

Open Government Plan

April 12, 2010



The [Open Government Initiative](#) lays out the Obama Administration plan to usher in a new era of open and accountable government that will bridge the gap between the American people and their government. The core values of this initiative are:

- **Transparency:** Government should provide citizens with information about what their government is doing so that government can be held accountable.
- **Participation:** Government should actively solicit expertise from outside Washington so that it makes policies with the benefit of the best information.
- **Collaboration:** Government officials should work together with one another and with citizens as part of doing their job of solving national problems.

Executive Summary

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) is engaging in an aggressive plan to put forth its data, deliberations, decisions, determinations, collaborations and actions in an open, accessible manner to consumers, stakeholders and the general public in accordance with the Open Government Initiative.



Caption: A live webcast of a CPSC commission hearing.

Online efforts currently include [live webcasts](#) of meetings, hearings, workshops and interactive training. Staff memos, technical analyses, Federal Register notices, Commissioner's statements, and public comments are [posted online](#) during the course of CPSC's decisional processes. Actions, including recalls, safety alerts, safety awareness programs, interpretive rules, final rules, and enforcement policies are on [CPSC.gov](#).

The public is engaged through social media, including [Twitter](#), the [OnSafety blog](#), [Flickr](#), [YouTube](#), [recall widgets](#), and [Podcasts](#). A contractor staffed [phone and online Hotline](#) provides another avenue for stakeholder and public comment on all actions and communications.

CPSC continues to develop its Open Government Plan. Give us your thoughts on how we can better develop our Open Government Plan, prioritize information for publication and improve the availability and quality of published information. You can send your feedback to feedback@cpsc.gov.

1. Transparency

Currently, the agency is regularly posting the following documents for the public:

- a. [Public calendar](#) of open meetings with the Commissioners and staff – *published each week on CPSC.gov*
- b. Open Commission meetings and/or hearings held each Wednesday to discuss top policy and regulatory matters – *announced in advance and Web streamed live and archived on CPSC.gov*
- c. Web site within CPSC.gov with high value information on the [Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act](#) that helps give affected industries an open forum to stay aware of specific target dates for submitting public comments or complying with a new rule.
- d. CPSC's electronic Freedom of Information Act ([FOIA](#)) [records are available online](#). CPSC is publishing FOIA annual reports and improvement activities, including the FOIA backlog reduction plan.
- e. CPSC's [organizational structure](#) is available online.

For [businesses](#), the agency publishes the following documents:

- a. Online guide for [reporting product defects and/or incidents](#)
- b. Online guide for [conducting a product recall](#)
- c. Listing of [Federal Register notices](#)
- d. [Solicitations for public comments](#) on Advanced Notice of Public Rulemaking (ANPRs) and Notice of Public Rulemaking (NPRs)
- e. Online guide for [small businesses](#) to be aware of CPSC regulations

For the general public, the agency publishes the following:

- a. Recall announcements – via [e-mail](#), timely posting on [CPSC.gov](#) and [Recalls.gov](#)
- b. Emerging and seasonal safety announcements – via e-mail to Neighborhood Safety Network (NSN) and archived on [NSN-dedicated Webpage](#)



- c. Blog posts, tweets, FlickrR photos, YouTube videos – [CPSC 2.0 platforms](#) used to exponentially expand the public's access to timely online information, increase the public's knowledge of how to stay safe, and promote public engagement with the agency.
- d. Injury estimate data now available on [Data.gov](#), in addition to [CPSC.gov](#)
- e. CPSC rulemaking is available for comment on [regulations.gov](#).

2. Participation

From the agency's home page, the public can provide comments or ask questions via info@cpsc.gov or feedback@cpsc.gov. These mailboxes are monitored and managed throughout the day.

There are links to our social media sites including: [OnSafety blog](#), [Twitter](#), [YouTube](#) and [Flickr](#).

The regulatory community can now use a special e-mail address (Section15@cpsc.gov) and/or a [secure online form](#) to timely report product safety defects or incidents to the agency's Office of Compliance.



Caption: Resale/Thrift stores is one of seven specialty sites dealing with issues of concern for consumers

The agency hosts seven specialty sites dealing with issues of specific consumer concerns including: [ATV Safety](#), [Cribs/Safe Sleep*](#), [Drywall*](#), [Fireworks*](#), [Generators](#), [Resale/Thrift Stores](#) and [Pool and Spa Safety](#). (*English and Spanish) These sites include current information on hearings, meetings and workshops, links to regulations and voluntary standards, print and video publications, collaborations with other government agencies, news and reports. These sites have links to report incidents and to other with agencies involved the program.

Public workshops have been held by the agency in advance of major rulemaking being initiated by agency staff, so that stakeholders can share their expertise and experiences on how a given federal rule will impact their business or is intended to benefit consumers.

3. Collaboration

- a. In [Webinars and Webcast presentations](#), the agency has solicited and received pre-, during, and post event dialogue, questions and feed back with participants including small businesses and concerned stakeholders.

During these events, we monitor Twitter conversation traffic to gauge the perception by the audience of the material.

- b. On our Web site, we identify collaborations with agencies like EPA, CDC and HUD for Drywall. We post links to those agencies and to their specific material dealing with the issue.
- c. For our Pool and Spa Safety Campaign we invited advocates and national leaders of water safety programs to a Partners Summit. During the program participants were able to review CPSC plans, exchange information about their programs and discuss ways to collaborate during the coming years. Collaboration in the form of contract funds will be awarded in FY2010 for

training services and safety programs. Additional collaboration has and will continue to take place with state and local health departments, supporting the agency's Pool and Spa Safety Act inspection and enforcement program.

- d. A new collaboration effort has been undertaken with state Attorneys General on high profile recalls and implementing the CPSIA.

4. Flagship Initiative



Caption: A panel of state government, consumer advocate and industry representatives begin discussion on the creation of a publicly searchable database during the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission's public database workshop.

In section 212 of the Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act (CPSIA), Congress mandated the CPSC to create a searchable public database of reports of harm received from consumers; local, state, and Federal government agencies; health care professionals; child service providers; and public safety entities. Reports of harm will be transmitted to manufacturers for comment, and the whole database will be linked to our CPSC.gov Web site. The public database, SaferProducts.gov, is scheduled for launch in March 2011. The consumer will report an incident, CPSC staff will review it and forward to the manufacturer for comment. In as little as three weeks, the incident will be posted the searchable public database allowing other consumers to consider the report of harm with manufacturer's comments when making purchasing or safety related decisions.

The public database will significantly increase **transparency** by allowing the public to see reports of harm and manufacturer comments as the CPSC sees them and long before a recall is announced. The CPSC expects a significant increase in **participation** from both consumers and manufacturers. The consumer is encouraged to report incidents of harm and incorporate this safety information when making product related decisions. Likewise, the CPSC is encouraging manufacturers to comment on those reports of harm. As the CPSC **collaborates** with other recall issuing agencies, it is collaborating in new ways with search.U.S.A.gov, third-party application developers, and online retailers.

In addition to the public database, CPSC is developing a phone application for the public to search recalls while on the go and is undertaking a Web site redesign to make agency information easier for the public to find.