



HOT - ISSUES



Hats off to YOU!

This issue is dedicated to the readers of *Hot Issues*.

In the last edition, State Fire Marshal Nancy Orr issued a call to action to help raise concerns about novelty lighters and children with the Consumer Products Safety Commission. Your response has been incredible. We'll update you with what's been done to date.

A year ago we asked for reports of fire incidents involving Axe deodorant. In this edition, we'll share what we've learned so far.

Together, we are helping to accomplish great things!

Novelty lighter campaign

People across the country responded to our call to action. Here is what some of them told us.

Letters were sent to CPSC:

- FirePsych, Inc., Robert Stadolnik, Ed.D.
- National Fire Protection Association, President James M. Shannon
- Texas State Fire Marshal Paul W. Maldonado
- Western Fire Chiefs Association, President Jeff Johnson

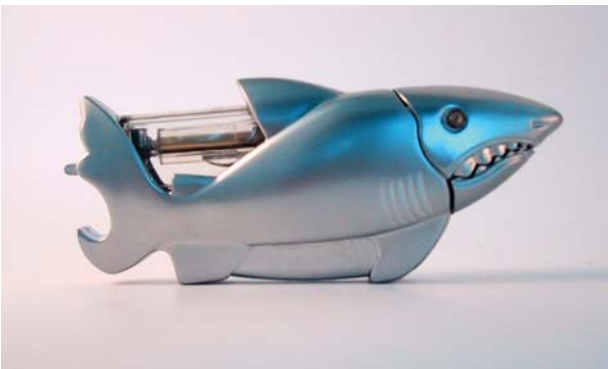
Fire departments raised the issue in the local media:

- Deputy Chief Gary Blumreich, Rhinelander Fire Department, Rhinelander, Wisconsin, shared an article in *The Rhinelander Daily News*.
- Captain Mark Northrup, Rogue River Fire District, Rogue River, Oregon, sent a full color spread that appeared in the *Rogue River Press*.
- The Burn Institute, San Diego, California, raised the issue in a front page spread in the winter 2006 *Burn Institute Beacon*.
- Volunteer Firefighters Insurance Services, a division of Glatfelter Insurance Group, will publish an article in their newsletter. The information will reach 20,000 of their members who will be encouraged to contact CPSC and ask that novelty lighters be banned in the U.S.

Other:

- USFA is supporting the campaign and has asked fire departments and burn centers to send data to the Oregon Office of State Fire Marshal.
- Jack Carriger reported that the National Volunteer Fire Council passed a resolution encouraging CPSC to prohibit the sale of novelty lighters.
- A therapist in a Denver, Colorado, Children's Hospital juvenile firesetter therapy group reported that firesetting youths identify novelty lighters as toys for kids.
- CEO Richard Lambert of The Idea Bank, producer of educational videos, is making a PSA about novelty lighters.
- Deputy Fire Marshal J. Arthur Miller, Harrisonburg Fire Department, Harrisonburg, Virginia, reported that they mounted a Fire Prevention Week informational display about the hazards of novelty lighters. Also, their legislator introduced a bill to regulate the sale or purchase of them. (details on page 3)
- Deborah Johnson, Community-based Prevention and Outreach, Texas State Fire Marshal, reported they are changing their fire reporting form to facilitate the collection of information about novelty lighters.

New on Oregon shelves



Novelty lighter bill

introduced in the Virginia legislature

Ed. note: DFM J. Arthur Miller, Harrisonburg Fire Department, Harrisonburg, Virginia, wrote to share information with *Hot Issues* about the bill regulating novelty lighters introduced in Virginia last year.

Congratulations on a good effort, DFM Miller. Thanks for sharing with *Hot Issues*. We can learn from each other.

Dear Colleagues,

I read Ms. Orr's letter to the CPSC regarding novelty lighters. I would like to pass along an item of interest that we initiated with our House of Delegates representative, Delegate Matt Lohr.

He met with us at our Fire Prevention Week display in the fall of 2005 during his campaign. We had on display several dozen novelty lighters. We were attempting to impress upon the public the problem that we alike see.

I have attached a copy of a bill that he plans to introduce in the Virginia General Assembly. Through your contacts, you may well become familiar with this bill. I will also keep you apprised of the bill's progress.

Sincerely,

J. Arthur Miller
CFPS Deputy Fire Marshal
540-432-7746
www.HarrisonburgFire.org

Ed. note: Lt. Wanda Willis, Harrisonburg Fire Department, Harrisonburg, Virginia, sent an update on the fate of their novelty lighter bill. While its passage was unsuccessful this time, they intend to try again.

