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].
To switch back to typical through cuts, the splitter and guard must be reinstalled in keeping with manufacturers’ recommendations that blade guard systems be used whenever performing a through cut.

D. The Market

CPSC staff has identified at least 15 manufacturers and importers of table saws. According to the Power Tool Institute ("PTI"), its members account for approximately 85 percent of all table saws sold in the United States. Most manufacturers are large, diversified, international corporations with billions of dollars in sales, of which table saws generally make up a relatively small part of their revenue. Several other U.S. corporations manufacture or import smaller numbers of table saws for the U.S. market. According to PTI, estimated annual shipments of table saws have fluctuated widely in recent years. In 2006 and 2007, estimated shipments were 800,000 to 850,000 units. However, estimated shipments declined to 650,000 in 2008, 589,000 in 2009, and 429,000 in 2010.

CPSC staff also obtained information from PTI regarding the expected useful life estimates for different categories of table saws, ranging from 6 years for an inexpensive bench saw, to 17 years for a contractor saw, to 24 years for an expensive cabinet saw. Based on these expected product lives and sales data for the different types of saws, PTI estimated the number of table saws in use at 8.0 million in 2001/2002, and 9.5 million in 2007/2008. CPSC staff believes that this estimate is generally consistent with independent estimates of table saws in use, based upon product population estimates using the CPSC’s Product Population Model ("PPM"). The PPM is used by CPSC staff to estimate the number of products in use, given sales estimates and information on expected product life. Assuming an average retail price of $500 per table saw,