

Safety office urges parents to check child safety seats

The Michigan State Police Office of Highway Safety Planning urges consumers to be alert to recalls of child safety seats.

Fisher-Price, Century and Guardian manufactured by Takap-Gerico (Gerry) have announced recalls.

Fisher-Price is conducting three recalls of its child safety seats.

The first involves model 9100 and 9101 seats made between February and November 1989. These seats must be modified because a plastic part on the buckle shield can break, making the shield difficult to latch.

Fisher-Price will provide a new shield at no charge.

The same models, produced between May 1987 and January 1989, were the subject of a November 1990 modification program for the same problem.

Other recalls include: Fisher-Price Model 9101 child seats produced between February 1991 and January 1992. Shoulder belts on these seats can move out of the proper position. The company will provide a new part to prevent the problem.

Model 9104 deluxe booster seats manufactured between April 24 and Sept. 4, 1992, are being modified because the red button on the seat buckle can become dislodged, preventing the buckle from latching. The company will provide a full refund, a new booster seat, or repair parts for the assembly.

No reports of injury have been reported as a result of the problems. The company and the Michigan State Police Office of Highway Safety Planning urge consumers to continue to use the seats until new parts arrive. Two toll-free numbers are provided. Owners of safety seat models 9100 and 9101 should call 1-800-332-3457. Owners of booster seats model 9104 should call 1-800-432-5437.

Century is conducting the recall of Century 3000 STE and Century 5000 STE series car seats - lot numbers 8909 through 9203. (The lot number is the last four digits of the model number located on the side of the car seat.) Tests showed that the push-button latch release (red button release) can jam during a crash, making it difficult to release the harness and shield that restrain the child.

The latch mechanism problem does not affect the seats' crash protection performance.

Although the mechanism problem has never been reported during an actual crash, if it occurs, the child can be removed from the seat by either pushing on the white plastic release plunger or by releasing the automobile safety belt and removing the child and the car seat together from the vehicle.

Century has developed a Retro-fit Kit that can modify the seat. Call 1-800-231-2765.

Guardian seats manufactured by Gerry between Jan. 31 and May 1990 also are being recalled.

If a car seat company does not respond promptly to a request, consumers may submit a complaint to the administrator, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 400 Seventh Street, SW, Washington, D.C. 20590 or call the toll-free Auto Safety Hotline at 1-800-424-9393.

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For more information, call Sue Vanderbeek at 862-8000, Ext. 316.

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