Commonwealth of Virginia regarding an update on the Virginia Novelty Lighter Proposed Bill:

Members of the Militia, Police and Public Safety subcommittee failed to pass House Bill Number 1728, The Novelty Lighter Bill.

The subcommittee members were sympathetic to the issue, but unfortunately they had concerns with the wording of the bill. As I understand them, they believe it will be difficult for retail merchants to determine what constitutes a "novelty lighter." Everyone at the meeting seemed to have concerns with the lighters so we will definitely work with our delegate to present a bill at next year's Virginia General Assembly.

Please keep me informed on any issues you have with lighters as we are already planning how to approach this for next year. This was a learning process for us at the Harrisonburg Fire Department and we hope to go back next year armed with more information and a stronger bill. The remarks from the subcommittee members as well as a convenience store representative suggested that wording of the bill should include placement of lighters in the stores.

We appreciate the work that Delegate Matt Lohr and his aide, Audrey Berkshire, have given to the fire department by bringing the issue of novelty lighters to the forefront of the Virginia General Assembly.

Lt. Wanda Willis
Fire Prevention Education Specialist
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A BILL to amend the Code of Virginia ...

SUMMARY

Sale or purchase of novelty cigarette lighters; civil penalty. Provides that any person who sells to, distributes to, purchases for or knowingly permits the purchase by any person less than 16 years of age, knowing or having reason to believe that such person is less than 16 years of age, any cigarette lighter that is not readily identifiable as such, is punishable by a civil penalty of no more than \$100 and that any person less than 16 years of age who attempts to purchase a cigarette lighter that is not readily identifiable as such is likewise punishable by a civil penalty of no more than \$100.

The European Union has taken action

Ed. note: The following is excerpted from The European Commission Web site, section on Health and Consumer Protection.
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On 11 May 2006, the Commission adopted a Decision requiring Member States to ensure that, from 11 March 2007, cigarette lighters are child-resistant when placed on the EU market. The Decision also prohibits placing on the market of lighters which resemble objects that are particularly attractive to children; so-called Novelty Lighters. Certain lighters, such as luxury lighters, are excluded from the scope of the Decision based on a number of technical criteria, but must anyway comply with the general safety requirements for these products ...

... by the appearance of the products their intended use (as a lighter) is not obvious and they can be considered as novelty lighters. According to the European Standard a lighter shall not be novelty-like, because the inherent risk is significantly higher. The novelty lighters are attractive for children and taking into account children's normal behaviour risk of burning injury is present during their use. (Health and Consumer Protection Directorate General of the EU) ...

... In short this means that by 11 March 2007:

All lighters must be safe

(This has already been the case since 1992. Lighters which comply with all requirements of ISO9994 are presumed to be safe)

Lighters are products which are inherently hazardous since they produce a flame or heat and since they contain a flammable fuel. They pose a serious risk when being misused by children, which may result in fires, injuries or even deaths. Taking account of the inherently hazardous nature of lighters, the very high number of items placed on the market and the foreseeable conditions of use, the seriousness of the risk posed by lighters to children's safety should be dealt with in relation to their possible use in play by children. (from the Commission Decision, 11 May 2006)

Cigarette lighters placed on the EU market must be child-resistant

(with the exception of lighters which are sold with a 2 year written guarantee, are refillable and can be repaired by a European-based after-sales service)

The serious risk posed by lighters is confirmed by the available data and information on fires in the EU related to children playing with lighters. A report published by the United Kingdom Department of Trade and Industry in February 1997 entitled "European research—accidents caused by children under five playing with cigarette lighters and matches" estimated a total of about 1,200 fires, 260 injuries and 20 deaths per year in the EU for 1997. More recent information confirms that a significant number of serious accidents, including deaths, are still caused in the EU by children playing with non-resistant lighters. (from the Commission Decision, 11 May 2006)

Novelty lighters are banned

All lighters that resemble by any means to another object recognized as appealing to or intended for use by children should be banned. This includes, but is not limited to, lighters the shape of which resembles cartoon characters, toys, guns, watches, telephones, musical instruments, vehicles, human body or parts of the human body, animals, food or beverages, or that play musical notes, or have flashing lights or moving objects or other entertaining features, usually called 'novelty lighters,' which pose a high risk of misuse by children. (from the Commission Decision, 11 May 2006)

*Ed. note: The European Commission Web site has extensive information about the Decision and is well worth a look.
http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/cons_safe/prod_safe/gpsd/lighters/index_en.htm*



Recalled In U.S.



Recalled In U.S.



Recalled In U.S.

