

Q I S P P

QUEENSLAND INJURY  
SURVEILLANCE & PREVENTION PROJECT

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# SAFETY BULLETIN

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Mater Adults' Hospital   Mater Children's Hospital   Mater Priority Emergency Centre   Redlands Hospital  
Logan Community Hospital   Queen Elizabeth II Jubilee Hospital   Princess Alexandra Hospital

## This Month ...

*Professor Bernard Guyer of the Department of Maternal and Child Health in the School of Hygiene and Public Health at Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore USA will visit QISPP in September.*

*Prof. Guyer will be speaking at a seminar on approaches to injury prevention and on paediatric mortality and morbidity statistics.*

*The seminar will be held on Thursday September 30 at the Community Child Health Building, 184 St Paul's Terrace, Brisbane, from 4 pm to 6 pm.*

*Seats are limited - please telephone QISPP on 840 8569 or Children's Community Health on 252 8555 if you are interested in attending.*

This month we examine in detail:

- **Injuries to Home Handypersons**
- **Head Injuries in Children Under Five**

In addition we will tell you something you didn't know about health and fitness activities, and raise your awareness of seasonal injury trends with a new spot called 'Season Watch'.

The Consumer Affairs Product Recall Notices this month cover vehicles, safety switches, chainsaws, cast iron chairs, medicine and Smith's Chips.

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## Injuries to Home Handypersons

QISPP recorded 4,794 injuries to people carrying out home, garden or vehicle maintenance during a 2 year period.

The majority (90%) of people reporting these injuries were males. The data showed that although those injured ranged in age from 15 years to over 80 years, one quarter of those injured were aged 30 to 39 years.

The injuries in this group were admitted at a rate of one in ten presentations, which was comparable with the database average admission rate of 12%.

As might be imagined, the incidence of home maintenance injuries doubled on Saturdays and Sundays, with half of the entire subset of injuries occurring on weekends. The hours between 2 pm and 5 pm were the most common time on weekends for injuries of this nature to occur.

88% of home handyperson injuries occurred in the injured person's garden or garage.

One in four injuries was a superficial abrasion to or foreign body in the eye, and 20% of injuries were lacerations to the fingers or hand. One in ten injuries was a fracture.

The most common items involved in these injuries were:

- grinding or sanding equipment
- saws
- lawn mowers
- ladders
- welding equipment
- hammers
- cleaning/maintenance chemicals (mainly paints, petrol and swimming pool chemicals)

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## Head Injuries in Children Under Five

In a 5 year study of head injuries to children under five, QISPP found that 80% of the 7,149 injuries occurred at home, most

commonly in the living or sleeping areas. 7% occurred in transport areas such as public roads, driveways, footpaths and parking areas.

Over half of the injuries were the result of falls. Steps and stairs were implicated in 7% of cases (could it be that the highset 'Queenslander' home constitutes a hazard not seen in other states?).

Beds were a factor in 6% of injuries. Nursery furniture was involved in a further 6% of injuries, with baby walkers featuring most often in this subcategory. Nursery furniture, in particular high chairs were examined in our July bulletin.

Grocery or shopping trolleys were implicated in 1% of head injuries to children under five.

## Did You Know...

The top 4 injuries resulting from health and fitness activities (use of exercise equipment and weights, jogging and aerobics) are:

1. sprained ankles
2. bruised feet or toes
3. lacerated hands
4. sprained knees
5. lacerated feet

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# Season Watch

• Children swallow more moth balls, camphor blocks and naphthalene flakes in September than any other month of the year, as folk put their winter clothing into storage. Caution should be exercised to keep them out of reach of children during packing and while in storage.

• As summer approaches and you are cleaning the swimming pool, don't even think about propping the gate in your pool fence open. An open or malfunctioning gate is the most likely point of access to a fenced pool for toddlers. This has been the situation in all cases known to us of toddler drowning occurring in fenced domestic pools.

A horse in Queensland recently made its way through an open gate and got into a domestic swimming pool. It required sedation and a crane to extract it.

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## Product Recall Notices

### Vehicles

Rover Australia: Range Rover and Discovery Vehicles produced between 10 August and 15 September 1992 recalled to replace electric window and sunroof switches. The affected range:

Range Rover Vehicles which have Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) within the following range VIN 625589 to 627471 and Discovery VIN range 033864 to 036637.

The VIN is displayed on the Vehicle Compliance Plate which is attached to the left hand inner guard panel under the bonnet.

