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August 6, 2004

Ronald Raboin
Chairman, ASTM F15.10

RE: Ballot F15.10 (04-02) Specification for Child Resistant Portable Gasoline Containers for Consumer Use.

Dear Mr. Raboin:

These comments are those of the staff of the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), have not been reviewed or approved by, and may not necessarily reflect the views of, the Commission. The CPSC staff is providing comments in response to subcommittee ballot F15.10 (04-02), Standard Specification for Child-resistant Portable Gasoline Containers for Consumer Use.

The revised standard addresses several of the concerns the CPSC staff expressed in past correspondences. We have several comments and clarifications that are raised in response to the revisions. The CPSC staff comments and suggestions for the various sections of the draft standard are listed below. The language found in the standard is written in italics.

1.3 This specification is based upon 16CFR1700.15 and 16CFR1700.20
The CPSC staff requests that this line be deleted because it may lead to confusion.

2.2 Federal Standards

The CPSC staff requests that a second footnote be added that states; "Testing procedures specified in this standard differ from testing requirements under the PPPA."

3.1.2 Containers with multiple closures shall have each closure tested separately. Closure(s) not being tested shall be removed from the container and openings sealed off. The CPSC staff has two comments related to this addition. First, the CPSC staff does not believe that the closures not being tested should be removed. The gas container should appear as it would normally with the alternative openings sealed so that they will not function. Second, the CPSC staff believes that the requirement to test each closure separately should apply only to the child test and therefore should be placed after Section 4.1 instead of at 3.1.2. We continue to believe that adults should test the entire "container" during the testing period.

3.1.3 Containers shall be tested as described in Sections 4 & 5 after having been subjected to... Testing for child-resistance and adult-use-effectiveness is conducted to represent the “real-world conditions.” The child-resistant feature of the gas container should continue to function during the life of the product. Staff believes the tests identified in this section are appropriate. However, the most difficult opening for adults is probably not with an aged gas container. Staff believes it is therefore more appropriate for this section to be placed in Section 4.1 of the child test. The reference to Section 5 should be deleted.

4.1.1 ... torque dependent closures shall be secured using on-torque values recommended by the Closure Manufacturers Association. The CPSC staff is opposed to the addition of this requirement. The application torque values recommended by the Closure Manufacturers Association (CMA) are specifically for lined polypropylene closures. The CMA is in the process of developing more comprehensive information on torque.

The gas can samples tested with children should be closed by an adult as would normally occur in the household. Having the closures closed to a specified torque value does not represent the condition of the gas container found in the household.

For the senior test, we recommend that the testers fill the gas cans half-full with water and apply the closures as they would normally if the gas cans contained gasoline. The gas cans should be tested with seniors in the normal use or ready-to-use configuration. Staff recommends using tester hand-application torque while additional data on average application torque for gas cans is being developed.

4.1.6 All containers to be tested shall be new and empty of contents.

This statement is in conflict with 3.1.3. The CPSC staff believes that it should be modified to read, “All containers shall be tested in the normal use configuration (e.g. spout out) and half-filled with water (1 gal. of water in a 2-gal. container).” The CPSC staff believes that measurement of leakage is important since the hazard associated with gasoline containers is related to the flammability of the gasoline and the fumes. The loss of water during testing should be noted by weight since section 4.3 specifies that a failure is a child who gains access to the contents (see further discussion below).

Table 1 Container Openings

The data in Table 1 should be for closure openings and not for container openings since each opening is tested separately. The pass/fail criteria will apply to each closure separately.

4.3 Child Resistant Tests (Test Failures) – a test failure shall be any child who opens the container or gains access to its contents.

As described above, the use of container is not correct. This should be modified to say “...opens the closure or gains access to the contents,” since each opening feature is tested separately.

4.5 "...No child shall test more than two containers. When more than one special container is being tested, each container shall be a different ASTM type and they shall be presented to the paired children in random order..."

The reference to the ASTM type should be eliminated because gas can closures and spout openings are not listed in ASTM D3475-03a. This statement should be modified to read, "No child shall test more than two openings. When more than one opening is being tested, each opening shall be dissimilar and they shall be presented to the paired children in random order."

4.6.8 To begin the test, the tester shall hand the children identical containers and say, "Please try to open this for me."

Since most gas cans contain at least two openings, it is important for the tester to point to the opening that the children are testing. The phrase, "indicate by gesture which opening is being tested and say..." should be inserted after the word containers in 4.6.8.

4.6.18 The tester shall say, "watch me open my container"

This should say, "Watch me open mine" since they are testing only one opening feature at a time.

5. Senior testing

The CPSC staff continues to believe that the adult test participants should have to open all of the features during the 5-minute/1-minute test. The testing procedure should be modified to time and record each opening and closing. The total time to open and close the multiple features should not be over 5 minutes in the first part and 1 minute in the second part (discussed further below).

5.2 Screening procedures

The CPSC staff believes that conventional (non-CR) gas containers should be used for the screening of adults who do not open the gas cans. The size of the samples in 5.2 do not compare with gas can closure sizes.

5.5.15 No adult may participate in more than two tests per sitting. If a person participates in two tests, the containers tested shall not be the same ASTM type of package.

This statement should be modified to say, "No adult shall test more than one container per sitting." The ASTM reference should be deleted.

The CPSC staff continues to believe that proper adult usage of gas cans is an important safety issue. Allowing a full 5-minute/1-minute test for each closure is unlikely to screen out cans that consumers are likely to alter because they are unacceptable. Rather than testing each opening separately, the CPSC staff recommends that the senior test be conducted on the container as a whole. The CPSC staff proposes that the 5 minute/1 minute test method be modified to reflect this. However, the CPSC staff is willing to work with the ASTM subcommittee to determine the appropriate time periods for the senior test method. We propose testing conventional gas cans with seniors to

see how long it takes them to use these containers. The time periods for the senior test for child-resistant gas containers could then be adjusted accordingly, if necessary.

Please contact me if you have questions about these comments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Suzanne Barone".

Suzanne Barone, Ph.D.