The AXE effect



Ed. Note: Using Axe deodorant to create a flame-thrower effect was first brought to our attention about a year ago. *Hot Issues* asked our fire service readers to let us know if they had incidents of this in their jurisdictions.

While other aerosol brands are also being used to make flame throwers, Axe is the brand mentioned most often. We wondered, why Axe?

The article which follows describes another "Axe effect" and may help to answer the question.

Teen boys picking up on a scent: body spray

By Lori Aratani
Washington Post Staff Writer
Monday, April 3, 2006; B01

James Armstrong's got style, and he likes to smell good. Real good. And to smell good, he's got to have his Axe.

"Axe is one of my favorite things in life," he said. "You don't want to be smelling bad in class."

He's 13. He wears outfits, not clothes. And he has one scent for every day.

And one for, well, you know, special occasions.

"Sometimes when you wear it," said Milai Henriet, his classmate at A. Mario Loiederman Middle School in Silver Spring, "the ladies will turn their heads at you."

Milai is 12.

Seems that Axe body spray has become *the* thing for today's discriminating middle school boy. Preteen boys barely registered in the billion dollar personal grooming market just a few years ago. But analysts say younger and younger boys are snapping up body sprays—lighter and often less expensive versions of cologne—in greater numbers than ever before.

Karen Grant, senior beauty industry analyst with the NPD Group, a market research company, said that when workers at her firm began analyzing the market in 2002, they were looking at trends among females, but to their surprise, they discovered teenage boys were also into fragrance.

Moms report being dragged to drugstores to pick up cans of the spray—in all of its "nine unique fragrances." Principals groan and roll their eyes when asked about the "Axe effect." And physical education teachers? Well, they joke that clouds of body spray have become so ubiquitous that they need gas masks just to make it through the boys' locker room.

"Let me just tell you," said John Burley, principal at Forest Oak Middle School in Gaithersburg, "there are days when I walk down the eighth grade hallway ... and I am nearly asphyxiated."

And it is Axe—launched in France in 1983 and introduced in the United States in 2002—that is the brand du jour. Although manufacturer Unilever maintains that its target market is men between 18 and 24, boys as young as 11 are dousing themselves in the spray that "leaves guys smelling great so they can concentrate on more important things—like how to get the girl."

The suggestion—that Axe will help with the ladies—is woven throughout its marketing and advertising and may be why company officials declined to comment on the body spray's appeal to younger teens. Click on Axe's Web site, and it offers this handy factoid: "28% of all males at Spring Break are arrested pantless."

Make no mistake, even among sixth graders, girls are a big part of the Axe effect.

"I was watching the commercial, and there was this guy and he was mobbed by a bunch of girls, and I thought, 'Wow, that's tight!'" said Asean Townsend, 12. "So I went to CVS and bought it."

"Given that more men are buying grooming products, it only makes sense that it would filter down to younger boys as well," Grant said.

Axe is not the only brand out there. More established scents—think Dad's stocking stuffer circa 1975—have repositioned their products to appeal to a younger generation. Old Spice has a line called Red Zone. Gillette launched a body spray called Tag in 2004.

But the boys at Loiederman Middle will tell you Axe is their fragrance of choice. "It smells good, and it's cheap," said Nic Weinfeld, 12.

Brett Goynes, a physical education teacher at Loiederman, said he noticed the body sprays turning up about three years ago. Before that, he can't remember seeing a middle school boy use anything except maybe the occasional stick of deodorant.

"It's priced perfect for the middle school student," he said of the body sprays. "But, boy, if they sweat a lot and then put it on—ohhhh—it just takes over the whole locker room."

Axe retails for about \$5 and has become such a part of James's life that he spends half of his \$10 monthly allowance on it. It's so important to him that when asked to paint a still life of four things that were meaningful in his world, he included Axe, along with a CD, some dog tags and a pair of dice.

For mothers who preach the importance of good grooming, the arrival of Axe has been greeted with both horror and amusement.

"It started in my house last year," said Karen Clarkson, who has three boys, ages 6, 11 and 15. "And it has been passed down from brother to brother."

"Earlier this year, my 6-year-old got ahold of it and decided to test it out himself and then decided to spray it everywhere. If you've ever had a quarter of a bottle of Axe sprayed around your house, you know it takes forever to get rid of it."

What's the appeal?

"I wish I knew," Clarkson said. "I was born in the '60s, and we were into the

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The “other” Axe effect

Abbotsford, BC, Canada

“Two middle students had been involved with spraying Axe deodorant into the hot air hand dryer. They sprayed a large quantity of the liquid aerosol into the blower and then turned the unit on. They were hoping to achieve a large flaming torch ‘similar to what is on the can of deodorant.’

