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U.S. CONSUMER PRODUCT SAFETY COMMISSION  
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March 1, 2017

Re: FOIA Appeal 17-A-00003  
For FOIA Request 17-F-00144

By letter dated January 28, 2017 and received on January 31, 2017, you appealed the decision dated January 19, 2017 of the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission's ("Commission's") Freedom of Information ("FOI") Officer to your Freedom of Information Act ("FOIA") request seeking records relating to a digital/electronic copy of the Compliance Investigator Handbook and the Product Safety Investigator Manual. The FOI Officer withheld disclosure of these records, citing applicable FOIA exemptions.

Under authority delegated to me by the Commission, 16 C.F.R. § 1015.7, I have reviewed your appeal, and I am reversing the FOI Officer's decision with respect to:

- The cover page; pages i-iii; pages 1-23, 29-59, and 61-66; and Exhibits A-E of the "Field Manual for Investigation Procedures and Reporting Techniques – November 2016."
- Partial pages 24-28 and 60 of the "Field Manual for Investigation Procedures and Reporting Techniques – November 2016."

Accordingly, the FOI Officer will process this information pursuant to section 6 of the Consumer Product Safety Act ("CPSA"), 15 U.S.C. § 2055, and will notify you under separate correspondence about possible release of information to you.

I am, however, affirming the FOI Officer's decision to withhold all other responsive documents based on Exemptions 3, 4, 5, and 7(E) of the FOIA. *See* 5 U.S.C. § 552(b)(3), (4), (5) and (7)(E); 16 C.F.R. § 1015.16(c), (d), (e), and (g)(5). Exemption 3 of FOIA provides for withholding information specifically exempted from disclosure by another statute. In applying

Exemption 3, I am relying on section 6(a)(2) of the CPSA, 15 U.S.C. § 2055(a)(2), which prohibits the disclosure of trade secret, proprietary, or confidential information under Exemption 4. This information is considered confidential if disclosure is likely to (1) impair the government's ability to obtain necessary information in the future or (2) cause substantial harm to the competitive position of the person from whom the information is sought. *See National Parks and Conservation Association v. Morton*, 498 F.2d 765, 770 (D.C. Cir. 1974). The confidential commercial information being withheld pursuant to Exemption 3, based on section 6(a)(2) of the CPSA, consists of proprietary software screenshots and instructions and confidential importation information contained in:

- Partial pages 24-28 of the "Field Manual for Investigation Procedures and Reporting Techniques -- November 2016,"
- Partial pages 182, 183, 185, 188, 190-192, 196, 199, 201, 202, 204, 206, 208-210, 213-216, 218, 225-228, 236, 237, 240, 245, 246, 252, 253, 256, 260-262, 264-266, 270, 272, 273, and 275 of the draft "Compliance Investigators Handbook," and
- Entire pages 197-219 and 223-266 of the draft "Compliance Investigators Handbook."

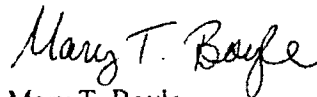
Additionally, I partially affirm the FOI Officer's decision to withhold intra-agency and inter-agency communications among staff. FOIA Exemption 5 provides for the withholding from disclosure of inter-agency and intra-agency memoranda which would not be available by law to a party other than an agency in litigation with the agency. The documents being withheld, either in whole or in part, contain material in draft form, as well as staff memoranda, analyses, and recommendations, including both pre-decisional and deliberative discussions. The deliberative process privilege protects advice, recommendations, and opinions that are part of the agency's deliberative, consultative, and decision making process. Although this privilege applies only to opinions and recommendations in a document and not to factual information, facts are withheld here because they are inextricably intertwined with the exempt portions. *See Rein v. U.S. Patent and Trademark Office*, 553 F.3d 353, 375 (4<sup>th</sup> Cir. 2009) (upholding documents withheld by the agency because factual portions, when viewed as part of a larger document "would reveal the very pre-decisional and deliberative material Exemption 5 protects"). Here, release of this information would impair the Commission's decision-making ability with respect to product investigations by impairing open and frank communication within the agency. The records or information being withheld pursuant to Exemption 5 include partial page 60 from the "Field Manual for Investigation Procedures and Reporting Techniques -- November 2016," and pages 001-339 of the draft "Compliance Investigators Handbook."

I also am partially affirming the FOI Officer's decision to withhold documents pursuant to Exemption 7(E) of FOIA. FOIA Exemption 7(E) provides for the withholding of records or information compiled for law enforcement purposes that would disclose techniques and procedures for law enforcement investigations or prosecutions or would disclose guidelines for law enforcement investigations or prosecutions if such disclosure could reasonably be expected to risk circumvention of the law. The provision protects techniques and procedures not already well-known to the public, including where the manner and circumstances of the use are not publicly known. *See Rugiero v. DOJ*, 257 F.3d 534, 551 (6 Cir. 2001); *ACLU of Michigan v. FBI*, No. 11-13154, 2012 WL 4513626 at \*11 (E.D. Mich. Sept. 30, 2012). Specifically,

investigations and operations manuals that list certain techniques, procedures, and events that trigger the agency's use of such techniques and procedures and would allow for the circumvention of the agency's effort may be withheld under Exemption 7(E). *See ACLU of N.J. v. DOJ*, No. 11-2553, 2012 WL 4660515, at \*10 (D.N.J. Oct. 2, 2012). Manuals that contain investigation guidance, such as hypotheticals for training purposes and approval limitations on use of certain techniques by law enforcement, may also be withheld if such information is not known to the public because release would increase the risk of individuals conforming behavior to avoid identified investigative tactics. *See PHE, Inc. v. DOJ*, 983 F.2d 248, 251 (D.C. Cir. 1993); *ACLU of Michigan*, 2012 WL 4513626 at \*11. Moreover, exemption 7(E) permits an agency to withhold information if the agency can demonstrate logically how the release of the requested information might create a risk of circumvention of the law. *See Blackwell v. FBI*, 646 F.3d 37, 42 (D.C. Cir. 2011). Accordingly, to protect agency law enforcement techniques and prevent circumvention of the law, I am affirming, under Exemption 7(E), the FOI Officer's decision with respect to partial page 194 and entire pages 004-014, 048-056, 066-138, 148-192, 196-219, 223-337 of the draft "Compliance Investigators Handbook."

You have the right to seek judicial review of this decision, as provided by 5 U.S.C. § 552(a)(4)(B).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mary T. Boyle". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Mary T. Boyle  
General Counsel



**U.S. CONSUMER PRODUCT SAFETY COMMISSION**

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March 3, 2017

Re: FOIA Request/Appeal 17-F-00144 (Appeal 17-A-00003): Copies of CPSC  
investigative manuals

As explained in the letter dated March 1, 2017 from Mary Boyle, CPSC General Counsel, enclosed are the documents that we decided to disclose after considering your appeal of the withholding of records with respect to the above referenced Freedom of Information Act Request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Alberta E. Mills", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Alberta E. Mills

Enclosure



# Field Manual for Investigation Procedures and Reporting Techniques

November 2016

**FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY**  
UNAUTHORIZED DISCLOSURE PROHIBITED

U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission  
Epidemiology, Division of Data Systems (EPDS)



# Field Manual for Investigation Procedures and Reporting Techniques

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## Chapter 1 – General Information

The purpose for this manual is to provide field investigators with procedures and reporting techniques to effectively provide the Consumer Product Safety Commission staff with information to support Commission projects.

### Background:

Consumer Product Safety Act. The *Consumer Product Safety Act* (CPSA) was signed into law in 1972. It grew out of a recommendation by the National Commission on Product Safety and out of the public and Congressional concern over the thousands of injuries and deaths each year that were associated with consumer products.

Consumer Product Safety Commission. The CPSA established an independent Federal regulatory agency, the *U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission* (CPSC), to address this concern. The Commission, which became operational in 1973, is required to:

1. Protect the public against unreasonable risks of injury associated with consumer products;
2. Assist consumers in evaluating the comparative safety of consumer products;
3. Develop uniform safety standards for consumer products; and
4. Promote research and investigation into the causes and prevention of product-related deaths, illnesses, and injuries.

The Directorate for Epidemiology. The *Directorate for Epidemiology* (EP), within the *Office of Hazard Identification and Reduction* (EXHR), is responsible for the collection, investigation, analysis, and dissemination of product-related injury information. Its mission includes functions provided for in such acts as the *Consumer Product Safety Act* (CPSA), the *Federal Hazardous Substances Act*, the *Flammable Fabrics Act*, the *Refrigerator Safety Act*, the *Poison Prevention Packaging Act*, and the *Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act* (CPSIA).

Surveillance System. In order to monitor incidents involving consumer products, the Directorate of Epidemiology operates several incident surveillance systems composed of reporting sources located throughout the country, including:

1. NEISS. The *National Electronic Injury Surveillance System* (NEISS) consists of statistically selected hospitals that report consumer product-related emergency department visits to the CPSC daily. CPSC staff continuously monitors NEISS data. Summary reports and analyses are provided to analysts in the Commission, industry, health personnel, and other interested parties or groups.
2. Non-NEISS. Additional incident information is collected from sources outside NEISS. These sources include news media reports, consumer complaints, death certificates, trade information, and medical examiner/coroner reports. These incident reports provide data for Commission analysts and statisticians to use when conducting studies of consumer product-related injuries or incidents.

Incident Investigation System. Both NEISS and non-NEISS surveillance data must be supplemented by conducting follow-up investigations using the epidemiologic approach. These investigations, through the comprehensive review of the incident sequence, and the human and environmental factors, provide the specific details required to evaluate product involvement. These data help the CPSC to achieve a greater understanding of the incident or hazards, including:

- The interaction between the product, the person, and the environment.
- Information on the product(s) involved at the time of the incident.
- Associated behavioral patterns and design characteristics related to product usage.
- Information on the victim and/or user of the product at the time of the incident.

## Objectives:

The overall objective of this manual is to provide specific instructions for conducting high-quality incident investigations. The investigation data will provide the foundation from which regulations, standards, educational programs, recalls and corrective actions, and recommended programs for state-and-local agencies can evolve. To assist you in this vital task, this manual:

- Defines investigator responsibilities for those performing incident investigations, either on-site or by telephone.
- Outlines procedures for the preparation of comprehensive, product-related investigation reports.
- Provides investigation guidance for use in conducting comprehensive investigations.

## Definitions:

Consumer Product. *Consumer Product* means any article or component of an article which is customarily produced or distributed for sale to or for the personal use, consumption, or enjoyment of consumers in a residential, school, recreational, or other environment. It does not include a product intended for commercial or industrial use, unless it is sold to or used by consumers more than occasionally.

Non-Consumer Products. The term *Consumer Product* excludes certain products covered by laws enforced by other regulatory agencies. However, the CPSC does enter into formal agreements with other Federal agencies to collect information on non-consumer products, and in these situations the CPSC and other agencies may assemble information through NEISS and other sources which is of particular interest to the other agencies. Only in these instances should information be gathered on the following items:

1. Alcoholic Beverages, Tobacco Products, Firearms, and Ammunition. Those products are subject to the regulations administered by the Treasury Department and, therefore, are subject to their rules and regulations.
2. Motor Vehicle and Motor Vehicle Equipment. CPSC does not have jurisdiction over incidents in which a licensed motor vehicle is the sole contributor to the incident. However, if a motor vehicle is not licensed (e.g., all-terrain vehicle) or a second "consumer type" product such as a bicycle is involved in the incident, the CPSC may be interested and an incident investigation may be conducted covering that product and the circumstances surrounding the incident. Licensed motor vehicles are subject to regulations administered by the Department of Transportation. NOTE: Infant car seats are in CPSC's jurisdiction for all hazards except crash-protection issues.
3. Environmental Poisons. Pesticides and other related products are subject to regulations enforced by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). These products would include all insecticides, fungicides, herbicides, and rodenticides. Some specific items are mothballs, sanitizers, fumigants, and other such substances intended for use in and around the home as plant or animal poisons, regulators, defoliants, or desiccants.
4. Boats and Related Equipment. Boats, personal watercraft, and equipment used in or around water such as life preservers and ski belts, are subject to the Federal Boat Safety Act of 1971, which is enforced by the Coast Guard.
5. Foods, Medical Devices, Cosmetics, and Drugs. These substances (except those packaged in containers subject to the Poison Prevention Packaging Act) are subject to regulations administered by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). The CPSC has jurisdiction over the container of the products that require packaging in child resistant closures and over mechanics/risks or injuries from packaging.

6. Aircraft and Aircraft Components. These products, including hang gliders and ultra light aircraft, are regulated by the Federal Aviation Administration.
7. Occupational Incidents. Incidents that occur to an employee in the work place are regulated by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA). However, if the employee was using a consumer product, we would be interested in the case.
8. Electronic Product Radiation. Even if the article is a consumer product (e.g., a microwave oven), a radiation risk would be outside the scope of the CPSC jurisdiction.

#### Incident Investigations:

There are six classifications for categorizing incident investigations. The table below denotes the six different types of categories applicable to investigative techniques and the corresponding chapter addressing the categories in this manual.

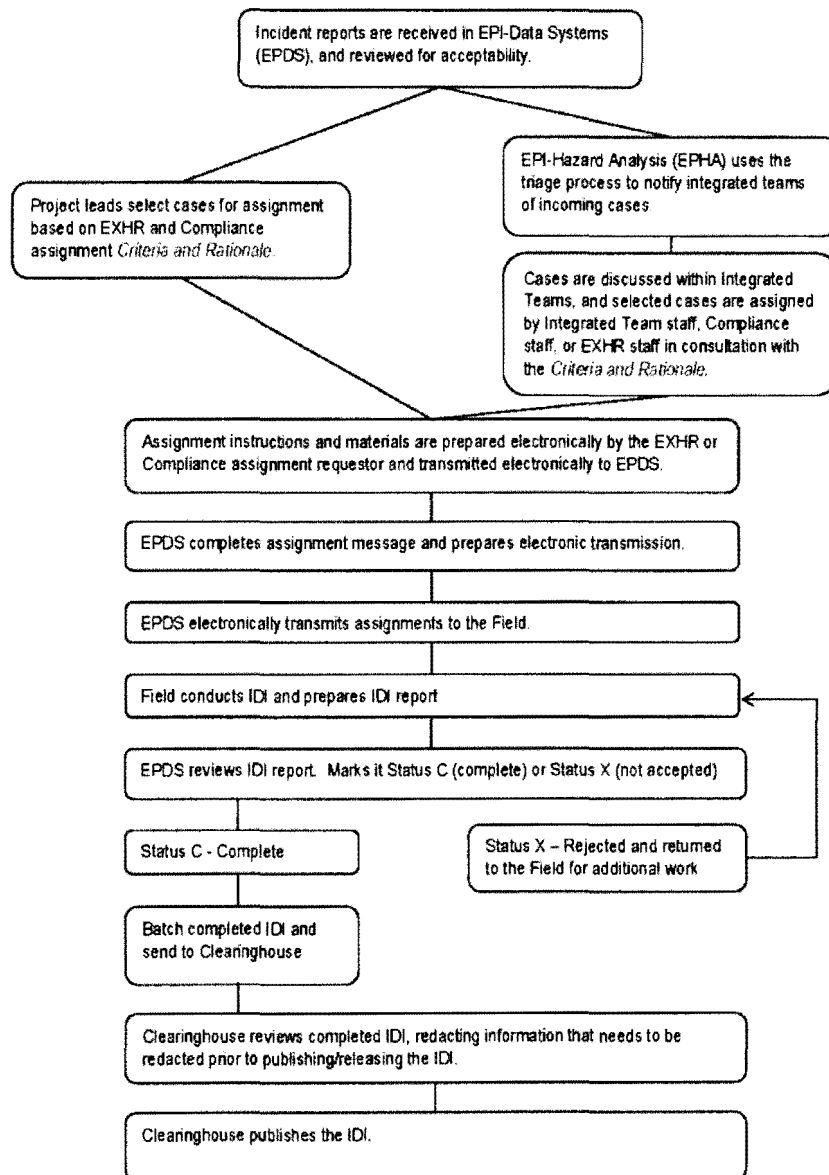
In-Depth Investigation (IDI) Classification Categories		
Type of Investigation	Classification	Chapter
On-Site Investigation ("1" in block 19 of Form 182)	Visits the victim <i>at the incident site</i> , recreating the incident scene and documenting accordingly. Should include incident scenario, product information (including photographs where appropriate), and data on environmental and behavioral factors related to the incident.	7
Telephone Investigation ("2" in block 19 of Form 182)	Information is only obtained by telephone. Similar format to an on-site with the collection of in-depth information or a brief questionnaire used to collect less detailed information.	6
Other Investigation ("3" in block 19 of Form 182)	Information is obtained by the investigator by visiting with knowledgeable parties such as medical examiner or local officials (police, fire dept., etc.) to discuss the incident and obtain copies of select documents, but the investigator <b>did not</b> visit the victim, or <b>did not</b> interview/visit the victim/consumer but did not conduct a site visit at the place <i>where the incident occurred</i> . This includes interviewing the victim/consumer at <i>any</i> location other than where the incident took place.	9
Purged Investigation ("4" in block 19 of Form 182)	An investigation was found to be a duplicate of a prior assignment, or the assignment requestor decides to abort the investigation and no new information above and beyond the source document was obtained, or the IDI was assigned in error.	9
Screening Investigation ("5" in block 19 of Form 182)	An investigator was able to contact a knowledgeable party, but discovered that the product involved was not a consumer product (e.g., agricultural/farm tractor rather than riding mower) or that the incident was a deliberate act such as arson.	9
Terminated Investigation ("6" in block 19 of Form 182)	Investigation was terminated due to the inability to contact a knowledgeable party, or no information could be obtained beyond what is in the source document, or a refusal.	9

## Chapter 2 – Case Selection and Assignment

### Case Selection:

The incidents assigned to the field for investigation come from a variety of reporting sources, including NEISS, consumers, news media, medical examiners, State Health Departments (death certificates), trade associations, and other sources that report incidents to the Commission. The source document flow chart below diagrams the process of how incidents are assigned for investigation. High priority investigations shortcut this process.

