



# Diversified Products Investigator

*Serving Consumers, Insurance Industry, and Manufacturers*

Diversified Product Inspections, Inc. Monthly Newsletter January 2001

## LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT TO ALL CLIENTS OF DPI



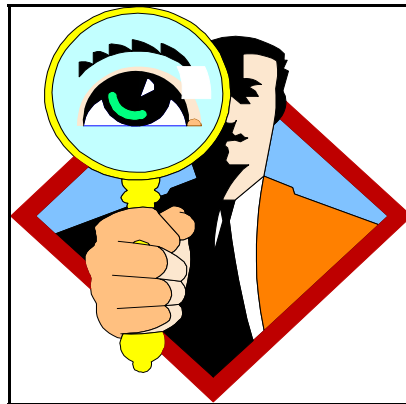
In a spirit of cooperation of the start of the new year, DPI is asking all of its clients to assist identifying product failure patterns.

If you feel that you have a product failure that may be a part of a pattern of failures, we would greatly appreciate your sharing of that information, even if DPI has not provided you service on the claim.

This information can be transmitted by fax or email. One such item that DPI is looking at is clothes dryers and stove top fires. In the coming year, DPI will be expanding the scope of its operations to both strengthen and improve the services we now offer and improve the services available through our website. We want all consumers to be able to draw on collective information in evaluating the safety of products they currently have in their home, and to assist them in the evaluation of new products before purchasing .

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the clients that DPI has had the privilege of serving in the past year.

## Happy New Year



We look forward to the opportunity to serve you in the coming year. If you have any suggestions or complaints about the service you received, I would greatly appreciate the opportunity to address them with you. Please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

John VanZyll  
President of DPI



## Propane Friend or foe?

**Exploring the hazards associated with propane and possible exposure to Carbon Monoxide (CO)**

Startling statistics show that each year over 56,000 people die due to carbon monoxide poisoning and 5000 are treated in the emergency room for exposure to this colorless and odorless gas.

It has been found that out of the 56,000 deaths that some 200 deaths are due to poorly or improperly vented fuel heaters.

**Common signs of exposure to (CO):**

1. Chronic headaches, nausea, or eye irritation when indoors
2. An unidentified chronic odor inside the building
3. Dying house plants
4. Condensation on cool, indoor surfaces and discoloration or soot build up at warm air outlets of the heating system.

Here are a few seasonal safety tips to help reduce the risk of exposure to carbon monoxide.

1. When flooding conditions are predicted to occur in your area, turn off the gas valve at the container (cylinder \ tank)
2. Do not turn the gas back on until the gas system and appliances have been checked by a qualified technician.

Heavy accumulations of snow and ice on regulators, piping, tubing and valves can cause damage that could result in gas leakage. Keep snow and ice from accumulating on tanks, regulators, piping, tubing and valves on the outside of your building. Regulator vents, appliance vents, chimneys and flues must be kept clear of snow and ice so appliances can vent properly. This is especially critical on the roofs of mobile homes.

Although there are hazards associated with the use of propane there are also benefits of using it. Propane burns more efficient than most other fuel sources such as fuel oil, kerosene. Propane also has multiple use's it could be stored in small tanks to make it portable for use with gas grills, and camping equipment. Another use for propane would be to heat a home or used as fuel for gas

Caution should be used while using propane in products such as gas grills, and fireplaces as dpi has investigated several claims involving these types of products. there are eighteen recalls involving gas grills and accessories and there are two recalls involving gas fireplaces. Another item that uses propane are pool heaters. Leakage in the gas valve on these heaters has resulted in explosions and fires. A regular maintenance schedule could help to prevent failures.

DPI recommends that periodic inspections be conducted on gas lines, regulators, and other accessories associated with the use of propane.

## Official Recall Notices



### Portable Propane Heater

The Turner LP-2440 portable propane heater could release deadly carbon monoxide gas. Twenty thousand of these radiant heaters were sold from 1963 to 1964 for \$30-\$35. Heater has green metal cabinet about 8 inches wide, 3 inches high, and 13 inches deep. Model number appears on front of heater, with the words, "PORTABLE radiant heater, TURNER CORPORATION."

Call 866/889-7672 for instructions on returning defective heater and receiving a \$250 reward.

### Natural Gas Water Heater Voluntarily Recalled

The A.O. Smith Water Products Company of Irving, Texas is voluntarily recalling and replacing approximately 29,000 flue baffles installed in water heaters manufactured between April 9, 1991 and July 9, 1991.

Only the 30 and 40 gallon heaters models FSG and PGX with serial numbers beginning with MD91, ME91, MF91 and MG91. A.O. Smith Electric water heaters have no flue baffle and therefore are not subject to recall.

The affected water heaters were distributed east of the Mississippi Rive by plumbing wholesalers and distributors.

Consumers who own one of the affected water heaters and have not received recall information from the company, should contact A.O. Smith Water Products Company toll-free at 1-800/538-9642 to arrange for the free replacement of the flue baffle.

A.O. Smith FSG and PGX model water heaters purchased prior to April 1991 or after July 1991 are not subject to this recall.

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