“They were not successful in their attempts but another student who walked in on them reported the incident to the school administration. The boys were immediately suspended and required to attend the Abbotsford Fire Rescue Youth Fire Intervention Program. It was determined that both boys had numerous misconceptions about fire and fire behavior.

“On average we get about six cases involving the misuse of aerosol cans on school property per year. Most of these incidents involve the flaming torch and lack of understanding about fire safety and fire behaviour.

“Some fire prevention officers in British Columbia contacted the Canadian manufacturer about the flaming torch on the front of the can and the message it sends to youths. Interestingly, the new cans of deodorant on the local store shelves now have a red sports figure instead of the flaming torch.

“Middle and high schools have been advised to ban all types of aerosol deodorants and hairspray. Only solid deodorant and pump air sprays are allowed onto school property and most schools are enforcing this restriction.”

*Michelle Jackson
Fire & Life Safety Specialist
Abbotsford Fire Rescue Service*

Alpine, California

“I am a law enforcement officer on the Cleveland National Forest near San Diego, California.

“In Alpine, we have had a couple of cases of Axe being used. The first was four boys who lit each other on fire, just burning clothes the first time. The second time, two of the boys torched the carpet in one of the boy’s bedroom.

“Two other boys were trying to light boards on fire with Axe. That case went to the juvenile DA’s office.

“Yes, we have had a minor ‘trend’ here as well.”

*Michelle Sarubbi
Law Enforcement Officer*

Contra Costa, California

“Our first documented account with a juvenile involved with Axe deodorant and fireplay is from October of 2004. This juvenile was thirteen-years-old and was making

Continued from page 5

natural and not the overpowering. And there is nothing really natural about Axe.”

Cans of the spray can be found stuffed in jeans pockets and squirreled away in lockers at Loiederman. After gym class, the locker room is often awash in musk, birch leaf and rich vanilla the “scentillating” ingredients found in the various sprays.

“We do occasionally fear they are using it in place of showering,” Principal Alison Serino said. “So we encourage them to take a three pronged approach, with Axe being the final step.” (Showering and soap being the first two prongs.)

Eighth-grader Klima Arrola started wearing Axe when he was 11 after seeing a TV commercial in a which a good-looking guy was mobbed by a

a torch with a lighter and Axe. He was sent to Contra Costa Fire for intervention.

“Since that time, our juvenile program has encountered approximately three to four more incidents that are documented. To my recollection, they were also middle-school-age males.

“In May, Contra Costa Fire interviewed a thirteen-year-old male who was using a can of Axe and a barbecue lighter. The same day, this juvenile lit a potato chip bag on fire in his living room.

“Two other male juveniles are on the calendar for our intervention program. They took a can of Axe to school and were caught making a torch with a lighter and the Axe. Both boys are twelve and attend a middle school.”

*Joey Smith
Public Education
Contra Costa Fire*

Corvallis, Oregon

“I just yesterday had a juvenile in my office who has used the Axe deodorant to create torches.

“This was not what he was arrested for; he and his brother are both in our juvenile firesetter

bunch of even better looking women. He found the ad appealing, he said.

Now 14, he prefers Axe’s Orion fragrance, described in promotional literature as an “aromatic citrus/fruity fragrance with a transparent watery top note composed of minty accents, orange flower, geranium, citrus and musk.”

But to Klima, who doesn’t have a girlfriend, “It just smells good.”

As for the girls, most say they like the body sprays too—when used in moderation.

“Someone by my locker uses it, but he uses so much that you can taste it in your mouth,” said Allison Testamark, 14, scrunching up her nose in disgust.

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intervention program for reckless burning involving another incident. The Axe thing came up while we were discussing his previous fire play.”

Carla Pusateri, FPO
Corvallis Fire Department
(541) 766-6909

Parma, Ohio

“The Parma Fire Department responded to a six-story apartment building for a report of smoke in an apartment.

“A basket of towels on the washing machine was smoldering. It was learned that the occupant had used an oil-based wax remover on her body, then wiped it off with some towels. She washed and dried the towels and placed them on top of the dryer. That evening, she noticed a strange smell on the towels so her twelve-year-old son sprayed Axe deodorant on them. They left the apartment and returned about one hour later to find the smoke.

“I interviewed the youth and his parents and showed the parents the winter 2006 *Hot Issues* article regarding Axe. The youth’s story was consistent with the parents’ account of what happened prior to the family leaving the unit.

“The cause of the fire is listed as undetermined at this time.”

