

NEWS from CPSC

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Kohl's Department Stores Agrees to Pay \$425,000 Civil Penalty for Failing to Report Drawstrings in Children's Sweatshirts

WASHINGTON, D.C. - The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) announced today that Kohl's Department Stores Inc., of Menomonee Falls, Wis. has agreed to pay a civil penalty of \$425,000. The [penalty settlement](#) (pdf), which has been provisionally accepted by the Commission, resolves CPSC staff allegations that Kohl's Department Stores knowingly failed to report to CPSC immediately, as required by federal law, that children's hooded sweatshirts it sold had drawstrings at the neck.

Children's upper outerwear with drawstrings, including sweatshirts, poses a strangulation hazard to children which can result in serious injury or death. In March 2009, CPSC and the sweatshirts' importer announced a [recall](#) of the products.

CPSC issued drawstring [guidelines](#) (pdf) in 1996 to help prevent children from strangling or getting entangled on the neck and waist drawstrings in upper outerwear, such as jackets and sweatshirts. In 1997, industry adopted a voluntary standard for drawstrings that incorporated the CPSC guidelines. In May 2006, CPSC's Office of Compliance [announced](#) (pdf) that children's upper outerwear with drawstrings at the hood or neck would be regarded as defective and as presenting a substantial risk of injury to young children.

Federal law requires manufacturers, distributors, and retailers to report to CPSC immediately (within 24 hours) after obtaining information reasonably supporting the conclusion that a product contains a defect which could create a substantial product hazard, creates an unreasonable risk of serious injury or death, or fails to comply with any consumer product safety rule or any other rule, regulation, standard, or ban enforced by CPSC.

In agreeing to the settlement, Kohl's Department Stores denies CPSC's allegations that it knowingly violated the law. In 2008, Kohl's paid a \$35,000 civil penalty for failing to report drawstrings in children's sweatshirts.

<https://www.cpsc.gov/cpsclist.aspx>. Consumers can obtain recall and general safety information by logging on to CPSC's Web site at www.cpsc.gov.