*Epidemiology Flow Chart for In Depth Investigations*



### Initiating Investigations:

All incident reports received by headquarters and field offices are forwarded to the Directorate for Epidemiology (EP) for review. Cases that involved a product or a hazard that is of current interest to the Commission are identified and assigned to the appropriate field office staff or contractor for further investigation. All cases of interest are identified and shared with the appropriate integrated team, which includes Commission analysts, statisticians, and Compliance staff. Cases selected for investigation by these integrated teams are entered into CPSC360 for assignment by EP to the field. All non-NEISS incident reports are imaged, including those not targeted for follow-up investigations. These imaged documents are available electronically to statisticians and analysts in Epidemiology for review and action.

The NEISS related incidents that meet the criteria of a special study are selected for investigation and assigned to contractor interviewers working for the Directorate for Epidemiology. The contractor may conduct a telephone interview to obtain details on the incident. The contractor will usually use a survey instrument designed for the special study. The CPSC analyst reviews these telephone investigations and if further follow-up to a report (e.g., on-site visit) is desired, and the respondent is cooperative, the case is reassigned to an appropriate field office staff for additional action.

Purging names and addresses of victims obtained through NEISS hospital. When a case is assigned from information received from a NEISS hospital, name and address identification of the victim MUST be purged before it is imaged and transmitted to EPDS. The Clearinghouse, prior to public release of the report, will do purging of other victim identification not received through NEISS.

Non-NEISS related incidents (e.g., news clips, consumer complaints, etc.) selected for investigation usually contain more information on the incident than NEISS cases. Selected non-NEISS cases are assigned directly to the field staff for follow-up investigation.

The EP staff develops *Incident Investigation Assignment Instructions* (also known as "E-assigns") that are attached to the IDI assignment request. These instructions are based on investigation *Criteria and Rationales* provided by the integrated team members responsible for that program area. The assignment instructions include the category ID to which the assignment will be credited, the name of the person(s) who may be contacted, the product investigation guidelines to follow, and other specific guidance.

Compliance officers on the integrated teams may select incidents for assignment using Section 15 tasking numbers, category ID (e.g., SECTxx), and investigation instructions with specific guidance.

Compliance v. EXHR Assignments (Dual Purposes). If the assignment is requested by Compliance but is listed as a category in the *Criteria and Rationales*, then the investigation report should also meet the requirements of the *Criteria and Rationales* including using the guidelines and a data record sheet, if applicable. Alternatively, if the assignment is requested by EXHR and it is clear that a product defect is involved, the investigation report must also meet Compliance's needs in accordance with the assignments instructions.

Investigation Initiated by field staff. Incidents identified in the field are to be reviewed by the field staff promptly and checked against assignment criteria, including the *Criteria and Rationales* and all applicable guidelines, provided by the Directorate for Epidemiology and other headquarters units for assignment purposes. It is up to the person initiating such an IDI to ensure that the needs of headquarters staff (e.g., EXHA) are met in conducting the field-initiated IDI.

The table below identifies the types of task numbers assigned throughout the Commission.

Identification of Task Numbers Assigned		
Office Initiating Assignment	Classification	Type of Task Number
EXHR	Assigned based on established assignment criteria or study needs. These investigations are assigned to collect information on generic type hazards.	HCC HBB HAA
Compliance	Assigned to collect information to assist Compliance staff in identifying whether a defect exists and whether that defect presents a substantial product hazard. Data will also be used in determining if a corrective action is required.	CCC CBB CAA
Field Office	Field offices (CFI) assign cases based on yearly <i>Criteria and Rationales</i> .	HFE
NEISS	Assignments made on NEISS incidents that are of particular interest to an EXHR analyst. An example of such a study is playground equipment.	HEP
NEISS-Compliance	Assignments made on NEISS cases for investigation based on criteria that Compliance has identified. An example of such an investigation would be 5-gallon bucket incidents.	CEP
Field Office involving Compliance Issue	Field offices (CFI) assign cases based on criteria provided by Compliance that are of current interest to the Commission.	CFE

Note: Field Office assignment designations no longer in current use include HNE, HWE, CNE, and CWE. These designations may still appear on older and/or completed IDIs.

### How to "read" a task number:

Example: 120203HCC1234

The date portion of task number (the first six digits) = date assignment generated:

First two digits = year  
Second two digits = month  
Third two digits = day

	<u>HQ Assigned</u>	<u>Field Assigned</u>
First letter = initiated for	H=Hazard Identification and Reduction C=Compliance	H=Hazard Identification and Reduction C=Compliance

Second two letters = Priority, field office assigning, or NEISS

AA=very high  
BB=high  
CC=normal  
WE=Western region (no longer used)  
NE=Eastern region (no longer used)  
FI=Field office  
EP=NEISS

Last four digits = sequential numbering of assignments

First number of these four digits indicates the region for HQ-initiated assignments:

1xxx=EASQ assignment  
2xxx=CENQ assignment  
3xxx=WESQ assignment

Currently, there is only one field division (CFI), but there are three regions for HQ assignments (EASQ, CENQ, and WESQ).

### How to read a CATID number:

A category ID number is assigned to each product category for which assignments are made. A CATID number of TLNN09 indicates that the case was initiated under the TL (tool category), it is a non-NEISS case (NN), and it is the ninth product in the TL category. A CATID number of SECTxx indicates that the case was initiated by Compliance staff under Section 15.

### Incident Investigation Assignment Instructions:

The *Incident Investigation Assignment Instructions* sheet (also known as an "E-Assign, "sample on next page) highlights the elements pertaining to the investigation being assigned. When a case meets the criteria for an investigation, it is assigned using a task number and category identification number (CATID) that identifies the field office staff that is investigating the case (for field assigned cases), the Directorate or Office for which the case is being investigated, and the product/program area to which the investigation is to be charged.

<i>Incident Investigation Assignment Instructions key</i>	
Document Number	A unique identifying number placed on the surveillance document when the Commission first receives the document. If there are multiple consumer product-related incidents listed on the same document, each incident should be marked with a sequential alphabetical notation.
CATID	The category identification number is associated with the hazards being investigated. (E.g., ELNN072012 represents heat tape incidents.)
Headquarters Contact	The contact person at headquarters who is most knowledgeable on the product and can clarify what is expected from the investigator.
Assignment Message	Outlines what the analyst hopes to obtain from the investigation.
Person(s) to contact	Investigators are not limited to the contacts noted, unless specified. This area also designates if the assignment requires special handling due to restricted data.
Guidelines	Identifies additional guidance that provides instructions the investigator should use in obtaining the requested information.
Task Number	On cases selected for follow-up, the assignment coordinator assigns a task number that includes the date the case was assigned, the Directorate initiating the assignment, the priority, the field office staff receiving the assignment, and a unique number for the case.



Sample Incident Investigation Assignment Instructions sheet

INCIDENT INVESTIGATION ASSIGNMENT INSTRUCTIONS

DOCUMENT NUMBER: XXXXXXXX

DATE OF INCIDENT: 12/26/2012

CATID: XXXXXX2013

FOLLOW-UP REQUESTED

HAZARD ANALYSIS ☐ SECT 15 ☒

HEADQUARTERS CONTACT: Requestor's name, phone number, email

BACK-UP CONTACT:

ASSIGNMENT MESSAGE:

Please investigate the attached ☐ fatal ☒ non-fatal incident involving a 4039 - OTHER ELECTRIC LIGHTING EQUIPMENT [general name of product]

This assignment is to be completed as

- ☒ an on-site investigation
- ☐ a telephone investigation
- ☐ other - see instructions below
- ☐ a screening\* investigation

\*A screening investigation is different from a screening report. A screening investigation is assigned when the requestor wants you to proceed only if certain conditions are true. Please contact Headquarters Contact for special instructions.

Priority level ☐ AA ☐ BB ☒ CC

Justification for AA or BB priority:

STATE in which incident occurred:  
MD - MARYLAND

Incident sample collection for Commission evaluation

- ☒ Yes, obtain entire product
- ☐ Yes, obtain part of product [specify which part]
- ☐ Obtain [number] exemplar(s)
- ☐ No sample collection necessary

Instructions:

Obtain all official reports

Verify incident scenario. Provide complete product identification including manufacturer, brand, date manufactured, place of purchase, date of purchase, model/serial numbers, cost, etc.

If this assignment is requested by Compliance but is listed as a category in the *Criteria and Rationales*, then the report should also meet the requirements of the *Criteria and Rationales* including use of any applicable guidelines and data record sheets. For assignments requested by EP, if it is clear that a product defect is involved, then the report must also meet Compliance requirements.

----- Area below will be completed in Data Systems -----

Person(s) to Contact: Joan Doe, consumer (See attached)

Task Number: XXXXXNCCXXXX

Date: 01/08/2013

Assigned to: CFI

Processed by: jcw

CPSC FORM 324A

If the assignment contains restricted data or requires special handling procedures for some other reason, the assignment message will inform the investigator of this requirement under the person(s) to contact section. For example, the assignment message may state "*Do not contact next of kin*," in which case you may *not* attempt to contact next of kin. (See section below on *Use of Restricted Documents* for more information on contacting next-of-kin.)

Investigation guidelines can be accessed in the Integrated Field System (IFS). When an assignment is reviewed, the investigator can search for applicable guidelines under the "Invest. Guide" button, and pull it up by Appendix number, product name, or guideline name. The guideline can then be read, saved, or printed as a reference. As new investigations guidelines are developed, these are also added. When other directions are received, they will be included in the *Incident Investigation Assignment Instructions*.

Investigators are encouraged to contact the investigation requestor (e.g., the appropriate EP analyst, engineer, compliance officer, etc.) directly when there are questions about what is expected.

If the investigator is unable to follow the instructions in the *Incident Investigation Assignment Instructions*, then the investigator must state, in the investigation report, why the instructions were not followed. (This includes instances where the investigator has received verbal direction from the requestor that differs from the *Incident Investigation Assignment Instructions*.)

Examples of this include:

- Conducting a telephone investigation when the instructions specified it should be conducted on-site.
- Not collecting a sample when a sample was requested.

Compliance assigned IDIs may request that the investigator contact the compliance officer (CO) before proceeding. If there is no direction to contact the CO in the IDI instructions, but the investigator has questions, he or she should contact the CO. For field-assigned IDIs, the COs may not be aware that the IDI has been assigned. When an investigator has questions about the product, he or she should contact the CO covering that product area for advice. While doing pre-IDI research, if the investigator finds that a CO is working on a case that seemingly involves this product, the investigator should contact the CO. There may be specific things the CO wants to find out, or the CO may be able to tell the investigator that an IDI is not necessary. If an investigator is instructed by the CO that an IDI is not necessary, the investigator should contact their supervisor for further instruction.

Headquarters generated assignments include a copy of the assignment (found in the *Incident Investigation Assignment Instructions*), plus any background information (e.g., source document) on the case. These are electronically issued through IFS to the field for distribution to the field supervisors so that the investigator has the necessary information to conduct a complete and comprehensive investigation. Field supervisors will determine the investigator who will receive the assignment.

### Use of Restricted Documents:

Many investigations assigned require that the victim's identity not be revealed. This is important, for example, when assigning death certificates and medical examiners and coroners' reports (MECAPs). The EPDS staff will identify on the *Incident Investigation Assignment Instructions* if next-of-kin can be contacted which requires identifying the victim. If it is not indicated or if you are uncertain, please call your supervisor to determine what contact should or should not be attempted with the family.

There are different rules for who may be contacted, depending on the type of source document. Note that the restrictions are different between MECAP reports and death certificates.

For certain assignments stemming from death certificates or MECAP reports, there are restrictions on whether or when the next of kin may be contacted. Please pay close attention to the *Person(s) to Contact* line on the *Incident Investigation Assignment Instructions*. If the *Incident Investigation Assignment Instructions* specify that you are not to contact next of kin, you may **not** attempt to contact next of kin. If the *Incident Investigation Assignment Instructions* specify that you are only to contact next of kin IF the reporting Medical Examiner/Coroner grants permission, you must put a statement in the narrative that permission was granted or you may not even attempt to contact the next of kin.

CPSC has very specific contractual agreements specifying who can be contacted with regard to certain death certificates and MECAP reports. If permission to contact next of kin is not granted nor permitted, the next of kin should **not** be contacted. Contacting next of kin (or *attempting* to contact next of kin) without proper permission could put at risk our death certificate and MECAP programs to continue to provide our agency with death certificates and MECAP reports.

Some investigators have established relationships with certain ME/Coroners over the years and have received a "blanket" permission to contact the next of kin. In these cases, a statement affirming that the reporting ME/Coroner granted permission to contact next of kin must still appear in the narrative of the report. At the investigator's discretion this statement may also be placed (*in addition to the narrative*) in the List of Contacts page.

If there is conflicting information in the assignment message with regard to who may be contacted (*i.e.*, the "Instructions to Investigator" section of a Compliance assignment differs from the "Person(s) to contact" line at the bottom of the assignment message), the contact line at the bottom of the assignment message takes precedent. (This is especially critical when the source document is a MECAP or death certificate.)

### Point-of-Contact for Death Certificates by State:

The chart below identifies each state's requirements for contacting next-of-kin and local officials. This chart should be referred to before each death certificate investigation. EPDS analysts will contact each state for permission before assigning death certificates to the field. EPDS analysts will also refer to this chart when completing the "Person(s) to contact" line on the assignment message when processing the assignment to the field.

Carefully review this chart and the instructions *before* attempting to make or making contact with next-of-kin. (Do not attempt to contact next-of-kin if not permitted to do so per the source document death certificate.)

1	2	3	4	5
<b>STATES WITHOUT RESTRICTIONS</b> NOTE: Contacting Next-of-Kin, Local Officials may be done without permission from state	<b>STATES REQUIRING PERMISSION FROM STATE BEFORE CONTACTING LOCAL OFFICIALS OR NEXT-OF-KIN</b>	<b>STATES REQUIRING PERMISSION TO CONTACT LOCAL OFFICIALS ONLY, NEXT-OF-KIN CONTACT IS NOT PERMITTED</b>	<b>STATES ALLOWING NO CONTACT WITH NEXT-OF-KIN OR LOCAL OFFICIALS</b>	<b>STATES ALLOWING CONTACT WITH LOCAL OFFICIALS ONLY</b>
Alabama Alaska California Connecticut Florida Georgia Hawaii Iowa Kentucky * Maine Massachusetts Minnesota Mississippi New Hampshire New York State North Carolina * Ohio Rhode Island Tennessee Texas Vermont West Virginia * Wisconsin	Michigan Nebraska  <hr/> <i>If <u>Missouri</u> or <u>Virginia</u> death cert, contact is the following:</i> Local officials only - NO EMS contact; next of kin contact NOT permitted.	Colorado Delaware Indiana Missouri Oklahoma Pennsylvania Oregon South Carolina Utah Virginia  <hr/> <i>If <u>Penna.</u> death cert, contact is the following:</i> Officials only; next of kin contact NOT permitted; purge all victim ID and victim's family ID prior to submitting report.	Kansas North Dakota	Arizona Arkansas District of Columbia Idaho Illinois Louisiana Maryland Montana Nevada New Jersey New Mexico New York City South Dakota Washington Wyoming
Officials, eyewitnesses, next of kin <i>[see also NC, KY, &amp; WV death exceptions]</i>	Officials, eyewitnesses, next of kin	Officials only; next of kin contact NOT permitted	No contact permitted	Officials only; next of kin contact NOT permitted

\*Exceptions for NC/KY/WV death certificate contacts will be listed on the *Incident Investigation Assignment Instructions*.

Rev. 08/09/2012

## Chapter 3 – Receipt of Assignments

### Acknowledging Assignments:

Acknowledgment of an assignment is automatic through IFS when the supervisor assigns the task to an investigator.

### Assignment Priority:

The field office supervisors assign the investigation requests to individual investigators. With each day's delay, valuable data are lost, respondents forget details, evidence and products are destroyed or altered, and knowledgeable parties leave the area of the incident. On special investigations, you may be expected to complete your investigation report in a shorter time as identified in the table below. The time frame for each priority case will be designated when the assignment is made. The second two letters in the middle of the thirteen-digit task number reflects the priority code and the turn-around time expected for EXHR and Compliance assignments. The following table outlines the suggested priority time frames:

Assignment Priorities		
Priority Code	Description of Priorities	Estimated Time*
AA	Urgent Priority – Reserved for cases of exceptionally high visibility and importance (e.g., life threatening defects, cases involving a Commission action).	Immediately
BB	High Priority – Reserved for cases of special interest such as those under special study or where corrective action is being considered.	As fast as possible
CC	Regular Priority – This level is for the standard assignments.	As fast as practical

\*There is no set number of days specified for these estimated time frames.

### Before you begin an investigation:

Make sure you know who has requested the IDI, and check if there is related incident information in CPSC360.

Upon receipt of an IDI, the field investigator should always enter the source document number into CPSC360 to review other pertinent information related to the incident. This includes reviewing any related documents that may have been associated with the assigning document, as well as seeing who made the actual IDI request if different from the headquarters contact name at the top of the assignment message. This is helpful information if you need to ask questions of the requestor prior to completing the IDI, as the requestor is not always the same person as the listed headquarters point of contact.

If you need assistance with using CPSC360, please ask your supervisor or contact the Help Desk.

## Chapter 4 – Contact and Introduction

### Contact Preparation:

Before you initiate contact with a victim or knowledgeable party and attempt to obtain information, review the assignment and any guideline or information available on the product hazard that is involved.

In addition, review the *Criteria and Rationales* provided by Epidemiology that explains why a product or hazard is being investigated in that fiscal year. This information is provided to give field investigators some background on the Commission's position on the hazard, the reason for the data need, and what action the Commission is planning in this area. Become familiar with the accomplishments of the Commission and use these as motivation tools.

If the investigator does not understand some aspect of the assignment, contact the person who requested the assignment (e.g., compliance officer or EXHR staff) as listed on the assignment message before beginning the investigation. See below for links for the listings of EPHA analysts and compliance officers who are responsible for the various hazards/product areas. Some assignment messages may instruct the investigator to make this contact before initiating the investigation.

