxide

Each year, 25 people die from carbon monoxide caused by burning charcoal indoors. Almost half of these deaths occur to ethnic minorities, particularly Hispanics and Asians. Differences in cultural practices, where charcoal may have been burned indoors, may be responsible for this. CPSC's new mandatory label for charcoal uses a pictogram (as well as words) to warn that charcoal must not be burned inside homes, tents, or vehicles.

CPSC's Use of Radio to Target Vulnerable Populations

Public Service Announcements -- In 1995 and 1996, CPSC produced radio public service announcements about product hazards and safety tips specifically addressed to Native Americans, Latinos, and African Americans. A unique set of radio spots for African Americans was composed and performed by singer/songwriter Marvin Matthews; these safety messages were done in rhythm & blues, gospel, urban contemporary, and jazz formats so they could fit "seamlessly" with the musical formats of targeted radio stations. Millions of listeners heard these radio spots.

Radio Actualities -- In 1998, CPSC plans to offer recorded safety messages ("actualities") through a toll-free number so radio stations can easily record and use these stories in their programs. The recorded messages will provide important product hazard warnings and safety messages for radio news directors to incorporate in their broadcasts. Targeted stations will be invited to call CPSC's toll-free number to get these messages for re-broadcast.