Contact: Range Rover Regional Offices, Brisbane (07) 834 4890. (1)

### Electrical

HPM Industries Pty Ltd: Electresafe 5000 range of safety switches outlined below:

- all switches with serial numbers printed in blue.
- all switches with serial number printed in brown with serial numbers greater than 210 000

Switches do not provide full complete protection from earth fault currents above 2.5A. HPM Industries Pty Ltd, 4 Hill Street, Darlinghurst, telephone: 008 807 000. (2)

Stihl Pty Ltd: Stihl 006 and 066M chainsaw. Industrial chainsaws designed for use by professional tree fellers. In certain extreme operating conditions the chain brake may become difficult to engage manually although the automatic activation in a kickback situation is unaffected. Contact Mr Marburg on (03) 215 6666 or fax (03) 763 4423. (5)

### Products

Clark Rubber Limited: Samples imported from Berkeley Products Inc California. The Augusta Rose Chair is a Green Cast Iron chair with lace/rose style back and seat. There is a fault in legs of chair. Curve at top of the legs where they connect to the underside of the chair seat is weak which may render it a safety hazard should they collapse.

### Medicine

Periactin: Periactin (Cyphroptadine HCL, MSD) Syrup in 100ml bottles, all batches. Testing has shown a problem with the stability of the active ingredient in some bottles from some batches, which means that the desired effect may be diminished. Merck Sharp & Dohme (Australia) Pty Ltd, 54-68 Fernfell Street, South Granville New South Wales, telephone (02) 795 9500. (6)

### Food

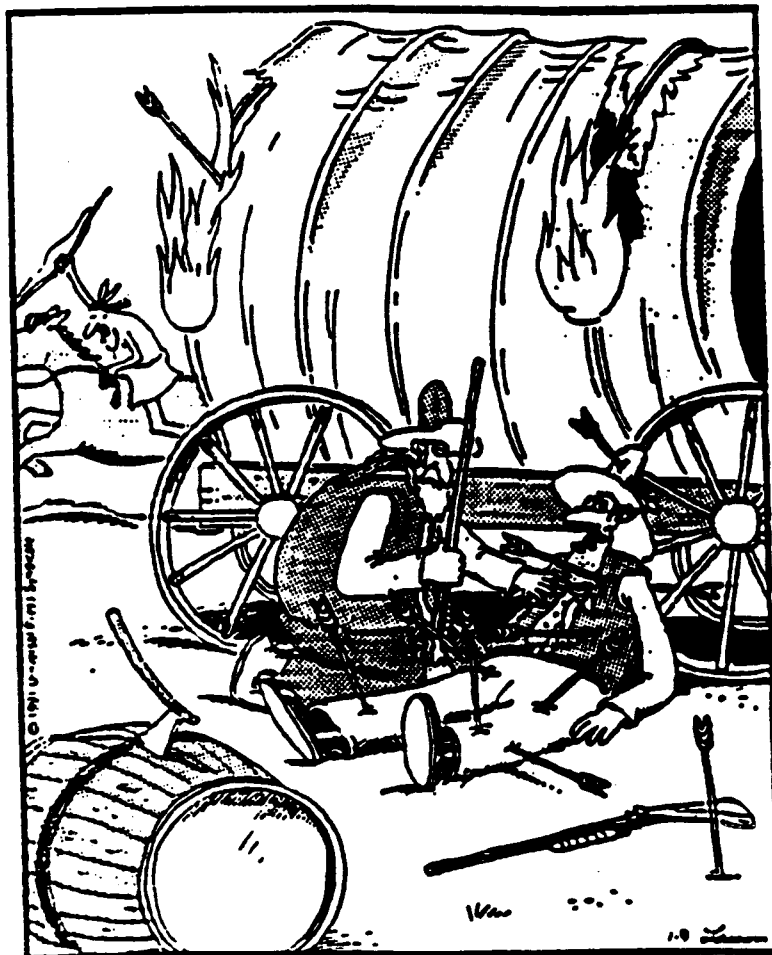
The Smith's Snackfood Company: Sewing needles found in three bags manufactured at Adelaide plant. Recall affects batches with following information in the "Pack Best Before" panel:

- Samboy Chicken Flavour - 17 September - FW
- Samboy Barbecue Flavour - 19 September - FW
- CC's Cheese Flavour - 24 August - FN

Goods to be returned to: Freepost 38 Rydalmere, Consumer Affairs Manager, The Smith's Snackfood Company, PO Box 142, RYDALMERE NSW 2116 Telephone: 008 025 789. (3)

**THE FAR SIDE**

By **GARY LARSON**



**"Yeah, Clem, I hurt. But y'know, it's a good kind of hurt."**

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