Responsible analysts by product/hazard area for EXHR assignments	This listing of EPHA staff responsibility can be found in Outlook in the Hazard Analysis Product Area subfolder at:	<a href="#"><i>All Public Folders/EXHR/Hazard Analysis Product Area</i></a>
Responsible compliance officers by product/hazard area for Compliance assignments	This listing of Compliance staff responsibility can be found on SharePoint (field) in the shared documents area at:	<a href="#"><i>CPSCnet &gt; Compliance and Field Operations &gt; Division of Field Investigations &gt; Shared Documents &gt; Compliance Org and Product Area</i></a>

### Initial Contact:

Provided there are no restrictions, it is essential that you, as the investigator, speak with the incident victim or most knowledgeable party whenever practical to obtain the most specific and reliable data possible. Establish a good rapport with the victim, the victim's relatives, and others being interviewed. This rapport, that atmosphere of trust and cooperation, begins with the first contact. It is recommended that in the initial phone call, the title "investigator" not be used. The term "investigator" is generally associated with law enforcement and may cause the respondent to be apprehensive about participating in the investigation. One suggestion would be to use the full title "product safety investigator." However, you should be prepared to show your investigator credentials when you visit the person.

Contacting the Most Knowledgeable Respondents. When a respondent is reached, try to speak to the victim, guardian, or most knowledgeable party. If the most knowledgeable person is not immediately available, obtain as much basic information from the respondent as is practicable, keeping in mind that you need to have permission from a parent or guardian to interview a minor (under 18 years old). If specific information cannot be obtained from this respondent, try to determine who the most knowledgeable party is, when he/she will be available, and where he/she can be reached.

Contacting Respondents during the Evening and Weekend Hours. If you cannot contact the victim or other knowledgeable party by telephone during regular working hours, try to reach them during evening hours and on weekends. We suggest several calls between 6 pm and 9 pm during the week and several calls between 10 am and 9 pm on the weekends. If the victim's email address is known, this should also be tried in an attempt to contact the respondent.

Contacting the Difficult-to-Reach Respondents by Mail. Before terminating an investigation because you cannot contact a knowledgeable party, confirm the accuracy of the address and telephone number by whatever means possible, such as Internet searches or postal records. If you have an address but no telephone number or email address, send the victim a letter with delivery confirmation requesting their cooperation. The investigator can also visit the address and if no one is home, leave a business card and a note or copy of the contact letter at the home. If still unsuccessful, report the situation to your supervisor so that he/she can arrange whatever additional steps may be appropriate, such as visiting the address while in the area on other business.

When exchanging emails with respondents, use a cloud-based secure file transfer system (such as Accellion) whenever appropriate.

#### *Sample Victim Letter for On-Site Visit*



United States Government  
Consumer Product Safety Commission  
4330 East West Highway  
Bethesda, MD 20814  
phone: 555-555-1212 Fax: 555-555-2323  
[thunter@cpsc.gov](mailto:thunter@cpsc.gov)

March 17, 2013

Ms. Jane Smith  
1234 N. Always Avenue  
Anytown, MD 21222

Dear Ms. Smith:

As an agency of the Federal Government, the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) is responsible for investigation consumer product related injuries, deaths, and potential injury situations. Investigations help make us aware of hazards to children and adults and aid us in preventing similar incidents from occurring to other people.

CPSC is currently investigating hazards involving candles and other household products. These investigations help us to identify hazards and safety issues, and determine if new safety standards are needed for these products, or if a design defect is present. We also enforce the federal safety regulations covering household appliances, power tools, children's products, and other consumer products. Information about CPSC is enclosed.

We would like to obtain more information about the malfunctioning candle fire that took place during February. I would like to speak with you about this candle, its characteristics, and the sequence of events. Any information that you can provide about the candle (its past history, original packaging, how it was used, correspondence with the manufacturer, any photographs, etc.) is appreciated.

I will try to reach you during the next few days. The telephone number that I have for you is 555-222-9876. Please let me know if this phone number is not correct. Feel free to call me if you have any questions. You can reach me in our Maryland office at 555-555-1212, or via email at [thunter@cpsc.gov](mailto:thunter@cpsc.gov).

Sincerely,

Tom Hunter  
Product Safety Investigator

Enclosures

### Introduction:

Familiarity with the subject matter is an important aspect of any interview, including the introduction. Deliver your opening comments in a straight-forward, positive manner. Make the introduction to-the-point, practice the delivery, and speak clearly. If necessary, write your introduction and use it when making the call. Do not read it word for word unless you can make the delivery sound normal. Use the introduction to identify yourself and your affiliation (CPSC), and to confirm the surveillance information in the assignment instruction sheet.

The following introduction is suitable for a telephone interview involving either a NEISS or non-NEISS investigation:

*"Mr. Johnson, I am [name]. I'm with the United States Consumer Product Safety Commission. We are studying incidents involving certain consumer products and according to [source], you injured your leg while using [product]. Is that correct? [If respondent agrees, continue.] By studying the events that lead to incidents like you've experienced, we hope to identify hazards that can be changed, and reduce the number of injuries associated with [product]. Will you please take a few minutes and tell me how you were injured?"*

If immediate cooperation is not obtained, some motivational statements may be useful. Explain that the interview will take "approximately [how long]" and that the information provided is extremely important in assisting the Commission in its effort to reduce injuries associated with [product]. Assure the respondent that his/her name and address are not released unless he/she authorizes the release. Additionally, he/she may request that certain information provided remain confidential. (The release of victim ID pertains only to non-NEISS investigations. Due to our agreements with the hospitals, NEISS victim identification is never retained by CPSC.)

The transition is now complete and your purpose has been defined. At this point the respondent will usually provide a brief description of the incident. Ask appropriate questions until you have obtained the requested information. When you have collected the requested data, go back over the respondent's answers to ensure that you have accurately recorded the description of the incident and answers provided. If an on-site is necessary, explain the purpose of the visit and attempt to schedule a time for the visit that will be convenient for both parties. Make sure that the information to be collected or documented during the on-site (e.g., product information) will be retained by the respondent and made available during the on-site.

For special studies, each NEISS-related incident assigned to the field for an on-site visit has already been investigated by an EPDS contractor via telephone. NEISS telephone investigations will not be reassigned to the field unless the respondent has agreed to be contacted again by CPSC. Once again, if immediate cooperation is not obtained during your initial contact, some motivational statements may be required.

The following three different mood variables of a respondent can affect the interview:

1. Apprehensive
2. Neutral
3. Cooperative

Often people contacted about an interview are neutral or lean towards being uncooperative. People called by strangers are likely to go into the "salesman's syndrome" and be initially uncooperative. What you say in the introduction and transition phase of an interview is critical in moving the respondent to the cooperative mood. People may use barriers to dissuade you. This should be expected and countered with logical motivational information. Maximize the positive!

If a respondent remains uncooperative you might provide motivation by briefly mentioning products that have been modified as a result of the Commission's studies (e.g., cribs, chain saws, riding mowers, ATVs, baby walkers, etc.)



**Refusals:**

If a victims or knowledgeable party refuses to cooperate, search out other sources such as local officials, product dealers, power company investigators, insurance agents, etc. If a victim is adamant in his/her refusal to cooperate, do not attempt to gather information from other family members unless otherwise instructed. However, it is appropriate to obtain whatever information local officials or other investigating agencies may have on the incident, unless it is a case assigned from NEISS data, in which case, do not pursue.

## Chapter 5— Product History CPSC Database Search

### Purpose:

This chapter provides specific direction to field investigative staff regarding how to quickly conduct a basic query of CPSC databases. This research step will be a required part of nearly all in-depth investigations. The exceptions are: ATV investigations in which there is no suggestion of a product failure; pool drownings; and those investigations in which no specific manufacturer, model, or style information could be obtained.

### Background:

While compliance officers routinely make Product Safety Assessment (PSA) requests for thorough database research to be conducted regarding a particular product category or even specific manufacturing and model/style of consumer product, this typically does not occur until Compliance action is being considered.

It has long been recognized that the earlier in the product hazard investigation process we identify products that are generating multiple complaints, especially complaints that suggest a similar failure mode, the more quickly we can identify those products that may pose a substantial product hazard. A preliminary check of CPSC databases would assist investigators in identifying potential investigative leads.

This investigative research is considered another “early warning” procedure that will alert Office of Compliance and Field Operations staff at the earliest point in an investigation that the field might be starting work on a case involving a product that has a previous incident history that may not have been previously recognized or that is already under investigation by Compliance staff.

### Procedures:

All investigations will include a routine query of selected CPSC databases to determine if the product has a previous history with CPSC. The purpose is to identify potential investigative leads. This query is not designed to serve as a replacement for a later formal PSA, but rather serve as a very preliminary inquiry (not a lengthy or exhaustive search) to determine CPSC’s previous history with the product and/or firm.

Upon initiating a new investigation, investigators will conduct a brief search of at least the following CPSC databases:

- CPSCnet
- DCM (Dynamic Case Management system, formerly Section 15 database)\*
- Section 15 database\*
- CPSC360 / CPSRMS
- IPII database

\*Note that cases prior to 2013 are not included in DCM and the old Section 15 database should be searched as well.

The investigator may choose to conduct additional research depending on the circumstances of each individual case. These queries should be conducted when the investigator has some or all of the appropriate product, retailer, or manufacturer information available. In the case of many consumer incident report-based assignments, much of this information is available at the time the investigation is assigned. In the case of a news article, this information may not be available until later stages of the investigation.

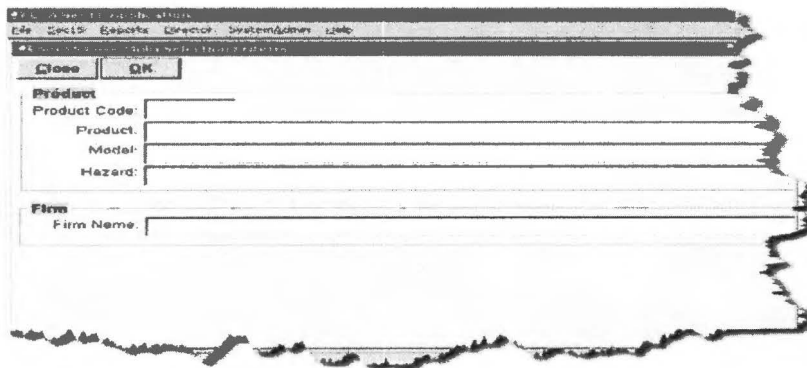
### CPSCnet Searches:

Like all database searches, choosing the right search terms is the key to finding the information you need. Start with the obvious: if you're looking for general information on coffee makers, start your search with that broad term. However, it is often advisable to use multiple search terms; if you're searching for "ABC" brand coffee makers, your search will be better focused if you include both terms. If you are actually interested in "ABC" brand model "123" coffee makers, *including all of those search terms* may produce even more specific results. Start your searches broadly, and then narrow the focus as necessary based on the number of hits received.

### DCM Searches:

The DCM (*formerly Section 15 database*) contains the records of Section 15 product defect cases, both open and closed. If you are beginning a product defect investigation, it will be invaluable to you to know that the Office of Compliance has previously investigated the firm or currently has open Section 15 cases with them. If there is a current open case involving the same product or similar model, it is critical that you coordinate your investigation with the appropriate compliance officer. Note that cases prior to 2013 are not included in DCM and the old Section 15 database should be searched as well.

To search the old Section 15 database, click on the Section 15 application. Then click on the "Sec15" tab and select "CO Query" from the drop down menu. You will be presented with the following screen:

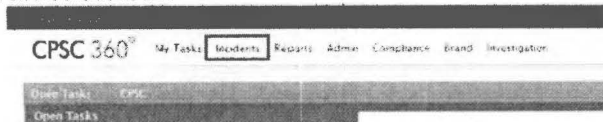


From this screen, you can conduct a query by product, firm name, and other parameters. Using the earlier example of a search for a coffee maker product, entering "coffee maker" will return more than 75 hits. If you narrowed your search by also entering a manufacturer name, your search will be much better focused.

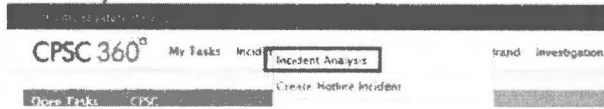
### CPSC 360/CPSRMS Searches:

Instructions for setting a filter using the CPSC 360 Incident Analysis page:

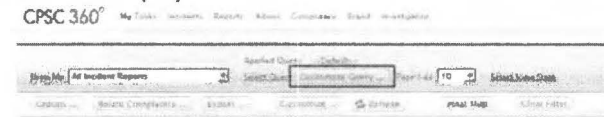
1. Click on the Incidents link



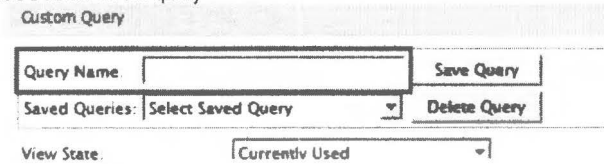
- Click on the Analysis link



- Click on the Custom Query link

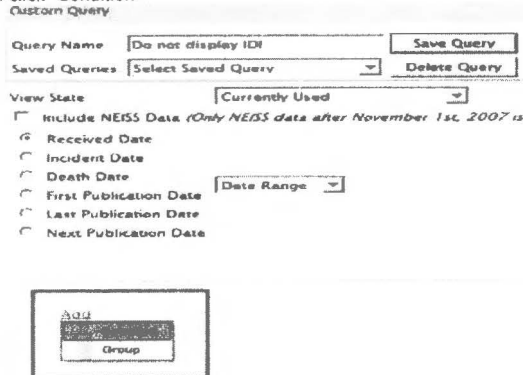


- Provide a name for the query



- Click the "Add" link

- Then click "Condition"



- Click the default link "Document Number"



8. Select "Incident Report Type" (or your desired filter option)

Custom Query

Query Name:

Saved Queries:

View State:

☐ Include NEISS Data (Only NEISS data after November 1st, 2007 is currently available in CPSC 160.)

☒ Received Date

☐ Incident Date

☐ Death Date

☐ First Publication Date

☐ Last Publication Date

☐ Next Publication Date

Incident Report Entered Date

Incident Report Locale

Incident Report Number

Incident Report Reviewed Date

Incident Report State/Province

Incident Report Status

**Incident Report Type**

Incident Reported Anonymously

Incident State Province Abbreviation

Incident State Province Code

Incident State Province Name

Investigation Status

Last Published Date Range

From

9. Select the filter conditions

☒ Incident Report Type One of

Add

4 Items Selected

☒ Unspecified

☒ Injury, Potential Injury Incident

☐ In-Depth

☒ Death

☒ NEISS

10. Ensure all other parameters are acceptable

View State:

☐ Include NEISS Data (Only NEISS data after November 1st, 2007 is currently available in CPSC 160.)

☒ Received Date

☐ Incident Date

☐ Death Date

☐ First Publication Date

☐ Last Publication Date

☐ Next Publication Date

Date Range

From

To

11. Click the Save Query button

Custom Query

Query Name:

Saved Queries:

View State:

12. View the message of the successful save

Custom Query

Query Name:

- Click the OK button

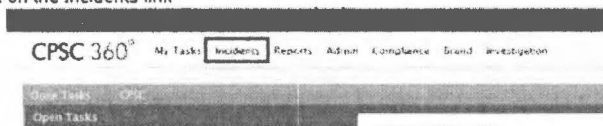
From  To

This query is now applied to the Incident Analysis grid.

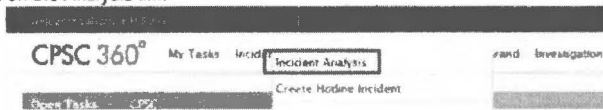
NOTE: The default query will be displayed only when a new session of Internet Explorer is initiated.

IF you have multiple queries set up, you may select the desired query by following the steps below:

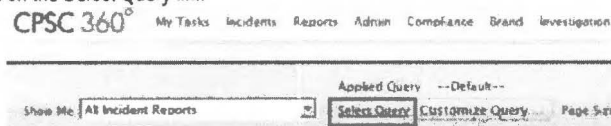
- Click on the Incidents link



- Click on the Analysis link



- Click on the Select Query link

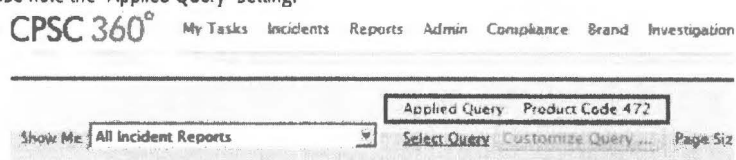


- Select desired query



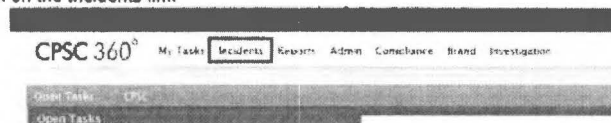
- The system sorts the data in the grid appropriately.

- Please note the "Applied Query" setting.

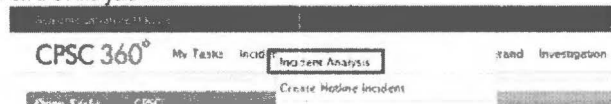


Removing a query from the list:

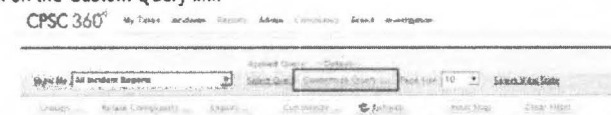
- Click on the Incidents link



- Click on the Analysis link



- Click on the Custom Query link



- Select the desired query from the dropdown list

Custom Query

Query Name: Latest IRs Save Query

Saved Queries: Latest IRs Delete Query

View State: Select Saved Query

☐ Include NEIS

☒ Received D

☐ Incident Da

☐ Death Date

☐ First Public

☐ Last Public

☐ Next Publication Date

age 5 and under

Death Cert only

Do not display IDI

Latest IRs

my saved query - no IDI

No Deaths

Product Code 1355, 1556

Product Code 472

recent published reports

Est. Publish Date Range Between

And First Published Date Range Between

And Last Published Date Range Between

Add

- Click the Delete Query button

Custom Query

Query Name: Latest IRs Save Query

Saved Queries: Latest IRs Delete Query

View State: Select Saved Query

6. The system removes the query from the list

### Injury or Potential Injury Incident (IPII) Database:

This database includes incident information obtained from a wide range of sources, including hotline complaints, website reports, letters, and news clippings. These reports are received from individual consumers or consumer groups, coroners, medical examiners, fire and police departments, and States Attorney General offices from across the nation. There are various screens available to search IPII, but the only way to search for records involving a particular product is to use the IPII Multi-Fields Selection." The other screens are used when you are looking for a particular incident and you know either the document number or task number.

