

Be On The Look Out!

Utica National Insurance Loss Control Department – Staff Alert

Issue : 02-01 Date: 04/09/02
Subject: Table Safety (Mobile Folding and Wall-Mounted/Recessed)

Source: U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission

Children Should Not Move or Play With Mobile Folding Tables

CPSC Document #5062

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) warns school officials and those organizations that use school facilities that children cannot safely move mobile folding tables commonly found in school cafeterias and meeting rooms. The tall heavy tables can tip-over and seriously injure or kill a child.

CPSC has received reports of several deaths and injuries to children in schools when these tables tipped over while being moved in their folded positions. The tables are about 6 feet tall and may weigh up to 350 pounds. Some of the tables have benches or seats attached. The tables are on wheels so they can be moved and then unfolded when in the desired location. Most of the accidents happened during after-school or non-school sponsored activities. The tables overturned when the wheel or bottom edge of the table apparently hit a child's foot or when the child attempted to ride on the table while it was being moved. Typically, two children were moving the table, one child pulling and the other pushing. The child pulling was the one injured or killed.

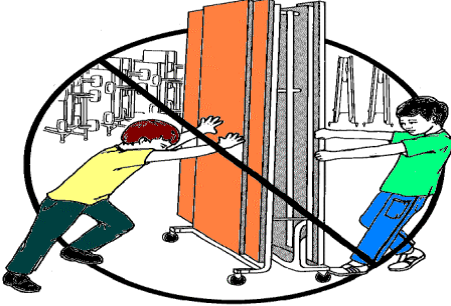
To avoid injuries and deaths from the tip-over of folded tables, school administrators and those supervising after school or non-school activities, such as scouting organization meetings, and social and church group meetings, should follow these safety rules:

- **Do not allow children to move the folded tables. Only adults should move them.**
- **Do not allow the children to play with the folded tables.**
- **Keep children away from the tables while they are being moved. Once the tables start to fall, It is difficult to stop them.**

The CPSC is reviewing the safety of folding tables. Some manufacturers of mobile folding tables have provided, or will soon provide, warning labels to be affixed to the tables. In the meantime, if folding tables do not have warning labels, we suggest that each table be prominently labeled with the above safety rules.

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For more information about the safe use of mobile folding tables, contact the manufacturer of the table. To report an unsafe product or a product related injury, consumers may call the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission toll-free hotline number, 1-800 638-2772. The



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teletypewriter number for the hearing impaired is 1-800-638-8270.

An Important Safety Message To Users Of Wall-Mounted Cafeteria Tables:

Source: Utica National Insurance Group

In addition to the concerns related to folding mobile tables, there have also been serious injuries and deaths associated with wall-mounted/recessed cafeteria tables.

Although the CPSC hasn't issued a safety alert regarding these tables, we have seen several serious injuries as a result of wall-mounted tables unexpectedly coming out of their wall pockets due to failure or improper maintenance of the locking/latching mechanism(s). The tables can strike a child on the head or other body part causing serious injury or death.

As with all furniture, owners of wall-mounted/recessed tables must be reminded to:

- **Make sure they have a good inspection and maintenance program for all their furniture and other equipment, including wall-mounted/recessed tables; and**
- **Make sure that the locking devices on wall-mounted/recessed tables are fully and properly used whenever the tables are folded into their wall pockets for storage.**
- **Install additional safety locks on pocket frames where necessary.**
- **Make sure there is a safety catch at the top of the wall frame and that there is an adjustable bolt located in the middle of the table or bench section that will trip the safety catch.**
- **Immediately repair or remove from service any damaged or unstable tables.**
- **Restrict use of these tables to adult staff members.**

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