

New Window Covering Safety Standard

By: Paul Nathanson, Window Covering Manufacturers Association

The Window Covering Manufacturers Association (WCMA) announced today the approval of a new window covering safety standard by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) that will require a vast majority of window covering products sold in the United States and Canada to be cordless or have inaccessible or short cords. The new safety standard, ANSI/WCMA A100.1-2018, strengthens window-covering safety by requiring that all stock products sold in stores and online—which account for more than 80 percent of all window covering products sold in the U.S. and Canada—to be cordless or have inaccessible cords.



WCMA previously announced that the compliance date for the new standard would be one year after ANSI approval, which would be January 9, 2019. However, at the request of CPSC Chairman, Ann Marie Buerkle, who asked WCMA to move up the compliance date, WCMA is advising all companies selling window covering products in the U.S. and Canada that the compliance date of the new standard is December 15, 2018, although many companies will likely begin introducing new products based on the new standard earlier in the year.

"The revised safety standard segments the market between stock and custom-made products because U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) incident data shows that requiring stock products to be cordless or have inaccessible cords would have the most significant and immediate impact on reducing the strangulation risk to young children from certain window covering cords," said WCMA Executive Director, Ralph Vasami.

Corded window coverings will only be available on custom-order products, as corded products are still needed by a wide range of consumers, including the elderly and those with disabilities, those short in stature, and those with windows in hard-to-reach locations. The revised standard imposes new restrictions on these custom-order products such as requiring operating cords to have a default length of 40% of the blind height [currently it is unlimited] and a default to a tilt wand instead of a tilt cord. The new safety standard also includes a change in warning tags to more graphically depict the strangulation hazard.

Many custom-order window coverings are also now available with cordless operating systems or have inaccessible cords. It is therefore likely that more than 90 percent of products sold in the U.S. and Canada will be cordless or have inaccessible cords once compliance with the new safety standard is in place.

New Window Covering Safety Standard (Cont'd)

"All companies who manufacture, distribute, or sell window coverings in the U.S. must comply with the voluntary safety standard or face enforcement action by the CPSC and/or be open to legal action if non-compliant products are sold," said Vasami. "'Voluntary' simply signifies that industry worked cooperatively with the CPSC, safety experts, and others under the auspices of ANSI to develop the standard."



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The revised standard was updated in strict accordance with the internationally-respected American National Standards Institute (ANSI) process. ANSI requirements mandate an open and balanced process with public review opportunities. The 18 month process required assembling a consensus body (the canvass group), submitting the draft standard to the canvass group for ballot and comment, addressing the comments received, re-balloting, a public review period and then finally achieving approval of the standard.

"I congratulate WCMA member companies, CPSC officials, safety advocates, retailers and all stakeholders who devoted an incredible amount of time and effort over the past 18 months to develop the most significant revision to the window covering safety standard since 1996," continued Vasami. "The new safety standard is a direct result of ongoing industry innovation, technological advances and new product development. However, our work is not done. WCMA is creating a task force this month to study what else can be done to further enhance safety on corded custom products."

Vasami concluded, "I am hopeful that the Government of Canada will align Canadian window covering regulations with the new U.S. standard. A harmonized standard will result in further reductions in strangulation risks and decrease the possibility of confusion in the Canadian market."

Consumers today can look for the "Best for Kids" certification label to identify cordless window covering options. WCMA created the "Best for Kids" certification program in 2015 to make it easier for consumers shopping for window coverings to identify cordless products.

Nationwide Marijuana Legislation Update

By: Jodie Applewhite, NAA

The legalization of marijuana is spreading rapidly throughout the United States, both for recreational and medical use. Several states will be dealing with the issue either legislatively or at the ballot box in the upcoming year. Oklahoma joins 30 other states and the District of Columbia in legalizing marijuana in some form. The initiated state statute in "The Sooner State" passed 57 percent to 43 percent, in the June 26 primary election.

Nationwide Marijuana Legislation Update (Cont'd)

According to Oklahoma's State Question 788 (SQ 788), medical marijuana license holders are legally allowed to possess up to three ounces of marijuana on their person; six mature plants; six seedling plants; one ounce of concentrated marijuana; seventy-two ounces of edible marijuana; and up to eight ounces of marijuana in their residence.



The Oklahoma State Department of Health was responsible for establishing emergency rules to regulate SQ 788. The rules, approved by Governor Mary Fallin on July 11, 2018, left home cultivation untouched from the initiated statute. These rules are temporary, subject to negotiation and will be finalized later.

Currently, in SQ 788, patients are permitted to cultivate up to twelve plants (six mature, six seedling plants) in their home. This includes rental property. Such a policy may pose a major health hazard in multifamily properties. Research shows that growing marijuana indoors increases the level of mold spores to ten times the amount found in outdoor samples.

Some states have tackled this issue by including specific wording in their laws to protect owners against the risk of home cultivation and the nuisance of marijuana in a smoking form. In states such as Alaska, Maine and New Mexico, for example, residents that are patients must receive written permission from the owner before home cultivation is allowed. Additionally, owners in Arkansas are permitted to prohibit residents who are qualifying patients from smoking marijuana on leased property. This does not, however, restrict the patient from consuming marijuana in other forms, such as edibles or vaporization.

It is crucial to note that while marijuana legalization continues to spread, it remains classified as a Schedule 1 drug under federal law, as listed in the Controlled Substance Act (CSA). This is critical if you own a property that receives federal funding. Oklahoma, in addition to a few states, such as Arizona, permits owners to refuse to lease to a qualifying patient if doing so would cause the owner "to lose a monetary or licensing related benefit under federal law or regulation."

The Department of Housing and Urban Development released a memo in 2014 specifying that owners of federally funded properties must "deny admission to any household with a member who the owner determines is, at the time of application for admission, illegally using a controlled substance as that term is defined by the CSA" as required by the Quality Housing and Work Responsibility Act of 1998.

Marijuana will remain a growing issue for NAA in the upcoming years as more states weigh the costs and benefits of legalization. To better assist our affiliates, NAA is in the process of creating additional resources for members to reference, should this issue catch fire in your area. We will notify members as these resources become available.



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Kansas Voter Registration Deadline is October 16th



You can register to vote for the first time or update your current voter registration information online [through the Kansas Secretary of State's Office](#). To register to vote online, you must have a valid Kansas driver's license or an ID card.

Sedgwick County Election Commissioner Tabitha Lehman says her office received nearly 600 applications this past weekend, and she expects a lot more to come. The last day to register to vote — by mail, electronically or in person — is Oct. 16.

"We expect that we'll have thousands of registrations between now and then to process," Lehman says. "We've hired additional help to process those, and are getting geared up for that increase in registrations."

Applications can also be turned in by mail or in person at county election offices. Lehman says even if voters are registered, they should check their status before the registration deadline.

"You still need to double-check and make sure that your registration is up to date, that you don't need to change your name or your address or that you haven't had something that needs to be taken care of," she says.

You have to re-register if you want to change your party affiliation.

Early voting will begin Oct. 22. The general election is set for Tuesday, Nov. 6.



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