To begin an IPII search, click on the EPIR application. Then select IPII from the "Reports" menu. Then select "Multi-Fields Selection." You will be presented with the following screen:

A date range is required for every search. Use either "date received" or "date entered." (Every record has both a "date received" and a "date entered," but not every record has a "date injured.") Whatever date you decide to use, you should always include your search criteria and the date the search was run with your results. If you decide to include a product code(s) in your search, consider checking the annual Comparability Table (available at <http://www.cpsc.gov/neiss/comptable.pdf>) to be sure that each product code has been in use during the entire date range that you're looking at. In order to include incident data from Section 15 reports and retailer reports, you should check Yes in the field labeled "Restricted" – this includes all Y-documents.



If your investigation involves an incident involving a product which has previously been recalled but which has a serial number or model number outside the scope of the recall, you may want to consider a "date entered" date reflecting the day after the recall was issued to the present date. This will limit the search results to only those complaints received after the recall was issued.

Be careful not to be overly restrictive when searching on manufacturer and/or brand names. For instance, you may wish to avoid searching for a lengthy model number – these are often reported and/or entered in different ways. You might not want to search on model numbers at all; model numbers are less likely to be reported accurately (if they're reported at all). Conversely, model names can produce more useful search hits because they are both easier to remember and easier to type (since typos are more obvious). Please be aware that Product ID (manufacturer name, retailer name, model name or number) is not included in the narrative field, so when searching for this kind of information, always check "Manufacturer/Model." You can use parts of words or model numbers, and in many cases that is the best approach.

Following is an example of a typical IPII search: You are asked to conduct an in-depth investigation as a follow-up to an incident report indicating that on March 24, 2008, the lid of a consumer's (b)(3):CPSC Section 6(b) coffee maker melted, posing a potential burn and fire hazard. There are a variety of basic searches you could undertake; this quick example is designed to show the wide parameters you could consider when doing your own searches. As described earlier, a date range is always required. For the purpose of this example, the "date entered" range covers three years from the date you are conducting your query. The product code for electric coffee makers is 0217, and that is entered. Out of curiosity, you decide to find out how many electric coffee maker complaints have been received in the past three years, and find hundreds of records.

The screenshot shows the 'IPII Main Window' with a menu bar (File, Reports, Lookup Codes, Windows, Help) and a title bar 'IPII Multi-Fields Selection Criteria'. The window contains several sections for search criteria:

- Dates (1 required - Use MM/DD/YYYY format):** Includes fields for Date Entered (06/25/2003), Date Received (00/00/0000), and Date Injured (00/00/0000), each with a 'To' field (06/25/2008, 00/00/0000, 00/00/0000 respectively). There are 'OK' and 'Close' buttons.
- Primary Selection:** Includes fields for Issue, State, Area Office, Source, Type Of Contact, Sex, Product (217), Age, and Hazard Type. There are also checkboxes for 'Include Unknown Age (0) with Age Range' and 'Unknown Age (0) ONLY'.
- Secondary Selection:** Includes fields for City and Zip Code.
- Restrict:** Includes checkboxes for 'Manufacturer/Model' and 'Narrative'.

Obviously, a more specific search is necessary. You decide to add the manufacturer name, and enter just "Bunn" because this will include any longer variations of the manufacturer name, including (b)(3):CPSC. Remember to check the "manufacturer/model" box, and "yes" in the "restricted" box. This search returns less than 100 records.

**EPIR Main Window**  
File Reports Lookup Codes Windows Help

**IPII Multi-Fields Selection Criteria**

Dates (1 required - Use MM/DD/YYYY format)

Date Entered:	06/25/2005	To	06/25/2008	OK Close
Date Received:	00/00/0000	To	00/00/0000	
Date Injured:	00/00/0000	To	00/00/0000	

**Primary Selection**

Issue:  State:  Area Office:

Source:  Type Of Contact:  Sex:

Product: 217 To   To   To

Age:  To  ☐ Include Unknown Age (0) with Age Range  
☐ Unknown Age (0) ONLY

Hazard Type:  Inj Code:  Work Related:  Confirmed:

**Secondary Selection**

City:  Zip Code:

☒ Manufacturer/Model ☐ Narrative

BUNN

Restricted ☒ Yes ☐ No

It might be useful to quickly page through a few of these records to see which Bunn electric coffee maker models are generating complaints, and why. Or you could further focus your search.

You decide to search for other complaints specifically involving the same model (b)(3):C that you are currently investigating. If you leave (b)(3) in your query, the results will include all records with the term (b)(3):CPSA (b)(3). It might be better to remove the (b)(3) name in the manufacturer/model selection area of your query and search just for the specific model number. This search returns just three records, and each of these incidents appears to describe a failure similar to the circumstances you are investigating. That search would look like the following:

**EPIR Main Window**

File Reports Lookup Codes Windows Help

**IPII Multi-Fields Selection Criteria**

Dates (1 required - Use MM/DD/YYYY format)

Date Entered: 06/25/2005 To 06/25/2008

Date Received: 00/00/0000 To 00/00/0000

Date Injured: 00/00/0000 To 00/00/0000

**Primary Selection**

Issue:  State:  Area Office:

Source:  Type Of Contact:  Sex:

Product: 217 To   To   To

Age:  To  ☐ Include Unknown Age (0) with Age Range  
☐ Unknown Age (0) ONLY

Hazard Type:  Inj Code:  Work Related:  Confirmed:

**Secondary Selection**

City:  Zip Code:

☒ Manufacturer/Model ☐ Narrative

(b)(3):

Restricted ☒ Yes ☐ No

**EPIR Main Window**  
File Reports Lookup Codes Windows Help

**IPII REPORT SELECTION**

☒ CLEARINGHOUSE FORMAT - WITH MFR (online, batch) OK  
☐ CLEARINGHOUSE FORMAT - WITHOUT MFR (online, batch) Close  
☐ CLEARINGHOUSE COMPRESSED FORMAT - WITH MFR (batch) Printer  
☐ CLEARINGHOUSE COMPRESSED FORMAT - WITHOUT MFR (batch)  
☐ USER-DEFINED FORMAT (batch)

Enter Program Name:

Title:

☐ SAVE RESULT SET TO LOCAL DISK - dBase/Spreadsheet Formats (online)  
☐ SAVE SELECTED FIELDS TO LOCAL DISK - Fixed Length Text Format (online)

**Clearinghouse Format w/MFR Report** X

Do you want to run this report online

Yes No

**EPIR Main Window**  
File Reports Lookup Codes Windows Help

**IPII Report With Manufacturer**

Clearinghouse Format - With Manufacturer  
Reported Incidents  
U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission  
National Injury Information Clearinghouse

6/23/2008  
Page 1

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Document Number : H05C0036A      Task Number :      Issue : 10  
 Date Received : 12/08/2005      Confirmed : Y      Date Entered : 01/03/2006  
 City : FREE SOIL      State : MI      Zip : 49411      Date Notified : 02/28/2006 ( Y )  
 Source : 0      Type Of Contact : 21      CONSUMER COMPLAINTS  
 Prod : 217      ELECTRIC COFFEE MAKERS OR TEAPOTS  
 Prod : 4063      PANELBOARDS, CIRCUIT BREAKERS, GFCIS, OR FUSES  
 Date Injured : 12/02/2005      Work Related : N  
 Age : 0      Sex : 0      UNKNOWN  
 Disposition : 0      0-NO INJURY      Haz Type : 1      FIRES AND FLAMES  
 Brand : (b)(3):CPSA      Screened? :  
 Model : Section 6(b)


**Narrative :**  
 AN ELECTRIC COFFEE MAKER FAILED TO WORK. THE GFCI OUTLET THAT THE UNIT WAS PLUGGED IN ALSO TRIPPED OFF. THE WIRING INSIDE THE COFFEE MAKER WAS FOUND MELTED & BLACK. NO INJURY. FIRE HAZARD.

Save As... Print Close Next Previous Source Image DI Image Assign Msg

Reporting: The results of the product history search will be reported in summary fashion on an attached *Product Search History* form. The form should be attached as the *very last page* in your in-depth investigation report via the separate *Product Search History* tab in IFS. This form is not included as a listed attachment. An example is shown below; the form is available on the field SharePoint portal. A 10-minute training video is also available in SharePoint.

TASK NUMBER : 080625H001234
<b>PRODUCT SEARCH HISTORY:</b>
On 6/25/08 I conducted a search of the Section 15 database for the (b)(3):CP Corporation concerning their model (b)(3): electric coffee maker.
(b)(3):C involves this same model, and for a similar safety safety issue.
I also checked IPII and found that three similar consumer complaints were received between 6/25/05 and 6/25/08.
I also found a complaint involving a potentially similar failure involving the firm's model (b)(3): coffee maker.

INTERNAL USE ONLY



**U.S. CONSUMER PRODUCT SAFETY  
COMMISSION**

**WARNING - INTERNAL USE ONLY**

**Do not release this information outside CPSC**

These searches need not be lengthy; they are meant to provide you with some preliminary investigative insight into the manufacturer and product you are investigating. As with all potential product defect investigations, you should discuss investigations that are suggestive of the need for immediate Compliance activity with your supervisor.

## Chapter 6 – Telephone Interviewing Procedures

### Conducting an In-Depth Telephone Investigation:

If an in-depth telephone follow-up is appropriate, use the pre-incident, incident, post-incident, and product information line of questioning. The narrative does not have to be written using the headings *pre-incident*, *incident*, and *post-incident*, but the narrative should be written in chronological order and should include a sequential account of all factors relevant to the incident. If a guideline has been developed for that product area, it should be referred to before the investigation is started. Sometimes a questionnaire has been created for the telephone interview; in those cases, follow the questionnaire format. Major points to be addressed should include, but are not limited to:

#### Pre-Incident.

1. Victim's general activity prior to the incident.
2. Victim's familiarity with the product (e.g., number of times used).
3. Victim's physical condition (e.g., eyeglasses) and emotional state (e.g., angry, tired, etc.) before the incident, including the use of alcohol and drugs.
4. Environmental conditions, including light, noise, moisture, weather, ventilation, etc.

#### Incident.

1. Victim's activity at the moment of the incident.
2. Victim's position in relation to the product at the time of the incident.
3. If victim had used the product before, what was different this time, including any unusual circumstances such as distractions, environmental conditions, etc.
4. Description of incident, including causal factors and resulting injuries, if any.
5. Photographs from official reports, if available.

#### Post-Incident.

1. Victim's actions following the incident.
2. Medical treatment, including extent and severity of injury, if any incurred and medical test results, if applicable.
3. Handling of the product following the incident.
4. Any changes in procedures or practices following the incident.
5. Tests on product or environment.

#### Product Information.

1. Identification of product, including brand name, model number, serial number, place purchased, date of purchase, and manufacturer. If an ATV or UTV is involved, please include the Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) whenever it is known.
2. Condition of product before and after incident, including maintenance and any modifications to the product.
3. Presence or absence of safety devices.
4. Warning labels, operating instructions, conformance to any standard, etc.
5. Photographs of the product from official reports if available.
6. Disposition of product.

### Telephone Questionnaire Follow-up:

If a telephone questionnaire or data record sheet is to be completed, attempt to obtain answers to as many questions as possible. Each question should be asked of the respondent in the same manner as stated in the questionnaire. Report the response in the space provided using the respondent's actual words whenever possible. Also include qualifying terms used by the respondent such as "I think...", "It could have been...", "It was probably...", "I was told that..." If multiple respondents are involved, clearly identify the respondent for each statement.

In some instances, the respondent will provide the investigator with answers to the questions before the question is asked. In these instances, the question should still be asked again, but in an altered manner. For example, if the respondent stated during the initial discussion: "I was riding an XYZ vehicle...", you could ask a question later, pertaining to the type of vehicle as follows: "You indicated earlier that you were riding an XYZ vehicle, is that correct?"

If the respondent should abruptly terminate the discussion, information provided by him earlier in the interview may be used to answer questions that had not yet been asked. Do not use information from the surveillance source or document unless the source document is an official report (i.e., death certificate, Medical examiners, fire or police reports) to answer questions in the questionnaire or data record.

If the questionnaire does not provide sufficient space for the response, use additional sheets, or report the information in a summary narrative that should accompany all questionnaires/data records. The space provided for answers should not in any way cause the investigator to limit the amount of detail that he/she would otherwise report on the incident.

## Chapter 7– On-Site Investigations

### Scheduling an On-Site Investigation:

After identifying yourself and the purpose of the call, the investigator should ask a series of questions about the incident based on the surveillance information that accompanied the assignment. The response to these questions should confirm the accuracy for the surveillance data, and allow the investigator to make a decision regarding the level of follow-up.

One of the factors to consider is whether the product is available for examination. If examining the product is appropriate, inform the respondent that you would like to conduct an on-site investigation to examine the product and reconstruct the incident situation. Schedule a time that is convenient to both the respondent and you. Ask the respondent to retain the product and any evidence of the incident, including a copy of the purchase receipt, for the scheduled on-site. The respondent should also be requested to locate any literature related to the product, such as the owner's manual, assembly instructions, repair receipts, and packaging/labeling.

If the on-site is scheduled several weeks in advance, the investigator should confirm the appointment a few days before the scheduled visit.

If the *Incident Investigation Assignment Instructions* specify that the investigation should be conducted on-site, but an on-site is not conducted for *any* reason, then the investigator must mention in the investigation report why an on-site was not able to be conducted. (This includes instances where the investigator has received verbal direction from the assignment requestor that differs from the *Incident Investigation Assignment Instructions*. Another example is if the investigator meets with the consumer at a location *other than where the incident occurred*.)

### Introduction to an On-Site:

First, explain to the victim or respondent the importance of an ON-SITE visit for their particular incident, emphasizing the value of collecting detailed information and documenting their incident situation. If the respondent realizes and appreciates the need for this visit as it relates to this particular situation, he/she will be more specific, more tolerant, and provide more assistance in gathering the incident information.

### Collection of Data:

Have the respondent briefly describe the incident in his/her own words. This description will give you a general understanding of the incident situation. However, do not let the respondent go into detail at this time. Try to control the discussion so that you can collect the data in an organized manner and minimize repetitive information from the respondent.

After you have a general understanding of the incident situation, let the respondent know that you would like to break the incident down into the same categories followed in a telephone investigation. This information will let the respondent know how you will be covering the incident and should provide for more precise answers.

Next, ask the respondent to show you the incident scene. You will want to collect as much of the information at the actual scene of the incident as possible.



Pre-Incident. The pre-incident sequence establishes the relationship between the victim, the product, and the environment just prior to the incident. It sets the stage by describing all circumstances that combined to produce the incident. The pre-incident sequence includes, but is not limited to, information describing:

1. Victim's activities prior to the incident.
2. Victim's familiarity with the proper operation of the product.
3. Number of times the victim had performed this particular operation.
4. Safety precautions that the victim may have taken prior to the incident.
5. Victim's awareness of the potential hazard prior to the incident.
6. Victim's physical condition, including the need for glasses, hearing aid, or other devices.
7. Victim's emotional state including the consumption of alcohol, drugs, etc.; the involvement of fatigue, etc.
8. Environmental and related factors, such as lighting, surface friction, spacing of furniture, location (indoors or outdoors), weather conditions, terrain, visibility, obstacles, etc.
9. The victim's age and gender should be placed in the narrative section.

Incident. The incident sequence is a very specific, sequential account of all relevant factors at the precise time the incident occurred. This section includes information describing the following:

1. The victim's exact movements and activities at the time of the incident.
2. The relative position of the product and the operator.
3. Unusual circumstances which may have contributed to the incident (distractions, environment, etc.)
4. Operating procedures being followed at the time of the incident.

This information can be easily collected by having the respondent re-create the incident situation. Re-creating the incident should always be done when there is a product failure unless doing so would be a potential hazard or cause undue emotional distress to the respondent. The victim's position in relation to the product(s) should be closely observed and documented.

Post-Incident. The post-incident sequence is a description of the events immediately following the incident. This section includes information describing the following:

1. Actions of the victim and/or any by-standers immediately after the incident.
2. First aid and/or emergency medical treatment that was administered.
3. Severity of the injury, including any permanent impairment that may have resulted.
4. Demographic and injury data for persons other than the most seriously injured victim.
5. Subsequent action taken to prevent this type of incident from occurring again.
6. The investigator should ask the respondent if the manufacturer or retailer were contacted and the answer should be documented in the narrative. If a follow-up visit is made to the retailer by the investigator, this should be noted on the Contacts List. In this section, the investigator should go into detail with the actual name, address, and contact information of the retailer and include any additional product information obtained. If a product defect is suspected, the investigator may also try to contact retailers who may have sold the same product(s) (i.e., model number) and ask about other complaints received from other consumers in this same section.
7. Whether the product has been modified or repaired, and whether the product is still in use.

The post-incident section should also include information from additional sources such as fire and police reports, results of legal actions, etc. The investigator should not analyze or give their opinion of a product hazard or failure in the investigation. If the respondent provides an opinion as to why the product failed, the investigator should include the opinion in the report, stating that this was the respondent's opinion.

Product Information. Product information describes any and all data available on or about the product(s). Be certain to identify all manufacturers when a product contains components identified as coming from multiple manufacturers. This section includes:

1. Brand name and, if available, the name and address of the manufacturer. The brand name should be in **bold print**.
2. The model number and serial number.
3. The principle dimensions of the product.
4. Materials used in the construction of the product, and their condition, age, and disposition.
5. Operating or cautionary instructions presently on or included with the product.
6. Controls and/or safety devices on the product or included with it, and any removal, altering, or modification of these devices.
7. Repairs, modifications, and general condition of the product prior to and immediately after this incident, including information from the repair services or retailer. (If the repair shop has information about similar problems, include this data on a separate sheet behind the investigation report so that it can be easily redacted.) This information should be documented in the investigation report.
8. Source from which the product was purchased, borrowed, or rented. If there was a product failure, the investigator should attempt to visit the store where the product was purchased in an attempt to find additional product information.
9. If a product has been recalled, the recall number should be referenced in the investigation report.
10. If multiple products are involved (e.g., a hair dryer and an outlet), information on the additional products should also be obtained.