Richard Ciarrone,
Fire Inspector,
Parma Fire Department

San Diego, California

“We have had three separate incidents that occurred in the last six months.

“A fifteen-year-old male sprayed a rag with Axe, wrapped the rag around the Axe bottle, lit it on fire and dropped the makeshift bomb in a McDonald’s toilet. It did explode and damaged the property. He was sent to juvenile detention.

“A fourteen-year-old male used Axe body spray as a torch. We asked why he chose Axe and he stated ‘because it said flammable.’

“A thirteen-year-old male and two companions were in the school bathroom lighting paper on fire. One boy sprayed Axe on the wall and was successful in lighting the wall where it had been sprayed with Axe.

“A seventeen-year-old male reported that he participated in making an explosive device using Axe body spray, paper, lighter fluid and a plastic pretzel container. The youths mixed the lighter fluid, paper and Axe cans together and ignited them in the middle of a public street.”

Dana Carnduff
Burn Institute

Thunder Bay, Ontario, Canada

“Four students in grade five created a torch using a lighter and Axe deodorant in the school bus while it was moving.

“I have completed the initial intervention at the school with the kids and parents, and the ‘hands on child’ has been referred to our mental health provider at the request of his mom. The boy had been coached on how to do this by a female foster child (fifteen years old) living with the boy’s family. She has since been moved by her care agency.

“I thought this was an isolated incident. However, suppression crews were sent out the other evening in response to a call of children doing the same thing. On their arrival, the kids were gone. There was evidence of their actions present, however.

“My fear is, of course, of a child receiving horrendous burns doing this or burning another person.”

Brian Berringer, Director
Fire Prevention / Investigation
Thunder Bay Fire / Rescue

New Massachusetts law requires schools to report fires

Excerpted with permission: *All Hands Herald*, July 2006, a publication of the Department of Fire Services, Stow, Massachusetts

A new law passed in early May now requires schools to report fires to fire authorities. Chapter 80 of the Acts of 2006 created a new section of 2A of Massachusetts General Law C. 148. (Ed. It took effect at the start of the new school year.) Fire and law enforcement authorities have long sought this law so they can better protect their communities. Fire officials know that all fires start small, so every fire has the potential to rob the community of a valuable asset—the school itself.

Juvenile firesetters will continue to set fires until they receive appropriate intervention. The sooner a child’s cry for help is heard, the sooner the child will receive help. No one does a child any good if they do not react appropriately and swiftly. If schools have a series of fires but only call fire and law enforcement officials when “they have a big one,” then none of that pattern of firesetting can be used to make the case for getting a student the help they need, and in the meantime, the entire school community is placed at risk.

While juvenile firesetting is not the only cause of school fires, it is the most common. MFIRS indicates 21 percent of school fires are intentionally set, 21 percent are indoor rubbish fires for which cause is not collected but should be considered intentionally set, and juvenile firesetting accounts for 2 percent. Since most school fires occur when school is in session, the data indicate 45 percent of school fires are most likely started by the students themselves.



Oregon Office of State Fire Marshal
Department of State Police
Juvenile Firesetter Intervention Program
4760 Portland Road NE
Salem, OR 97305-1760

Resources

Conferences

.....
Save the date!
Oregon
Cultivating Partnerships 2
September 17 & 18, 2007
Location TBA
Portland, Oregon

Hosted by the Oregon Office of State Fire Marshal
and the Fire Safe Children and Families Program

New York State
Juvenile Firesetter
Intervention Program Seminar
May 21 - 23, 2007
Academy of Fire Science
Montour Falls, New York

Contact William McGovern,
WMcGover@dos.state.ny.us

Afterword ...



According to police, a woman in South Carolina recently shot herself in the hand. She was trying to light a cigarette with a pistol she had mistaken for a cigarette lighter.

If an adult can't tell the difference between a novelty lighter and a pistol, how can a child be expected to do so?



This lighter was donated to *Hot Issues* for our burgeoning lighter collection by a colleague who purchased it at an airport in Hawaii.

The label, stating that the lighter contains no fuel, made it possible to take it on the airplane. It could also make it possible to mail such lighters, thus avoiding retail marketing entirely.

Hot Issues is a quarterly newsletter of information and ideas for those concerned about juvenile firesetting. It is published by the Oregon Office of State Fire Marshal. Please submit news, announcements, articles, suggestions or resources for review to *Hot Issues*. In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, this publication is available in alternate formats by calling 503.373.1540, ext. 240. Subscriptions are free of charge. Also available on the Office of State Fire Marshal Web site: <http://egov.oregon.gov/OOHS/SFM/>

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