



Companies Fined for Selling Hazardous Sweatshirts and Jackets

Written On September 10, 2009 By [Bob Kraft](#)

As reported by the [Associated Press](#), four retailers have been fined by the Consumer Products Safety Commission (CPSC) for selling hooded sweatshirts or jackets with drawstrings at the neck. This is a known safety hazard, especially for small children. 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, the industry adopted a voluntary standard for drawstrings that incorporated the CPSC guidelines. In May 2006, CPSC's Office of Compliance announced 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.

Any parents who bought these jackets or sweatshirts should return them and not allow their children to wear them. Here are excerpts from the article:

The commission identified the companies as:

_Kohl's Department Stores Inc. of Menomonee Falls, Wis., which has agreed to pay a civil penalty of \$425,000. In 2008, Kohl's paid a \$35,000 civil penalty for failing to report drawstrings in children's sweatshirts.

_Maran Inc. of North Bergen, N.J. and K.S. Trading Corp. of Moonachie, N.J., which agreed to pay a total of \$85,000 in civil penalties.

_Hill Sportswear Inc. of Paramount, Calif., which agreed to pay a civil penalty of \$100,000.

About 120,000 Hill Sportswear sweatshirts with drawstring were sold at various small retailers in California and Texas from 2003 through December 2008 for approximately \$8 apiece. Due to the serious nature of this hazard, parents are urged to immediately remove the drawstrings from the sweatshirts or return the garments to either the place of purchase or to Hill Sportswear for a full refund.

In November 2008, a 3-year-old boy died in Fresno, Calif., when the drawstring on his Hill Sportswear hooded sweatshirt reportedly became stuck on a playground set strangling him. Hill Sportswear and CPSC announced a recall of the sweatshirts in February of this year.

In agreeing to the settlement, the companies deny CPSC's allegations that they knowingly violated the law.

Federal law requires manufacturers, distributors, and retailers to report to the agency within 24 hours that a product contains a defect that causes a safety hazard or doesn't comply with consumer product safety rules.