Data Record Sheet. If a data record sheet is attached to the product investigation guideline, it should be completed. The data record sheet essentially collects very specific information in a consolidated manner. Many of the details are very specific to the product involved and may or may not have been considered by the investigator. Occasionally, some of the information will not be available; it is important for the EXHR analyst to know that an effort was made to gather the unavailable information and that it was not simply overlooked. Investigators differ in their reporting styles and the data record sheet is a tool to streamline the essential incoming information so as to enable automated data entry for subsequent analyses. Data Record Sheets should include the Exhibit number and task number header as specified in Chapter 8 of this manual.

If there is no information at all gathered during the course of the investigation that can be used in completing a data record sheet, you need to include a statement to that effect within the narrative of the report. If *any* information, no matter how minimal, is filled in on a data record sheet, then the entire data record sheet must be completed. In these cases, it is permissible to fill in the unknown or non-applicable information with "unknown" or "N/A."

### Completion of Body Chart Diagram:

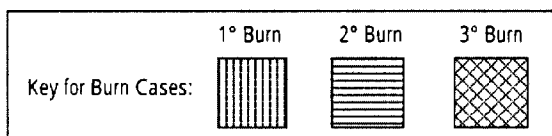
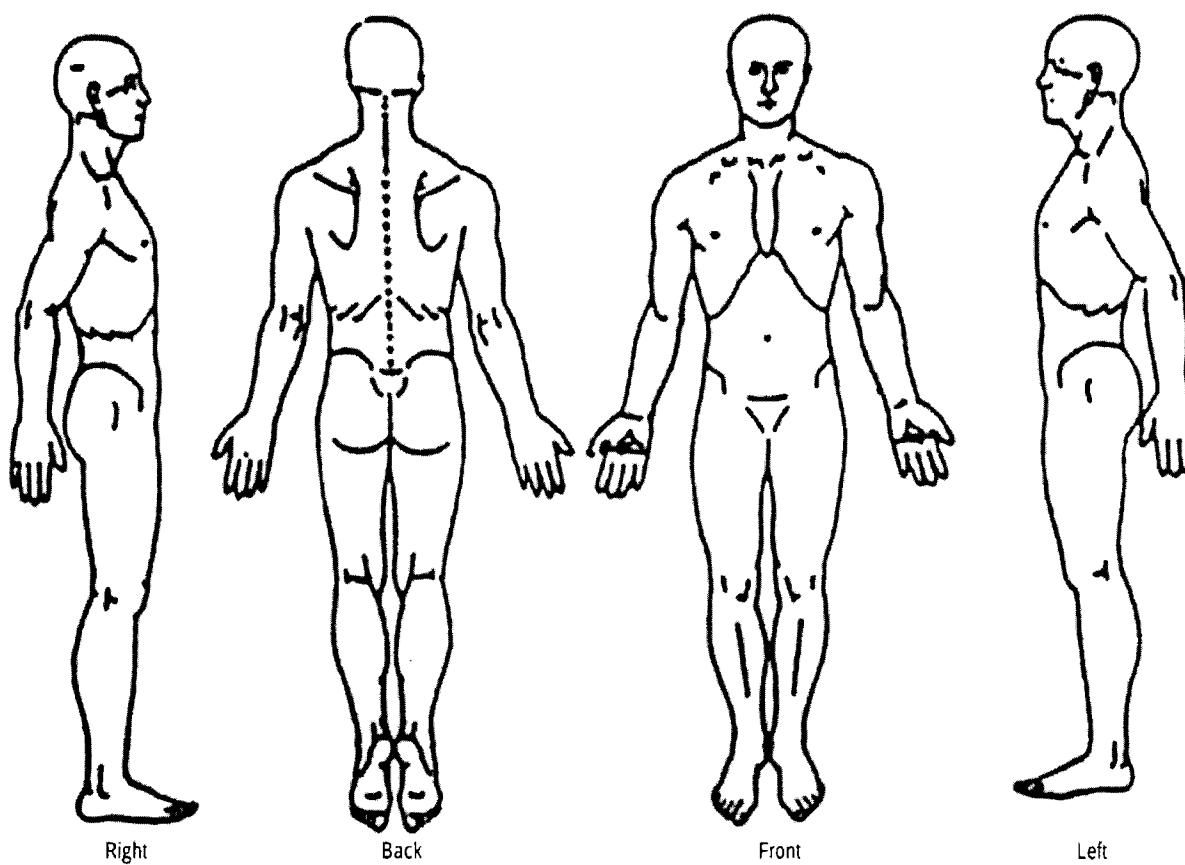
A body chart diagram may be included as part of the report to provide a graphic depiction of an injury (for instance, with a burn victim to illustrate the body areas that were burned.) Be certain to show the injury on as many views of the body chart diagram as needed. If a death report is collected while conducting an investigation and a diagram already exists, then a separate body chart is not necessary. In many of the investigations requested, there was no injury, and therefore a diagram may not be necessary. On this body chart diagram:

1. Complete the "location of injury" and "IDI task number" sections at the top of the body chart diagram.
2. Indicate the location of the injury or injuries on the body chart diagram. Label the area indicated with the diagnosis.
3. Indicate burn injuries by covering the body area involved with the appropriate markings, as shown in the key for 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> degree burns.
4. Use the space between body positions to sketch a close-up of the body part involved to show details of the injury.
5. Complete a separate body chart diagram for each victim in a multiple victim incident. Position the charts in decreasing order of the severity of injury. Label the charts "Victim 1," "Victim 2," etc.

### Body Chart Diagram

IDI Task Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Location of Injury: \_\_\_\_\_



### Photographs:

Photographs should be taken/obtained on all on-site investigations, and any other type of investigation where appropriate. Include several photos of the product and the environment. If possible, include photos showing the relationship between the position of the victim and the position of the product at the time of injury. Photographs are imaged and transmitted as part of the complete IDI report. See Chapter 8 for more information on photographs.

Be certain that the photographs illustrate the following:

1. The size of the product by including a ruler or object of known size.
2. A close-up of any part of the product that is the suspected cause of the incident or source of the injury.
3. Overall views of the product from different angles.
4. Identification nameplates and/or markings, warnings, and cautionary labels.
5. The location (environment) where the incident occurred.
6. The relationship between the victim and the product, if possible, by having the victim/witness reconstruct the incident situation, providing a reconstruction is not hazardous. (Do not include the victim's face or any identifying features in the photograph.)
7. Each individual photograph should be separately labeled and numbered according to the sequence of events. Identify *each individual* photograph with a unique identifier (e.g., Photo B-1, Photo B-2, etc., for photos in Exhibit B) and ensure that the Task Number and Exhibit Number are on each page.
8. (Do not "photo-shop" several pictures together to create one new picture.)
9. The investigator should check photographs prior to leaving the on-site investigation to make sure that the images are clear.
10. Include the total number of *individual photographs* included in each exhibit in the list of Exhibits.

### Diagrams:

Prepare diagrams wherever practicable. Well-prepared diagrams with accurate dimensions and measurements help clarify the relationships between victim, product, and environment, and help establish relationships between points of interest at the scene of the incident. Diagrams also provide valuable information when photographs are not possible. Be certain to discuss all diagrams in your narrative and to put the identifying task number on each diagram.

### Additional Information Sources:

If the assignment involves an incident where a local agency (e.g., fire department, police, gas/electric utility, or medical examiner) conducted an on-site investigation, then contact that agency. Locate the individual who conducted the investigation and discuss the incident with him/her. Obtain a copy of the report and any photographs or other documentation that may have been prepared or obtained. Finally, if a product has a potential product defect, contact the repair service and/or retailer if involved, for information on the problem(s) associated with the product in question or on like products.

Some local/state agencies can only provide information requested under a subpoena. If this occurs, contact an attorney in the Office of General Council (OGC) for guidance. Likewise, if a repair service or retailer does not wish to cooperate, obtain guidance from the Office of Compliance.

If the case involved a fire and most of the fire department evidence is destroyed, including the product, try to determine the insurance company who had coverage on the building. Contact the agent for information on the causal factors. They usually make a concerted effort to determine cause (product) so they can subrogate the claim if possible. In many instances, the agent may have obtained specific product identification and causal information.

Reports and documents obtained from additional information sources should not be purged of victim identities, unless specifically directed to do so in the assignment instructions. The Clearinghouse is responsible for purging victim ID from all documents before releasing the investigation report.

Information collected from additional sources on incidents associated with similar products should be sent to Compliance in memo form and not made part of the investigation report. A copy of all memos sent to Compliance should be sent to EPDS as an attachment to the originating task assignment.

#### HIPAA:

The CPSC *Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act* (HIPAA) exemption authority is spelled out in a Federal Register (FR) notice. The FR notice is what you provide medical facilities if they cite HIPAA concerns when you request medical records. You can use the text below in your written request to introduce the FR as some healthcare providers may need or expect an explanation of the FR notice. The text can be a stand-alone letter/email/fax or you can incorporate it into your regular official request. *The Office of General Counsel has approved this exact language, so do not alter the text of this paragraph.*

The attached "Public Health Authority Notification" was published in the Federal Register on March 3, 2014. The Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) published this notice to inform hospitals and other health care organizations of CPSC's status as a "public health authority" under the medical privacy requirements of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA). Therefore, CPSC is entitled to receive protected health information from hospitals and other health care organizations without written authorization or consent. Please see the attached notice for further information. If you have any questions, please contact me or Melissa Buford, CPSC Office of the General Counsel at 301-504-7636.

#### Product Specific Guidelines:

Approximately 135 product specific guidelines have been developed to assist investigators in collecting key information. Investigators should always check for a guideline on the products implicated in *every* incident assigned for investigation. Whenever available, the guideline(s) should be used to obtain the incident data. If a product specific guideline is not available, a guideline on a related product or the "general" guidelines discussed earlier in this chapter (pre-incident, incident, post-incident, product approach) should be used to obtain the incident data.

Instructions in the guidelines do not replace or supersede investigation requirements/instructions found in this manual unless affirmatively stated otherwise in the guideline or the *Incident Investigation Assignment Instructions*.

If additional information is needed to understand the operation of the product(s) or the hazard(s), consult websites, texts, product brochures, catalogs, fact sheets, etc. for the desired information. Search out a friend or acquaintance who is familiar with the product(s). Finally, visit a store or dealer/distributor that handles the product(s) for information on the use and operation. Dealers are usually very helpful in this regard.

If the guideline or other information available does not adequately address your questions or concerns, contact the EXHR staff or compliance officer responsible for that product area and discuss the situation with him/her.

Responsible analysts by product/hazard area for EXHR assignments	This listing of EPHA staff responsibility can be found in Outlook in the Hazard Analysis Product Area subfolder at:	<u><i>All Public Folders/EXHR/Hazard Analysis Product Area</i></u>
Responsible compliance officers by product/hazard area for Compliance assignments	This listing of Compliance staff responsibility can be found on SharePoint (field) in the shared documents area at:	<u><i>CPSCnet &gt; Compliance and Field Operations &gt; Division of Field Investigations &gt; Shared Documents &gt; Compliance Org and Product Area</i></u>

### **Sample Collection for Evaluation and Analysis:**

Sampling a product(s) is based on the requirements set for you by the analyst in the assignment instructions or in the *Criteria and Rationales*. When you sample a product(s), CPSC will test, inspect, measure, or examine the product(s) involved in the incident. For instance, a product may fail and cause a fire. CPSC engineers will want to examine the incident sample to determine the cause of the failure and to determine if it is a design defect or a one-of-a-kind situation. Therefore, collect the product(s) as a sample based on the information given to you in the assignment instructions or the *Criteria and Rationales*.

If, during the course of your investigation, the requirement to collect a sample changes from what the assignment instructions indicate (e.g., the investigator talks with the compliance officer who decides a sample is no longer needed), then the investigation report must address the inconsistency between the request for a sample and the lack of sample collected. (E.g., *"In discussions with the assigning compliance officer, it was determined that a sample was no longer needed."*)

**Collection.** In most cases, the failed consumer unit (the *"incident sample"*) should be collected. If the failure involves a regulated product, an official sample should be collected from a retailer (an *"exemplar sample"*) for full testing. The compliance officer and your supervisor should be contacted if you are unsure as to whether the incident sample and/or an exemplar sample should be collected. There may be cases where only part of the unit is necessary for testing purposes, and this should also be discussed with the compliance officer. If the consumer unit is not available, discuss with your supervisor and compliance officer whether you should attempt to collect an exemplar sample from a retailer. When either the incident sample or an exemplar sample is collected, a sample collection report should be attached as an exhibit to the completed IDI.

**Sample Documentation.** If a sample is to be collected, proceed as follows:

1. Refer to *Order 9010.36, Domestic Sample Collection* for procedures. Issue a *Receipt for Sample* and offer payment for the product.
2. Inform the consumer that the product will not be returned, and that the product may or may not be tested. In rare instances, a sample will need to be "borrowed" from the consumer. Before doing so, make arrangements with the headquarters staff to assure that the sample is returned. Borrowing samples is discouraged.
3. Include the task number of the case in block 5 of CPSC Form 166.
4. Attach a copy of the *Sample Collection Report* to the investigation report.
5. Include the sample number and a description of the sample in the investigation report under product information.
6. Indicate the sample number in box 22 on Form 182. (See Chapter 8.)

### Authorization for Release of Name (On-Site):

Securing an authorization for release of name should be approached differently during an on-site than during a telephone follow-up. Therefore, the following approach in connection with an on-site investigation is suggested.

Incident Reports Received Without Restrictions. If the case was identified through a news clip, consumer complaint, or a governmental referral, ask the respondent (if he or she is the victim) if the CPSC may disclose his/her name to the manufacturer of the involved product and to others requesting information on that product. Explain that CPSC shares this information with the manufacturer so that they become aware of these injuries and the investigation findings. In some cases, the manufacturers would like to re-contact the victim for additional information, and therefore need the victim's name and address. *Do not ask other respondents other than the victim/complainant for permission to release their names.*

If the victim does not object to the disclosure of his/her name, prepare an "Authorization for Release of Name" form, CPSC Form 322. (See below for a copy of this form.) Check the box indicating this authorization and have the victim print his/her name, and then sign and date the document on the lines provided. The investigator should provide a copy of the form to the victim (either by mailing or providing a duplicate copy). When completing the *Epidemiologic Investigation Report Form* (CPSC Form 182), check the appropriate boxes in Item 24 and include the signed permission document with the investigation report as an attachment. Do not purge the victim's identification from the document.

If the consent was granted verbally, the narrative of the report must include a statement such as "*The respondent indicated verbally that her contact information could be released to the manufacturer only.*" In situations where there are multiple respondents, the statement should describe the respondent in some way, so that it is clear which respondent granted the permission (for example, parent of victim, consumer, etc.). If block 24 on the Form 182 has "*yes*" or "*yes for manufacturer only*" and the required supporting statement in the narrative or the *Release of Name* form is not included in the report, the report will not be accepted when reviewed by EPDS staff.

If the victim does not permit the release of his/her name, so indicate on the CPSC Form 182. Do not purge victim ID that is in the attached documents (e.g., assignment instructions, official records, etc.). Have the victim complete/sign the form. If the victim/respondent refuses to sign the form, but gives a verbal response, the investigator should note this on the *Release of Name* form, use the appropriate code on Form 182, and include a statement to such effect in the narrative of the report.

If only officials are interviewed for the IDI (e.g., no victim or consumer was contacted), no release of name form is required to be submitted with the report. Be sure, however, to check the "no" button on Form 182.





## U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission

### Authorization for Release of Name

Thank you for assisting us in collecting information on a potential product safety problem. The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission depends on concerned people to share product safety information with us. We maintain a record of this information, and use it to assist us in identifying and resolving product safety concerns.

We routinely forward this information to manufacturers and private labelers to inform them of the involvement of their product in an incident situation. We also give the information to others requesting information about specific products. Manufacturers need the individual's name so that they can obtain additional information on the product or incident situation.

Would you please indicate on the bottom of this page whether you will allow us to disclose your name? If you request that your name remain confidential, we will, of course, honor that request. After you have indicated your preference, please sign your name and date the document on the lines provided.

☐

I request that you do not release my name. My identity is to remain confidential.

☐

You may release my name to the manufacturer but I request that you do not release it to the general public.

☐

You may release my name to the manufacturer and to the public.

Printed Name \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

CPSC Form 322

The *Permission to Disclose Name* section of Form 182 (block 24) is specifically for the disclosure of the name of the victim or the complainant. If a respondent other than the victim/complainant asks that his/her name not be disclosed, please include this information on the Contacts list. Always check "no" when you only obtain information from officials. Always attach the *Authorization for Release of Name* form when it is used. If the authorization is requested (or denied) verbally, include this information in the narrative of your report. When respondents indicates that they do not want information they've provided to be disclosed, use the *Confidential Data Warning* cover sheet and specify on the cover sheet exactly which attachments are to be considered confidential.

**Incident Reports Received With Restriction.** If the case was identified through NEISS, a death certificate, or medical examiner/coroner's report (MECAP), the victim's information must not be included in the reports. We have a contractual agreement with the hospitals and with some states and medical examiners indicating that we will use the victim's identity only to collect information on the incident and that after this action has been completed, the victim's identity will be excised from all public records.

Investigators should be aware that a source document designated with a "Y" at the beginning of the document number (see Chapter 8) is a restricted source document, and therefore an *Official Use Only* cover sheet must be added to the final report. *Official Use Only* cover sheets and *Confidential Data Warning* cover sheets may be used when official reports are collected and restrictions on their use are designated by the provider of the reports (e.g., police, fire, medical examiners, etc.). See Appendix A and Appendix B for sample of the *Official Use Only* cover sheet and the *Confidential Data Warning* cover sheet. These two cover sheets may be photocopied and scanned into your report in IFS. Electronic versions of these two cover sheets are also available in SharePoint in the shared document/field forms and sample letters folder. When using either cover sheet, you must add the IDI task number to the cover sheet. When using the *Confidential Data Warning* cover sheet, you must also include which *specific* exhibits require the use of the cover sheet, where applicable.

