

LOG OF MEETING
U.S. CONSUMER PRODUCT SAFETY COMMISSION

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SUBJECT: Portable Generators

DATE OF MEETING: September 17, 2007

PLACE: Room 714 CPSC Headquarters

LOG ENTRY SOURCE: Barbara E. Parisi

DATE OF ENTRY: October 16, 2007

COMMISSION ATTENDEES:

Janet Buyer
Hugh McLaurin
Charles Smith
Barbara Parisi

NON-COMMISSION ATTENDEES:

Robert Aratari, Aratari Enterprises
Joseph Englander, Registered Patent Attorney
Dr. Isaac Ray, President of EnviroEnergy
Jeanette Aratari, Aratari Enterprises Assistant
Blake Beeson

Open Portion of Meeting:

Roy Deppa, Marchica & Deppa
Nick Marchica, Marchica & Deppa
Mike Gidding, Brown & Gidding, PC

MEETING SUMMARY:

CPSC technical and legal staff met with representatives of Aratari Enterprises and their patent counsel to discuss information claimed by the company as proprietary concerning their catalyst approach to reducing exhaust emissions from small gasoline engines. This portion of the meeting was closed to the public. After this discussion, which included CPSC staff noting that much of the information presented had at one time been available publicly on the www.envirogen.com website, the CDC's website, and the CPSC's own website, GC staff in attendance opened the meeting to the public. The discussions then

turned to topics including the University of Alabama study, Senator Nelson's bill regarding shut-off devices for portable generators, discussions with industry regarding the reduction of CO emissions, and the agency's petition process.

MEETING MINUTES:

Mr. Aratari stated that after being without power following Hurricane Wilma in Florida, he was motivated by a desire to limit noise and carbon monoxide emissions from portable generators.

Testing on the product is being done through Met Labs.

Mr. Aratari cited statistics which he took from the CDC website, as follows:

- Generator emissions kill 500 annually.*
- 65% polled by CDC think that it is safe to run a generator in a basement.
- Environmentally Unsound: Home generators emit as much CO as 100 idling automobiles.
- 30% of the world's CO problems are caused by small engines.

*Ms. Buyer pointed out that Mr. Aratari cited this statistic from the CDC incorrectly—it is carbon monoxide emissions from all sources, most notably motor vehicles, that kill 500 annually.

Dr. Isaac Ray stated that an estimated 40,000 per year seek hospital room/ER treatment for CO poisoning. He stated that CO poisoning may manifest itself as flu-like symptoms. He asked if CPSC estimates or counts generator-related CO poisoning injuries. Ms. Buyer informed him that CPSC does not.

Dr. Isaac Ray stated his belief that use of a catalyst is the most economical and effective way to reduce emissions. Chuck Smith asked about the cost of Mr. Aratari's device. Mr. Aratari explained that the cost is not yet known. Ms. Buyer asked Mr. Aratari if he is still advertising on his website that the unit retails for \$99. Mr. Englander replied that they have removed that from their website.

Mr. Aratari cited statistics from CPSC's website:

- From 2000 to 2005, the number of deaths has more than tripled. Those who do survive could be affected with severe disabilities, such as blindness, paralysis, Parkinson's disease, temporary emotional instability, memory loss, psychosis, dementia, incontinence, and peripheral neuropathy.
- Consumer Portable Generator Ownership and Sales Statistics (Sources: Synovate, Inc., Multi-Client Research Group):
 - \$10.6 million units estimated in households in 2005.
 - \$1M per year bought in 2003, 2004, and 2005.
 - 60% of sales to consumers cost \$300 to \$800 per unit.

- 98.7% of portable generators sold in 2003 to 2005 were gas-fueled.

Mr. Aratari stated he was looking for public awareness. He stated information needs to be provided to: government officials, fire and police departments, schools, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, and the general population.

Mr. Englander asked whether the agency has an additional budget for product testing, besides what it has spent on the University of Alabama study. Janet Buyer said not currently.

Mr. Englander suggested that the CPSC tie in carbon monoxide alarm discussions with the portable generator warnings.

Mr. Aratari asked whether the CPSC was considering Senator Nelson's bill regarding shut-off devices for portable generators (S. 1510).

Mr. Englander asked whether the CPSC has had discussions with industry regarding the reduction of carbon monoxide emissions. Janet Buyer responded that there had been discussions with industry, notably, a 2004 public meeting and various closed meetings with individual manufacturers.

Mr. Englander asked whether the CPSC works through private companies in getting the word out to consumers. Mr. McLaurin responded that the CPSC works through different networks to get the word out, and does have relationships with private and federal entities to do so.

Mr. Englander asked about the petition process. Ms. Parisi informed him that the petition process was the method by which an outside party could request that the agency engage in rulemaking.