CONSUMER PRODUCT SAFETY COMMISSION

16 CFR Chapter II

[CPSC Docket No. CPSC-2011- ]

Table Saw Blade Contact Injuries; Advance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking; Request for Comments and Information

Information

AGENCY: Consumer Product Safety Commission.

ACTION: Advance notice of proposed rulemaking.

SUMMARY: The Consumer Product Safety Commission ("CPSC" or "Commission" or "we") is considering whether a new performance safety standard is needed to address an unreasonable risk of injury associated with table saws. We are conducting this proceeding under the authority of the Consumer Product Safety Act ("CPSA"), 15 U.S.C. 2051–2084. This advance notice of proposed rulemaking ("ANPR") invites written comments from interested persons concerning the risk of injury associated with table saw blade contact, the regulatory alternatives discussed in this notice, other possible means to address this risk, and the economic impacts of the various alternatives. We also invite interested persons to submit an existing standard, or a statement of intent to modify or develop a voluntary standard, to address the risks of injury described in this ANPR.

DATES: Written comments and submissions in response to this notice must be received by [insert date that is 60 days after publication in the FEDERAL REGISTER].
FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Caroleene Paul, Directorate for Engineering Sciences, U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, 5 Research Place, Rockville, Maryland 20850; telephone (301) 987-2225; fax (301) 869-0294; e-mail c paul@cpsc.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

A. Background

On April 15, 2003, Stephen Gass, David Fanning, and James Fulmer, et al. ("petitioners") requested that we require performance standards for a system to reduce or prevent injuries from contact with the blade of a table saw. The petitioners cited estimates of 30,000 annual injuries involving table saws, with approximately 90 percent of the injuries occurring to the fingers and hands, and 10 percent of the injuries resulting in amputation. The petitioners alleged that current table saws pose an unacceptable risk of severe injury because they are inherently dangerous and lack an adequate safety system to protect the user from accidental contact with the blade.

In the Federal Register of July 9, 2003 (68 FR 40912) and September 5, 2003 (68 FR 52753), we invited comments on the issues raised by the petition. We received 69 comments. CPSC staff's initial briefing package regarding the petition is available on the CPSC website at http://www.cpsc.gov/library/foia/foia06/brief/tablesaw.pdf. On July 11, 2006, the Commission voted (2–1) to grant Petition CP03-2 and directed staff to draft an advance notice of proposed rulemaking ("ANPR"). On July 15, 2006, the Commission lost its quorum and was unable to move forward with publication of an ANPR at that time. However, CPSC staff continued to evaluate table saws and initiated a special study from January 2007 to December 2008, to gather more accurate estimates on table saw injuries and hazard patterns related to table saw injuries.