Note: the *Official Use Only* cover sheet is now automatically attached to the IDI through IFS when the source document is a "Y" document.

#### **Authorization to Release Name (Telephone):**

If the investigation was limited to a telephone interview, and did not involve restricted information, ask the victim for permission to disclose his/her identity with the same restrictions as above. If he/she gives you verbal permission to do so, check the boxes on the Form 182 indicating this authorization. If verbal, indicate this in the narrative or attach a copy of the *Authorization for Release of Name* form to the investigation report. If the authorization is provided verbally by phone, the *Authorization for Release of Name* form does not need to be completed, but the verbal permission *must* be mentioned in the narrative of the report. If obtained verbally, there is no need to also attempt to obtain this permission in writing. Do not ask other respondents for permission to release their names, and do not put their names in the report. If block 24 on the Form 182 has "yes" or "yes for manufacturer only" and the required supporting statement in the narrative or the Release of Name form is not included in the report, the report will not be accepted when reviewed by EPDS staff.

#### **Confidentiality:**

Assure all victims/complainants, except for public officials, that unless they authorize the release of their name, their identities will remain confidential and will not be released. Under the *Privacy Act of 1974*, investigators are prohibited from disclosing the names of respondents and are subject to civil suit for any damages that occur as a result of willful or intentional action which violates any individual's rights under the *Privacy Act*.

## Chapter 8 – Investigative Report Submission and Review Process

### Components of the completed IDI report:

Since the information is shared with so many, and is the basis for Commission action, the Investigative Report should be clear, concise, and presented in a professional manner. Therefore, we recommend that all reports be neatly typed (preferably in Times New Roman, Arial, or Calibri font; *use of Courier is discouraged*), free of misspellings and other errors, and grammatically correct.

In IFS, the components of the report should be uploaded in the following order:

1. The first page to upload should be the applicable cover sheet (*Official Use Only* or *Confidential Data Warning*), if required. There may be occasions where it is appropriate to include both cover sheets. In those instances, upload the *Official Use Only* cover sheet before the *Confidential Data Warning* cover sheet. Note that the *Official Use Only* cover sheet is now automatically attached to the IDI through IFS when the source document is a "Y" document.
2. The next upload should be the written narrative report, concluding with the List of Exhibits, followed by the exhibits themselves. Be sure to include the Contact List as Exhibit 1. In addition to listing the respondents contacted, the Contact List should include the name of victim, victim's date of birth, and ATV/UTV VIN, whenever available. All other exhibits, including police reports, fire reports, coroner reports, manuals, photographs, and internal CPSC documents (such as the Missing Documents form, Release of Name form, or Sample Collection Report) should come next.
3. Following that, should be any required data record sheets which are completed right in the system by selecting the appropriate record sheet. *Be sure to fill in the boxes on the data record sheets for the task number and exhibit number.*
4. The last upload should be the "Product History Search" if that page is part of the report. The Product History Search should not be enumerated in the list of exhibits.

The list of exhibits at the conclusion of the narrative report should include the *number of pages within each exhibit*, and for photographs should include the *total number of photographs* in the exhibit. Any and all photographs embedded in the narrative must be included in the Photographs exhibit(s).

#### Sample list of exhibits:

*Exhibit A – Contacts List (1 page)*  
*Exhibit B – Photographs (9 photos, 7 pages)*  
*Exhibit C – Police Report (10 pages)*  
*Exhibit D – Fire Report (4 pages)*  
*Exhibit E – Product Manual (29 pages)*  
*Exhibit F – Missing Document form (1 page)*  
*Exhibit G – Release of Name form (1 page)*  
*Exhibit H – Data Record Sheet for Smoke Alarms (4 pages)*  
*Exhibit I – Data Record Sheet for Candles (3 pages)*

If photographs are embedded in the narrative of the report, those same photographs should ALSO be included in the photographs exhibit. In both the embedded photograph and the photograph exhibit, all photographs must be properly labeled and identified.

*All pages of all exhibits* should have the task number at the top of the page, along with the exhibit number and "pages \_\_\_ of \_\_\_" for each exhibit. This includes numbering all components of the completed report, with the following two exceptions to the requirement to include the header information on each page of each exhibit:

1. The first page of all data record sheets must contain the Task Number and the Exhibit Number in the boxes provided. You do not need to include the header on each page of a data record sheet. The total number of pages for the data record sheets must be included in the list of exhibits.
2. The Product History Search page should never be given an exhibit number, nor listed in the list of exhibits.

On rare occasions where the header information (task number/exhibit number/page number) does not *physically* fit at the top of a particular exhibit (due to other printed information being at the top of the page), then it is permissible for the header information to appear at the *bottom* of the page for that exhibit only; all other exhibits in the IDI should have the header information at the top of the page.

There may be additional requirements for inclusion of information or documentation into the investigation report from case-specific guidelines and appendices. These additional requirements do *not* replace, but are *in addition to*, the in-depth investigation requirements found in this manual.

The incident information collected during these investigations will be reported on or attached to a CPSC Form 182 and sent electronically to EPDS for review, use, and distribution.

For a few product areas (e.g., ATVs), you will not need to include a written narrative in the Investigative Report. If this is the case, there will be direction in the guideline and/or appendix for the particular product letting you know that you do not need to complete a narrative.

Record Vehicle Identification Numbers (VIN) as follows:

- ATV-related incidents – include the VIN, if known, on the Contacts List page (Exhibit 1) *and* the ATV data record sheet. Do not put it on the 182.
- UTV-related incidents – include the VIN on the Contacts List page (Exhibit 1) *and* in the product information section of the narrative of the report. Do not put it on the 182.

Other points to consider:

- Never refer to something as an “*accident*.” Use the word “*incident*” instead.\*\*
- Do not include the source document as an exhibit in the Investigative Report.
- Only use the term “electrocution” or “electrocuted” if the victim died; if the victim did not die, use the term “electric shock.”

\*\*Note that, while the 182 itself does use the term “accident” in Blocks 4 and 6, you should not use this term and instead use the term “incident” when describing the event. We are unable to modify the 182 to remove the word “accident” and replace it with “incident.”

## CPSC Form 182 Epidemiologic Investigation Report

1. Task Number		2. Investigator's ID		EPIDEMIOLOGIC INVESTIGATION REPORT	
3. Office Code	4. Date of Accident YR MO DAY	5. Date Initiated YR MO DAY			
6. Synopsis of Accident or Complaint					
UPC					
7. Location (Home, School, etc)		8. City		9. State	
10A. First Product		10B. Trade/Brand Name		10C. Model Number	
10D. Manufacturer Name and Address					
11A. Second Product		11B. Trade/Brand Name		11C. Model Number	
11D. Manufacturer Name and Address					
12A. Hispanic or Latino		12B. Race Other:		12C. Race Source	
13. Age of Victim		14. Sex		15. Disposition	
16. Injury Diagnosis		17. Body Part(s) Involved		18. Respondent	
19. Type of Investigation		20. Time Spent (Operational / Travel)		21. Attachment(s)	
22. Case Source		23. Sample Collection Number		24. Permission to Disclose Name (Non NEISS Cases Only)	
<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No <input type="radio"/> Yes for Manuf. Only <input type="radio"/> Verbal <input type="radio"/> Written					
25. Review Date 00/00/0000		26. Reviewed By		27. Regional Office Director	
28. Distribution		29. Source Document Number			

CPSC FORM 182 (01/2011)

OMB No. 3041-0029

## Completing CPSC Form 182:

This Form 182 is to be completed whenever the investigator collects any significant information beyond that provided in the originating assignment document. This includes information collected during either telephone or on-site investigations. Some of the blocks of Form 182 are pre-populated based on certain coded information at the time of the initial assignment request. If you find, during the course of your investigation, that some pre-populated items are not as accurate as they should be, you will need to change the coding prior to submitting the IDI.

Form Entries. The following instructions review in detail each entry on the Incident Investigation Report Form. Each item detailed below is numbered to correspond with the appropriate item on the form.

1. Task Number. This block is for the 13-digit task number that appeared on the assignment.

2. Investigator's Identification. This block is for the investigator's (or contractor's) 4-digit ID number.

3. Office Code. This number identifies the office/contractor responsible for the investigation.

4. Date of Incident (\*\*Accident). Enter the date the incident occurred using a year-month-day order. If the exact date is unknown, at least enter the year of occurrence. If multiple incidents occurred, use the date (year) of the first incident.

5. Date Initiated. Enter the date that you first attempted to contact the victim or a person knowledgeable about the incident. Use a year-month-day order.

6. Synopsis of Incident (\*\*Accident) or Complaint. Provide a brief scenario summarizing the incident and answering the questions of *who, what, where, when, and how*. There are eight lines of text available to you in block 6 so be as thorough as possible in the space allotted to encompass the "*who, what, where, when, and how*" of the incident. The scenario should include the victim's age, sex, and location at the time of the incident. Include any treatment received and what the final diagnosis was, if known. When applicable and available, include damage estimates. In multiple victim incidents, include the ages of the victims not shown in block 12.

In block 6, do not include statements of unknown information (e.g., the manufacturer of the generator was unknown") or your processing information (e.g., collected a sample, sent a letter to the medical examiner, etc.). This information is appropriate to include in the narrative of your report, but should not be in the synopsis at block 6 of the 182.

*Example 1: "The victim, 4yof (WHO), received first and second degree burns (DIAGNOSIS) to her chest from a fire (WHAT) apparently started by her 4yo brother playing with a cigarette lighter (HOW) in the bedroom closet of their home (WHERE). The victim was hospitalized for 2 weeks and released. The brother received no injury. There was an estimated \$23,000 damage to the home (DAMAGE ESTIMATE) and the smoke alarm did not sound (SMOKE ALARM INFORMATION)."*

*Example 2: "The victim, a 2yom, became entrapped by his neck and head between the mattress and headboard of a crib. The victim died two days later in a local hospital due to asphyxiation by neck compression"*

Include the UPC code, if known, in the space designated in block 6.

If additional documentation is received after the investigation was submitted and statused complete, EPDS will add a short sentence to the synopsis stating that additional documents have been added to the investigation. See chapter 9 and Appendix E for more information on Addendums.

Proper names, including people, and product brand names/trade names, etc., along with VINs, should never be placed in the synopsis.

7. Location (Home, School, etc.). Use the drop down box to enter the place where the incident occurred and its appropriate code. Be as specific as possible. Codes for these locations are found below.

Location Codes	
To show where the incident happened, use one of these codes	
Incident Locale	Code
Home	1
Farm/Ranch	2
Street or highway	4
Other public property	5
Manufactured (mobile) home	6
Industrial place	7
School	8
Place of recreation or sports	9
Not recorded	0

*Some examples of specific incident sites covered under each incident locale code are listed below:*

<p><u>Code 1</u> Home (house, townhouse, apartment, etc.) – Includes: Patient's own home; Someone else's home; Foster home; Rooms inside a home; Porch or patio of a home; Yard or garden of a home; Garage of a home ; Driveway of a home; Sidewalk of a house; Farmhouse</p>	<p><u>Code 7</u> Industrial place – Includes: Factory; Railway yard; Warehouse; Loading platform of factory or store; Construction site</p>
<p><u>Code 2</u> Farm/Ranch – Includes: Land, pasture, farm; Barn or other outbuilding</p> <p>Does not include: Farmhouse or driveway, yard, garden, etc., immediately surrounding a farmhouse. (See code for Home.)</p>	<p><u>Code 8</u> School – Includes: Children's day care facilities and all types of schools (nursery, elementary, high school, college, business school, etc.)</p>
<p><u>Code 4</u> Street or highway – Includes: Highway; Alley; Road (paved, unpaved, etc.); Public thoroughfare of any kind</p>	<p><u>Code 9</u> Place of recreation or sports – Includes: Bowling alley; Amusement park; Sports fields or stadiums; Lake, mountain, or beach resort; Park, beach, or recreation area (including water)</p>
<p><u>Code 5</u> Other public property – Includes: Store; Office building; Restaurant; Church; Hotel or motel; Hospital, nursing home, other medical facility; Adult day care facility; Fraternity/Sorority house; Theater; Sidewalk (excl. sidewalk of a house); Other public property; Parking lots/Parking garages</p>	<p><u>Code 0</u> Not known</p>
<p><u>Code 6</u> Manufactured (Mobile) home</p>	

8. City. Enter the name of the city where the incident occurred. If it occurred in a rural area, enter the name of the city used in the mailing address for that location.

**9. State.** Use the drop down box to enter the name of the state in which the incident occurred, and insert its appropriate alphabetic code in the space provided. The alphabetic codes for the states are listed below.

Alphabetic State Codes			
AL – Alabama	IN – Indiana	NV – Nevada	SD – South Dakota
AK – Alaska	IA – Iowa	NH – New Hampshire	TN – Tennessee
AZ – Arizona	KS – Kansas	NJ – New Jersey	TX – Texas
AR – Arkansas	KY – Kentucky	NM – New Mexico	UT – Utah
CA – California	LA – Louisiana	NY – New York	VT – Vermont
CO – Colorado	ME – Maine	NC – North Carolina	VA – Virginia
CT – Connecticut	MD – Maryland	ND – North Dakota	VI – US Virgin Islands
DE – Delaware	MA – Massachusetts	OH – Ohio	WA – Washington
DC – Washington DC	MI – Michigan	OK – Oklahoma	WV – West Virginia
FL – Florida	MN – Minnesota	OR – Oregon	WI – Wisconsin
GA – Georgia	MS – Mississippi	PA – Pennsylvania	WY – Wyoming
HI – Hawaii	MO – Missouri	PR – Puerto Rico	
ID – Idaho	MT – Montana	RI – Rhode Island	FN – Foreign Nation
IL – Illinois	NE – Nebraska	SC – South Carolina	AA – Not Stated

**10A. First Product.** Use the product code search function to enter the NEISS product code for the product involved in the space provided. The current *NEISS Coding Manual* can also be found on SharePoint. All product codes on the Form 182 should be coded correctly. Be as specific as the NEISS coding allows. For example, if the product is a *swimming pool*, and you know it is an *in-ground pool*, use the code for *built-in swimming pools*, not the *swimming pools, not specified* code. If you are unsure about what product code to use, consult the NEISS Coding Manual and/or contact your supervisor.

Note that sometimes a less specific product code was referenced when the assignment was initiated. If you learn during the course of your investigation that a more specific product code is more accurate (see *swimming pools* example above), please use the more specific product code on the 182.

**10B. Trade/Brand Name.** Provide basic information on the trade or brand name of the product, excluding address of the manufacturer, in the space provided.

**10C. Model Number.** Include the model number, when available, in this space. By including information on the model on the Form 182, it is entered into the computer database and can be used by Compliance, etc. for locating cases of interest.

**10D. Manufacturer's Name and Address.** Use the drop down menu to determine if a manufacturer's address is available. If not, provide the manufacturer's name and address, if known, in the space provided. When a product is made by a foreign manufacturer, but sold or distributed in the United States, the investigator should enter the US importer or manufacturer's information in block 10D. If this information is unknown, and the foreign manufacturer information is available, enter the foreign manufacturer's information.

**11A-D. Second Product, Trade/Brand Names, Model Number, Manufacturer's Name and Address.** Complete exactly as noted in 10A-D.

When a second product is mentioned in the report and is related to the incident, then code this product. If this second product is a safety device such as a smoke detector or CO alarm, code it whether it was working or not working. It is necessary for the epidemiologists to monitor both the successes and the failures of these products.



For the second product, if the manufacturer is foreign, give priority to the manufacturer rather than the US importer, if known. See instructions for block 10D above. If more than two products are involved, include the information on the additional product(s) in the narrative, including age and condition, and whether it was examined.

12A. Hispanic or Latino. Select appropriate answer from the drop down menu.

12B. Race. Select appropriate answers from the drop down menu.

12C. Race Source. Select appropriate answers from the drop down menu.

Some people consider being asked their ethnicity and race to be sensitive or intrusive questioning. To decrease the likelihood that a face-to-face field investigation becomes uncomfortable, you should ask about ethnicity and race at the end of the investigation.

If someone questions why CPSC needs to know ethnicity and race, you can respond: "Collecting ethnicity and race along with other demographic information such as age and gender gives CPSC a better idea of who is suffering consumer product-related injuries and can help CPSC in its injury prevention activities."

Two questions should be asked of the respondent:

1. Is the victim of Hispanic or Latino origin?
2. What is the victim's race?

When interviewing the victim or a family member, first ask if the victim is of Hispanic or Latino origin, and then ask what their race is. Even if the respondent refuses to answer the question regarding Hispanic/Latino origin, please continue with the second question and ask the race of the victim. *If the respondent refuses to identify their race, do not attempt to answer the questions using official documents, observation, or other means.* If the respondent is confused as to what ethnicity and/or race categories there are, you can read the possible answers listed on the next page. In general you should ask the questions and note their response.

If when asked about the victim's race, the respondent answers "Hispanic" or provides a nationality (Puerto Rican, French, etc.) or religion, please ask the question one more time, "That is your/the victim's ethnicity/nationality/religion, could you tell me what his/her/your race is?" If the answer is the same or the respondent refuses to answer, capture the information provided in your notes and do not probe further.

If you will not be interviewing the victim or a family member, attempt to obtain the answers to these questions through official documents. If you are unable to determine Hispanic/Latino origin and race through official documents, other documents and knowledgeable respondents may also be consulted. If ethnicity and race are on official documents from multiple sources (ex. police report and medical examiner report), use the most reliable report based on your experience.

## Recording Race Information on the Form 182

The three race fields and their possible responses are:

### 12A. Hispanic or Latino

- 1 – Yes
- 2 – No
- 9 – Refused

### 12B. Race (there is also a free text area for additional detail when 8 – Other is selected)

- 1 – White
- 2 – Black/African American
- 3 – Asian
- 4 – American Indian/Alaska Native
- 5 – Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
- 8 – Other
- 9 – Refused

### 12C. Race Source

- 1 – Respondent – self/family
- 2 – Respondent – other
- 3 – Official document
- 4 – Other document

Only enter responses to the race questions (12A and 12B on the Form 182) in IFS if: you asked the questions of the victim or a family member; OR you did *not* interview the victim or family member, but you were able to obtain answers to one or both questions through official documents, other documents, or another knowledgeable respondent.

