

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

January 10, 2022

Alexander Hoehn-Saric  
Chair  
Consumer Product Safety Commission  
4330 East West Highway  
Bethesda, MD 20814

Dear Chair Hoehn-Saric:

We write to express our concerns regarding recent reports of deaths caused by at-home carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning and to inquire into actions the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) is taking to ensure that Americans are kept safe from CO poisoning this winter.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports that at least 430 people in the U.S. die each year from CO poisoning and approximately 50,000 people are forced to seek medical attention for accidental CO poisoning.<sup>1</sup> Tragically, a Moorhead, Minnesota family of seven lost their lives to carbon monoxide poisoning this past December.<sup>2</sup> As carbon monoxide gas is colorless and odorless, it's critical that Americans are made aware of the importance of properly using and maintaining carbon monoxide detectors.

We introduced the bipartisan *Nicholas and Zachary Burt Memorial Carbon Monoxide Poisoning Prevention Act* to encourage states to adopt tougher standards to help ensure carbon monoxide detectors are safe and reliable. At the federal level, the CPSC is charged with protecting the public against unreasonable risks of injuries and deaths associated with consumer products. While the CPSC has taken steps to educate consumers—such as posting safety tips to the Commission's website and social media page—we believe additional informative measures could be taken to protect Americans from CO poisoning.

We also respectfully request that you respond to the following questions:

1. What steps is the CPSC taking to help prevent incidents of CO poisoning at home?
2. How is the CPSC coordinating with states on CO poisoning awareness? What challenges do you face in working with states?
3. Does the CPSC provide education and outreach in non-English languages? If so, what languages, and what recent efforts has the CPSC taken to reach non-English speaking communities?

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<sup>1</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Carbon Monoxide (CO) Poisoning Prevention. (2021, Jan. 19.) Retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/nceh/features/copoisoning/index.html>.

<sup>2</sup> The Associated Press and Dan Gunderson. (2021, Dec. 22.) MPR News. *Authorities: Carbon monoxide caused deaths of 7 in Minnesota*. Retrieved from <https://www.mprnews.org/story/2021/12/22/authorities-carbon-monoxide-caused-deaths-of-7-in-minnesota>.

4. What data has the CPSC collected on the number of CO poisoning at-home accidents in 2021?
5. Does the CPSC need additional resources to investigate the increase in CO poisoning and take appropriate measures to help educate the population?

Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter. We look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

  
Amy Klobuchar  
United States Senator

  
John Hoeven  
United States Senator