The responses that you enter for both questions must be based on information obtained from a single source. If the respondent was the victim or a family member, the information you enter into IFS must be based on their responses, even if they refused to answer one or both questions. If you did not speak with the victim or a family member, use the responses from the most reliable source.

If either question was refused or a nonsensical answer such as "I'm from the Human race" is given, select the response "Refused". If either question is unanswered, leave it blank.

If you were able to obtain an answer to the question about Hispanic/Latino origin, enter the appropriate response (yes or no) in IFS.

For the question regarding the victim's race, please consult the attached listing. If the information you obtained matches one of the racial categories or one of the cross-references for nationality, record the appropriate racial category from the listing in IFS.

If the victim was identified as multi-racial or if the information you obtained does not match any of the entries in the listing, code the race in IFS as "Other" and enter the specific information in the free text area.

If the only answer you were able to obtain to the second question (what is the victim's race?) in your interview with the victim or a family member was "Hispanic", code race as "Other" and enter "Hispanic" in the free text area. If you relied upon official documents or another source for your responses and all you know is that the victim is Hispanic or Latino, code race as "Other" and enter "Unknown" in the free text area.

The last question regarding race is used to capture the source of the answers to the first two questions. You should answer this question if you obtained an answer to either of the first two questions or if the victim or parent/guardian refused to answer the questions. For purposes of this question, please consider any document that is prepared by or submitted to a local, state, or Federal agency to be an official document.

### *CPSC NEISS Race Categories*

If the race is stated as "White", "Black", "Asian", etc., code race to the appropriate category. If only the country/region of origin is stated, use these guidelines to select the appropriate race category.

If your source is a document which states "Indian" and the state is AZ, CA, MT, NM, OK, WY, and there is no other information on the record regarding the victim's race, then it is categorized as American Indian/Alaska Native. For all other states, it is categorized as Asian.

#### **1 – White**

Albanian	French	Mediterranean	Scandinavian
Arab	Georgia	Middle Eastern	Scotland
Armenian	German	Montenegro	Serbian
Assyrian	Greek	Near Easterner	Slovakian
Australian	Holland	Netherlands	Swedish
Austrian	Hungary	New Zealand	Switzerland
Bosnian	Iranian	North African	Syrian
Cajun	Iraqi	Norwegian	Turkish
Canadian	Irish	Palestinian	Ukrainian
Caucasian	Israeli	Persian	United Arab Emirates
Cyprus	Italian	Polish	White
Dutch	Jordan	Portuguese	Yugoslavian
Egyptian	Kuwait	Romanian	
English	Lebanese	Russian	
European	Lithuanian	Saudi Arabian	

#### **2 – Black/African American**

African American	Ethiopian	Negro	Trinidad
Afro-American	Fulani	Nigerian	Ugandan
Bahamian	Haitian	Nigritian	West African
Barbadian	Jamaican	Somalia	West Indies
Black	Kenya	South African	West Indian
Botswana	Liberian	Sudanese	Zaire
East Africa	Namibian	Tobago	

#### **3 – Asian**

Asian	East Indian	Iwo Jiman	Oriental
Asian American	Eurasian	Japanese	Pakistani
Asian Pacific	Filipino	Korean	Punjabi
Asiatic	Guyana	Laotian	Singapore
Bangladesh	Hindu	Malaysian	Sri Lanka
Burma	Hmong	Maldivian	Taiwan
Cambodian	Hong Kong	Mongolian	Thailand
Cantonese	India	Myanmar	Vietnamese
Chinese	Indian* [from India]	Nepalese	
East Asian	Indonesian	Okinawan	

#### **4 – American Indian/Alaska Native**

Alaskan American	American Indian	Eskimo Indian	Indian Alaskan
Alaskan Indian	Eskimo	Indian* [from N. America]	Native American

#### **5 – Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander**

Chamorro	Marshallese	Pacific Islander	Tahitian
Fijian	Micronesian	Polynesian	Tokelauan
Guam	Palauan	Samoa	Tongan
Hawaiian	Papa New Guinean	South Pacific	

#### **8 – Other**

Biracial	Creole	Mixed	Mulatto
Combination	Interracial	More than 1 race	Multiracial

**13. Age of Victim.** Enter the age of the victim. Code in months (preceded by the number "2") if the victim is less than two years old. Code in years if the victim is two years old or more. If multiple victims are involved, include the age of the first victim in block 13, and the other victims in the narrative of the report (i.e., age, sex, injury disposition).

If there is no actual injury, just a potential injury, be sure to code as the victim the person most likely to be injured from the potential hazard. For example, if a toddler is playing with a toy that breaks into small pieces, the victim listed on the 182 should be the toddler, not the toddler's parent who filed the complaint with CPSC.

Examples of age of victim		
201 = less than 8 weeks	002 = 2 years	078 = 78 years
206 = 6 months	022 = 22 years	102 = 102 years
218 = 18 months	045 = 45 years	000 = not recorded/no victim

**14. Sex.** Use the drop down menu to place the appropriate number from the *NEISS Coding Manual* in the block provided to identify the victim's sex. For no victim cases, use Code 0.

Codes for sex victim		
Male = 1	Female = 2	Not stated = 0

**15. Disposition.** Use the drop down menu to describe the victim's disposition at the time of treatment. Locate the appropriate code on the list to enter it in the block provided. If the party was not injured, select "0-No injury" on the line provided.

Codes for disposition	
0 = No Injury	5 = open
1 = Treated at hospital and released, or examined and released without treatment	6 = open
2 = open	7 = open
3 = open	8 = Death
4 = Treated and admitted for hospitalization	9 = Unknown

If an individual is injured while using a consumer product, he is a victim, regardless of whether he received medical treatment.

**Example 1:** *For an incident involving a 3-year-old male child who fell from his high chair, but only bruised his head (did not receive any medical treatment), code as follows:*

Age of victim = 003  
Sex = 1  
Disposition "injured but not hospitalized" = 1  
Injury diagnosis "bruises" = 53  
Body part "head" = 75

**Example 2:** *If the high chair collapsed, but the 3-year-old child in the chair was not injured, we still have an incident situation; and since an individual was directly involved in the incident and could have been injured, we have a victim. The case should be coded as follows:*

Age of victim = 003  
Sex = 1  
Disposition "no injury" = 0  
Injury diagnosis "no injury/not stated" = 71  
Body part "none" = 99

**Example 3:** If the high chair did not collapse but a mother reported that her son's high chair had lost a bolt and was in danger of collapsing, we have a possible victim in that an incident occurred by placing an individual in a possible incident situation. Therefore, we would code the victim elements the same as we did in the incident in which the chair collapsed but did not injure the child. The case would be coded as follows:

Age of victim = 003  
 Sex = 1  
 Disposition "no injury" = 0  
 Injury diagnosis "no injury/not stated" = 71  
 Body part "none" = 99

**Example 4:** If a consumer reports that a high chair she examined at a local retailer may be hazardous because it appears to be unstable, there is no victim. This is merely a complainant's opinion and does not necessarily reflect an incident situation. In this report, we would code the victim elements as follows:

Age of victim = 000  
 Sex = 0  
 Disposition "no injury" = 0  
 Injury diagnosis "no injury/not stated" = 71  
 Body part "none" = 99

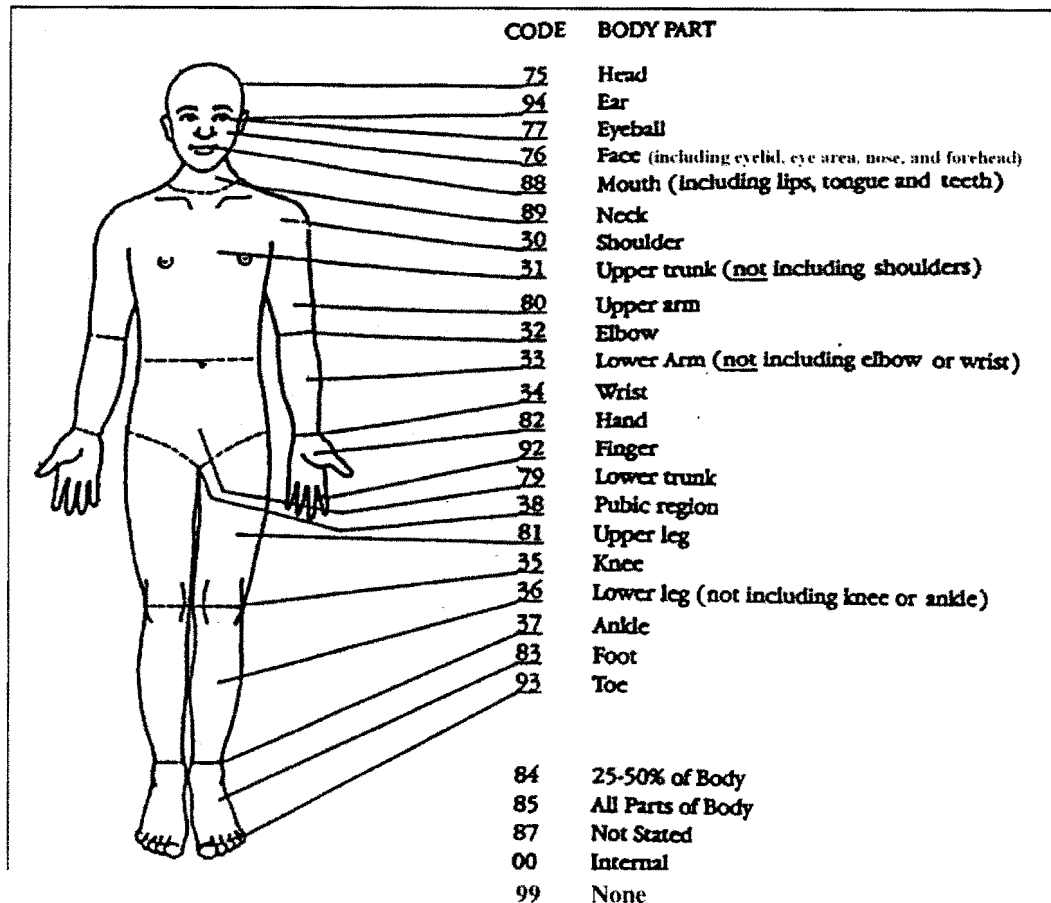
In summary, there must be a product-related incident resulting in an injury or in an individual being placed at a possible risk of injury in order to have a victim.

**16. Injury Diagnosis.** Use the drop down menu to enter the one to two word description of the most serious injury or suspected injury in the space provided. If there are multiple injuries, discuss them in the narrative. If there is no injury, use injury diagnosis code **71-Other/Not Stated**. A more comprehensive listing of injury diagnosis coding can be found in the *NEISS Coding Manual*.

Injury Diagnosis Code Summary			
Diagnosis	Code	Diagnosis	Code
Amputation .....	50	Dermatitis, Conjunctivitis .....	74
*Anoxia .....	65	Dislocation .....	55
†Aspirated Foreign Object .....	42	*Electric Shock .....	67
Avulsion .....	72	Foreign Body .....	56
Burns, scald (from hot liquids or steam) .....	48	Fracture .....	57
Burns, thermal (from flames or		Hematoma .....	58
hot surface) .....	51	Hemorrhage .....	66
Burns, chemical (caustics, etc.) .....	49	†Ingested Foreign Object .....	41
Burns, radiation (includes all cell damage by		Internal Organ Injury .....	62
ultraviolet light, X-rays, microwaves, laser		Laceration .....	59
beams, radioactive materials, etc.) .....	73	Nerve Damage .....	61
Burns, electrical .....	46	*Poisoning .....	68
Burns, not specified .....	47	Puncture .....	63
Concussions .....	52	Strain or Sprain .....	64
Contusions, Abrasions .....	53	*Submersion (including Drowning) .....	69
Crushing .....	54	Other/Not Stated .....	71
Dental Injury .....	60		
		*Code 85 should always be used for body part	
		†Code 00 should always be used for body part	

**17. Body Part(s) Involved.** Use the drop down menu to list the body part most seriously injured or subjected to injury during the incident situation. If there were multiple injuries, discuss that in the narrative. If there is no body part involved/injured, use body part code *99-None*. A more comprehensive listing of body part coding can be found in the *NEISS Coding Manual*.

*Body part codes*



**18. Respondent.** Identify the individual who provided the most important information in the space provided. Codes for respondents are listed below:

Respondent Identity	
0 = not stated or unknown	2 = eyewitness
1 = victim or complainant	3 = second-hand information only

**19. Type of Investigation.** Use the drop down menu to place the number in the block that most closely describes the type of investigation performed as defined.

Type of In-Depth Investigation		
On-Site Investigations	Code = 1	Visits the victim <i>at the incident site</i> , recreating the incident scene and documenting accordingly. Should include incident scenario, product information (including photographs where appropriate), and data on environmental and behavioral factors related to the incident.
Telephone Investigations	Code = 2	Information is only obtained by telephone. Similar format to an on-site with the collection of in-depth information or a brief questionnaire used to collect less detailed information.
Other Investigations	Code = 3	Information is obtained by the investigator by visiting with knowledgeable parties such as medical examiner or local officials (police, fire dept., etc.) to discuss the incident and obtain copies of select documents, but the investigator <b>did not</b> visit the victim, or <b>did not</b> interview/visit the victim/consumer but did not conduct a site visit at the place <i>where the incident occurred</i> . This includes interviewing the victim/consumer at <i>any</i> location other than where the incident took place.

**20. Time Spent (Operational/Travel).** Enter the number of operations hours, to the nearest half-hour, expended on this investigation. This would include time spent preparing for the investigation, conducting the investigation, and preparing the report. Enter the amount of time for travel for on-site investigations.

**21. Attachment(s)/Exhibit(s).** Use the drop down menu to make note of the type of attachments/exhibits. *In almost all instances, the type of attachments/exhibits should be 9/Multiple attachments.*

Type of Attachments/Exhibits	
1 = Photographs only	5 = Other (such as a questionnaire)
2 = Documents only. Use "2/Documents" when there is only a contact sheet included and no other attachments/exhibits.	9 = Multiple attachments/exhibits (in both number and type)
3 = Sample of product (attached to the report)	0 = No attachments/exhibits
4 = Sample of product (submitted separately)	

**22. Case Source.** Use the drop down menu to describe the case source on the line provided.

Case Source	
00 = Not stated, unknown	07 = Consumer complaint and CPSC hotline
01 = Fire or police department	09 = Physician's office
02 = City, county, or state health department	10 = Personal contact
03 = NEISS	11 = Law firm
04 = Radio or TV	12 = MECAP/Coroner
05 = Newspaper	13 = Other case source
06 = Emergency room other than NEISS	14 = Death certificates

**23. Sample Collection Number.** Enter the sample collection number if a sample was collected. If more than one product sample was collected, enter additional numbers under the *Product Identification* area of the report.

**24. Permission to Disclose Name (Non-NEISS Cases Only).** Check the appropriate radio button(s) indicating whether the respondent agreed to the release of his or her identity. If you are unable to make contact with the appropriate person(s) to grant permission, check "no" rather than leaving all selections blank.

Check appropriate radio button(s) to indicate whether permission was written or verbal. If written, attach a copy of the signed *Authorization for Release of Name* form to your report. If verbal, indicate this in the narrative of your report.

If the consent was granted verbally, the narrative of the report must include a statement such as "*The respondent indicated verbally that her contact information could be release to the manufacturer only.*" In situations where there are multiple respondents, the statement should describe the respondent in some way, so that it is clear which respondent granted the permission (for example, parent of victim, consumer, etc.). If block 24 on the Form 182 has "*yes*" or "*yes for manufacturer only*" and the required supporting statement in the narrative or the *Release of Name* form is not included in the report, the report will not be accepted when reviewed by EPDS staff.

25. Review Date. This will be entered automatically by the system.

26. Reviewed By. This will be entered automatically by the system.

27. Field Office Director. This will be generated automatically by the system when the supervisor signs off on the report.

28. Distribution. This will be entered by the supervisor. At a minimum, the investigation requestor should be included in the distribution of the completed IDI.

29. Source Document Number. This is automatically generated.

#### Narrative:

In the narrative, relate clearly and concisely the chronological sequence of events associated with the incident. Include specific factors concerning the interaction between the victim, the product, and the incident environment that may have a relationship to the incident itself. In the event you are assigned to perform an in-depth investigation of a "no-injury" incident, look for and relate the POTENTIAL hazards associated with operating that product.

The narrative must present fact(s) objectively. Do not include your personal opinions or comments, but you can include your observations if you identify them as such. Use anonymous terms to describe respondents and their addresses, such as victim, mother of the victim, suburban home, fire official, etc. Do not use actual names or street addresses.

The narrative should be arranged in a chronological order (e.g., pre-incident, incident, post-incident). As you may recall, we recommended that you investigate the incident in this order. The investigation does not have to be written with the headings "pre-incident," "incident," and "post-incident," but the sequence of events should follow this chronological order. Thus, your notes should already be arranged so that your narrative can include the appropriate information.

Be sure to redact *all* social security numbers, driver's license numbers, and license plates from all sources. Be sure to reference *all* of the attachments/exhibits in the narrative.

The investigator should address any discrepancies between the information supplied by the different respondents or discrepancies between the respondents and the attached documentation. In addition, when information or documentation has been obtained after the investigation has been submitted as complete, any discrepancies or additional information should be changed and discussed in the narrative section, if you still have the Word document. If you no longer have the Word document, the additional information/documentation should be explained in an addendum, which accompanies the additional documentation. The assignment requestor should be notified of any changes/additions to the completed investigation.



Similarly, any inconsistency between the assignment instructions and the IDI report (e.g., samples requested, on-site, etc.) must be addressed in the report.

The investigator should place the product labeling information in the narrative section of the investigation. If a photograph of the label clearly identifies all information that would be included in the product labeling section of the narrative, it is permissible to embed the photograph of the label in lieu of re-typing the label information in the product labeling section of the narrative.

If an involved product is coded on the Form 182 in block 10 or 11, be sure to describe that product in the narrative of the report. Likewise, if an involved product is mentioned in the narrative, it should be coded in block 10 or 11 of the Form 182. (If there are more than two involved products, at least two products should be coded on the Form 182.)

For a few product areas (e.g., ATVs), you will not need to include a written narrative in the Investigative Report. If this is the case, there will be direction in the guideline and/or appendix for the particular product letting you know that you do not need to complete a narrative.

#### Attachments/Exhibits:

All social security numbers, driver's license numbers, and license plates on *any/all* attachments/exhibits (e.g., medical reports, sheriff reports, etc.) must be redacted prior to submitting your report. Be sure to reference *all* the attachments/exhibits in the narrative. All pages of all exhibits should have the task number at the top, along with the exhibit number and pages \_\_\_ of \_\_\_ for each exhibit. (This includes numbering all components of the completed report, excluding the data record sheets and the Product History Search page. The first page of all data record sheets must contain the Task Number and the Exhibit Number in the boxes provided. The total number of pages for the data record sheets must be included in the list of exhibits.)

Death Related Incidents. For incidents resulting in deaths, you should include a copy of the police report and/or the coroner's/medical examiner's report with the in-depth investigation report. Most deaths are investigated by the police to determine whether foul play was involved.

Serious Injury Related Incidents. A verbal description of the actual injury is normally obtained directly from the victim or eyewitness during the investigation. However, if documentation on the extent, type, or location of the injury is needed, the investigator needs to review and copy medical records. The hospital or attending physician may require a signed release from the patient before releasing these records. The "*Authorization for Medical Records Disclosure*" form, CPSC Form 170 is used for this purpose. (See below for a sample of this form.) Complete this form and have the victim or guardian sign it during the interview. The investigator can act as a witness and sign in the designated space. Section 25(c) of the CPSA insures that the physician's identity will remain confidential. If appropriate, inform the physician of this provision.

Sample of Authorization for Medical Records Disclosure, CPSC Form 322

**AUTHORIZATION FOR MEDICAL RECORDS DISCLOSURE**

This form authorizes release of information in accordance with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act, 45 C.F.R. Parts 160 and 164, 5 U.S.C. 552a, and 38 U.S.C. 5701 and 7332. I understand that my disclosure of the information requested on this form is voluntary. I further understand that the Social Security Number will be used to locate records for release and if not voluntarily furnished completely and accurately, the health or medical facility will be unable to comply with the request.

**TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:**

I request and authorize \_\_\_\_\_ (name of health or medical facility) to furnish the United States Consumer Product Safety Commission all information and copies of any and all records you may have pertaining to (my case)(the case of)

Patient Name \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to you \_\_\_\_\_

Patient Social Security Number \_\_\_\_\_

including, but not limited to, medical history, physical reports, laboratory reports and pathological slides, and X-ray reports and films.

AUTHORIZATION: I certify that this request has been made freely, voluntarily and without coercion and that the information given above is accurate and complete to the best of my knowledge. I understand that I will receive a copy of this form after I sign it. I may revoke this authorization, in writing, at any time except to the extent that action has already been taken to comply with it. Written revocation is effective upon receipt by the unit or office at the facility housing the records. Redisclosure of my medical records by those receiving the above authorized information may be accomplished without my further written authorization and my records may no longer be protected. Without my express revocation, the authorization will automatically expire: (1) upon satisfaction of the need for disclosure; (2) on \_\_\_\_\_ (date supplied by patient); or (3) under the following conditions:

\_\_\_\_\_  
(DATE)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(SIGNATURE OF PATIENT OR PERSON AUTHORIZED TO SIGN FOR PATIENT)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(WITNESS)

**CPSC FORM NO 170**


Fire Related Incidents. For serious fires that involve a product of interest, a fire report is to be obtained and submitted with the investigation report. This record provides the opinion/conclusion of an expert and carries considerable weight in determining causal agents.

When a product of interest is involved in a fire and the debris may have been removed, attempt to contact the insurance agent to obtain copies of insurance forms which may reveal information on product ID and evaluation findings.

Source Documents. *Do not include the source document as part of the Investigative Report.* The source document is now accessible electronically for review by analysts and compliance officers. Include the source document number in block 29 of the Form 182.

Missing Documents. An investigation report should not be submitted as complete until all documentation is received and attached to the report. If you are unable to obtain a document (e.g., police, fire, ME/coroner, photographs, etc.) in a timely manner, make note in your report that the document has been requested but could not be obtained, and fill out a *Status of Missing Document* form to attach to your report.

Sample of *Status of Missing Documents* form

Task Number: xxxxxxxx		Exhibit: xx
		
<b>U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission</b>		
Task Number: _____		
Date: _____		
<b>Status of Missing Document(s)</b>		
The official records below were requested for this investigation report, but could not be obtained:		
1.	_____	
2.	_____	
3.	_____	
4.	_____	
5.	_____	
6.	_____	

Diagrams. Body charts of the victim and diagrams of the product should be included as attachments, if applicable.

Manuals. Product operational manuals should be requested from the respondent. The operational manual should be scanned as an attachment to the investigation. If the operational manual is too large, the first few pages should be scanned with an explanation that the entire manual can be found in the CPSC Clearinghouse. Be sure to send the manual to the CPSC Clearinghouse. If you are unsure whether a manual is too large to scan, contact your supervisor for further direction.

Release of Name. The investigator should request a signature for the *Authorization for Release of Name* form for an on-site investigation. If the victim/respondent refuses to sign the form, but gives a verbal response, the investigator should note this on the Release of Name form, use the appropriate code on Form 182, and include a statement to such effect in the narrative of the report.

Contacts List. A separate contact page should be attached to the investigation listing all respondents' names, addresses, if known, telephone numbers, and the dates of the contacts. The list of contacts should be attached as the *first* attachment/exhibit to the report.

If the victim's name is available, you must include it at the top of the Contacts List page (Exhibit 1).

If the victim's date of birth is available, you must include it on the Contacts List page (Exhibit 1).

If an ATV's VIN is available, you must include it on the Contacts List page (Exhibit 1), in addition to the ATV data record sheet. If a UTV's VIN is available, you must include it on the Contacts List page (Exhibit 1), in addition to the product information section of the report narrative.

If the respondent spoke to the manufacturer, this should be documented in the Contacts List with an explanation that the respondent made the contact, not the investigator.

All refusals and the date of refusal should be documented in the list of respondents. This list should also document all respondents that the investigator failed to reach. It is not necessary to list all attempted contacts for a particular respondent for a completed investigation, but you should continue to list all attempted contacts for a particular respondent in a terminated investigation.

Victim Letter. Correspondence sent to the victim or other witnesses by the investigator need not be attached to the report if the letter resulted in successful contact. However, if no response is received to a letter or email, a copy of that correspondence should be attached to the final report (typically the termination report).

### Photographs:

Include any photographs that were taken of the product and scene, including those taken by other investigating officials. Photos taken by local officials are extremely valuable in that they were usually taken immediately after the incident and provide details on the incident that may no longer be available.

Identify *each individual* photograph with a unique identifier (e.g., Photo B-1, Photo B-2, etc., for photos in Exhibit B) and ensure that the Task Number and Exhibit Number are on each page. (Do not "photo-shop" several pictures together to create one new picture.) Photographs should be digitally processed for submission. When photographs reveal the face of the victim, they should be modified to conceal the victim's identity. Similarly, if a photograph reveals other personally identifiable information (PII), the PII in the photograph should be modified to conceal the PII. The source of the photograph should be identified if it was not taken by a CPSC investigator.

Include the *total number of photographs* in each exhibit in the list of Exhibits in the report. See Chapter 7 for more information on photographs.

### Supervisory Review and Submission of Investigation Reports:

Investigation Report Review. In some cases, supervisors may want to review the investigation report before it is copied to IFS. In other cases, the supervisor may request to review the report in IFS before it is forwarded to headquarters. **In either case, supervisors should review every report.** Questions that should be considered during the supervisory review include:

(b)(5)



Only those investigation reports that favorably address the above questions and contain the appropriate information should be accepted and submitted as a completed report. Once all documentation is received, the investigator should complete the investigation report and submit the report to their supervisor through IFS. The investigator should maintain the investigation in their database until it is statused complete by EPDS. All others investigation

reports should be corrected or improved. There is a need for continuing communication between the supervisor and investigator about the process of completing and IDI. The investigator may have difficulties or run into barriers trying to collect all necessary information. These problems should be shared with the supervisors but should not be part of the investigative report. The investigator should update IFS on a regular basis to show the status of the investigation process.

#### Distribution of Investigation Reports:

The distribution block on the 182 should include ALL of the names that appear on the E-assign document if there is one for the assignment. If it is a field initiated assignment, the appropriate compliance officer and/or analysts should be put in the distribution block on the 182.

After reviewing the report, the supervisor should click the "approve" button and then the "save" button. Both are located on the 182.

Be sure that the report includes the appropriate cover page if warranted. Any source document beginning with the letter "Y" needs an *Official Use Only* cover page and if certain information is confidential then the *Confidential Data Warning* cover page should be included and the list of documents that are confidential should be written on to the bottom of the cover page. The "Y" document cover page should not be used in lieu of the *Official Use Only* cover page. See sample cover sheets in Appendix A and Appendix B.

Once the IDI is distributed, field staff should not make any changes. If it is necessary to make a change, the supervisor should click on the approval button on the 182 and to switch it back to "unapproved" so that the changes can be made. The report then will need to be redistributed. Note that the completion date will have to be manually set back to the original date either by the supervisor or the help desk.

#### Purging Names and Addresses of Victims Obtained Through NEISS Hospitals:

When a case is assigned from information received from a NEISS hospital, the name and address identification of the victim MUST be purged before it is imaged and transmitted to EPDS. The Clearinghouse, prior to public release of the report, will do purging of other (not received through NEISS) victim identification.



Instructions for the completion of pertinent blocks on the *Incident Termination Report* form are below:

Record of Attempts to Contact.

1. List attempts to contact the victim/respondent by telephone. Investigators must make separate attempts on separate days, including attempts to contact the victim or respondent on the weekend and during evening hours. Under circumstances where you can leave a message, leave your phone number, a brief message explaining the nature of your call, and ask for a return call. If the victim/respondent does not call back within a couple of days, place the call again and leave another message. Using your own best judgment, you could attempt another call/message after two more days. Otherwise, document on the form each of your attempts to contact the victim/respondent, including the time and date that the contact was attempted.
2. If you have not reached the victim/respondent under conditions described above, note attempts to visit the victim/respondent during travel. If within reasonable travel distance or in an area that is on the travel schedule for other CPSC work, include a home visit in the travel plan.
3. Another means for attempting to contact the victim/respondent is the use of a delivery confirmation letter. Note the use of such letter. This letter should request individual(s) (e.g., victim, parent, etc.) contact you or provide information in writing (e.g., complete a questionnaire). Provide at least 15 days for a response before terminating.
4. Try other resources, such as internet searches, to locate the victim/respondent.



### Screening Report:

There are two circumstances under which an investigation can be screened and reported on an *Incident Screening Report* form, CPSC form 229, and still be submitted via email. The investigator was able to contact a knowledgeable party, but discovered:

1. The product is not a consumer product or is not within the jurisdiction of the Commission (e.g., agricultural/farm tractor rather than riding mower).
2. The incident was the result of a deliberate act (e.g., arson, assault, suicide, etc.).

#### Sample of *Incident Screening Report, CPSC Form 229*

INCIDENT SCREENING REPORT		
1. Document No.	2. Organization Code	3. Investigator No.
4. Person(s) Contacted	5. Time Expended	6. Date Completed
7. Information Obtained		
8. Product Information (Manufacturer, Brand, Model, etc.)		
9. Distribution	10. Task No. (if applicable)	
	11. Supervisor R.O. Dir.	
12. Please staple this report to the initiating document(s) and send to EPDS.		

CPSC FORM NO. 229

### Abbreviated Report:

An investigation can be abbreviated (and reported on a Form 182), and submitted through the network, if:

1. The product or hazard is significantly different than the one indicated in the source document, but a consumer product is still involved, and it is one that is not included in the *Criteria and Rationales*. If the investigator collected useful data and/or documents while determining the causal factors associated with a product, he/she should complete a Form 182 and include the additional documents following a brief narrative. Submit this report electronically as with any other report.
2. On a *temporary* basis because of resource constraints, agreements may be entered into between Field Operations and the IDI assignment requestor allowing certain product or hazard-specific related investigations to be completed using an abbreviated narrative.
3. An official report is obtained, but there is very little information beyond the source document.

### Purged Report:

An investigation may be purged when:

1. it is found to be a duplicate of a prior assignment;
2. the person requesting the IDI (*e.g.*, EXHR or Compliance staff) decide to abort the investigation AND no new information had already been obtained; or
3. the IDI was assigned in error.

To purge a headquarters-initiated IDI, please contact the appropriate EPDS staff (listed in Appendix A) directly via email (do not email the Help Desk), and provide a brief reason why the IDI should be purged. When an open HQ-initiated IDI is purged, notification will be sent to the field deputy directors.

Field-initiated IDIs are purged by field deputy directors.

### IDI Addendums:

On occasion, you will receive additional information/documentation pertaining to an IDI after it has been completed. When this happens, you will need to submit an addendum with the additional information/documentation. Do not attempt to attach the addendum information directly into the completed IDI in IFS.

Should you obtain additional information to add to an IDI, you need to provide the attachments in pdf format to your supervisor, who will then send it to EPDS-IDI to be added to the existing file.

Once received by EPDS-IDI, EPDS staff will process the addendum and attach it to the completed IDI. The addendum submitted by you/your supervisor will NOT replace the Status of Missing Documents form. It will be added at the end of the IDI report, leaving the original report intact.

If you have any questions about addendums, please ask your supervisor. If you have questions about the formatting of an addendum or what is needed to be submitted for an addendum, please contact either your supervisor or the EPDS staff person tasked with processing addendums (see Appendix C of this manual).

When submitting an addendum, please adhere to the following:

In the subject line of the email, state: Addendum Task Number.

In the body of the email, include the Task Number, and for *each* new item to be added to the completed IDI report, provide the following:

- What the addendum is (*i.e.*, ME Report, Police Report, etc.)
- Which item on the missing documents page does this addendum correspond with (if applicable). If this addendum is not related to something currently on the missing documents page, please indicate this.
- What should the exhibit number be for this addendum?

In the email attachment (see example in Appendix E), include:

- Additional report information (*i.e.*, new narrative details, sample collection information, updated DRS, updated product information, etc.)
- List of additional exhibits
- New exhibit(s), including exhibit number and task number header

## **Appendix A – Sample of Official Use Only Cover Sheet**

**TASK NUMBER:**



**U.S. CONSUMER PRODUCT SAFETY COMMISSION**

**FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY**

**PROPRIETARY**

**Unauthorized Disclosure Prohibited**

## **Appendix B – Sample of Confidential Data Warning Cover Sheet**

**TASK NUMBER:**



**U.S. CONSUMER PRODUCT SAFETY COMMISSION**

# **WARNING**

**AN INDIVIDUAL/AGENCY WHO PROVIDED INFORMATION FOR THIS REPORT CONSIDERS SOME OF THE DATA TO BE CONFIDENTIAL OR RESTRICTED. PLEASE PROCESS THIS MATERIAL IN A CAREFUL AND PRUDENT MANNER.**

**The following exhibits are considered confidential or restricted:**

## **Appendix C – EPDS Points of Contact and IDI Review Information**

### **HQ-initiated IDI assignments:**

All HQ-initiated assignment requests are processed through EPDS utilizing the EPHQ database. Laura Noble, EPDS, currently has primary responsibility for processing HQ-initiated IDI assignment requests.

### **Purging open IDI assignments:**

- Open HQ-initiated IDI assignments are purged in EPDS. Direct all requests to purge OPEN HQ-initiated assignments to Laura Noble. These requests should not be sent to the help desk.
- When an open HQ-initiated IDI is purged, notification will be sent to the field deputy directors (Bev Kohen and Justin McDonough).
- Open FIELD-initiated IDI assignments are purged by field deputy directors.

### **Who reviews “field-completed” IDIs:**

All field-completed IDIs are reviewed and statused by designated IDI-Reviewers within the office of Epidemiology Data Systems (EPDS). Currently, the IDI-Reviewers are:

- Rebecca Cullen, CENQ Team (backup Krystil Smith)
- Jesse Harrahill, EASQ Team (backup Rod Holcomb)
- Lorraine Ross, WESQ Team (backup Omar Stokes)

### **Where do I send ADDENDUMS:**

Addendums are sent to EPDS-IDI. The EPDS current staff person who receives/processes addendums is Rebecca Cullen. All addendums should be sent to her via EPDS-IDI. Direct all questions with regard to required formatting to her.

### **Review of Field-Completed IDIs:**

All FIELD-COMPLETED IDIs are reviewed by the IDI-Reviewers. The IDI-Reviewers are reviewing for consistency. For the most part, every attempt is made to make corrections within the EPDS, rather than returning to the field for corrections. However, there are occasions where the changes are too numerous or too complex and must be returned to the field for corrections. If you are requested to make corrections to an IDI, you must let the IDI-Reviewer know when you have completed your corrections, so that we can complete our review in order to status the IDI as complete. (There is nothing in the system that will automatically alert us that you have made the corrections.)



## Appendix E – Sample of Addendum

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Page 1 of 1

### **ADDENDUM** *[Include additional narrative information here.]*

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### **EXHIBITS**

In addition to the 16 Exhibits already attached to the original report, this addendum will add:

17. State Fire Marshal's Office Investigative Report (20 Pages)
18. Business Card Sign-In for Scene Evaluations (15 Pages)
19. Thirteen Fire and Damage Overview Photos (13 Pages)
20. Sixteen Scene Photos Before Cleanup (16 Pages)
21. Six Scene Photos After Cleanup (6 Pages)
22. Twenty-Eight Photos of Incident Unit widget at Scene (28 Pages)
23. Forty-Eight Photos of Incident Unit widget During Independent Evaluation (48 Pages)
24. Thirty Photos of Exemplar Unit widget from Room (30 Pages)
25. Five Photos of Miscellaneous Safety Equipment Installed in Community (5 Pages)
26. Twelve Photos of Exemplar Unit widgets from other Rooms in Community (12 Pages)