

Safety

Spring 1994

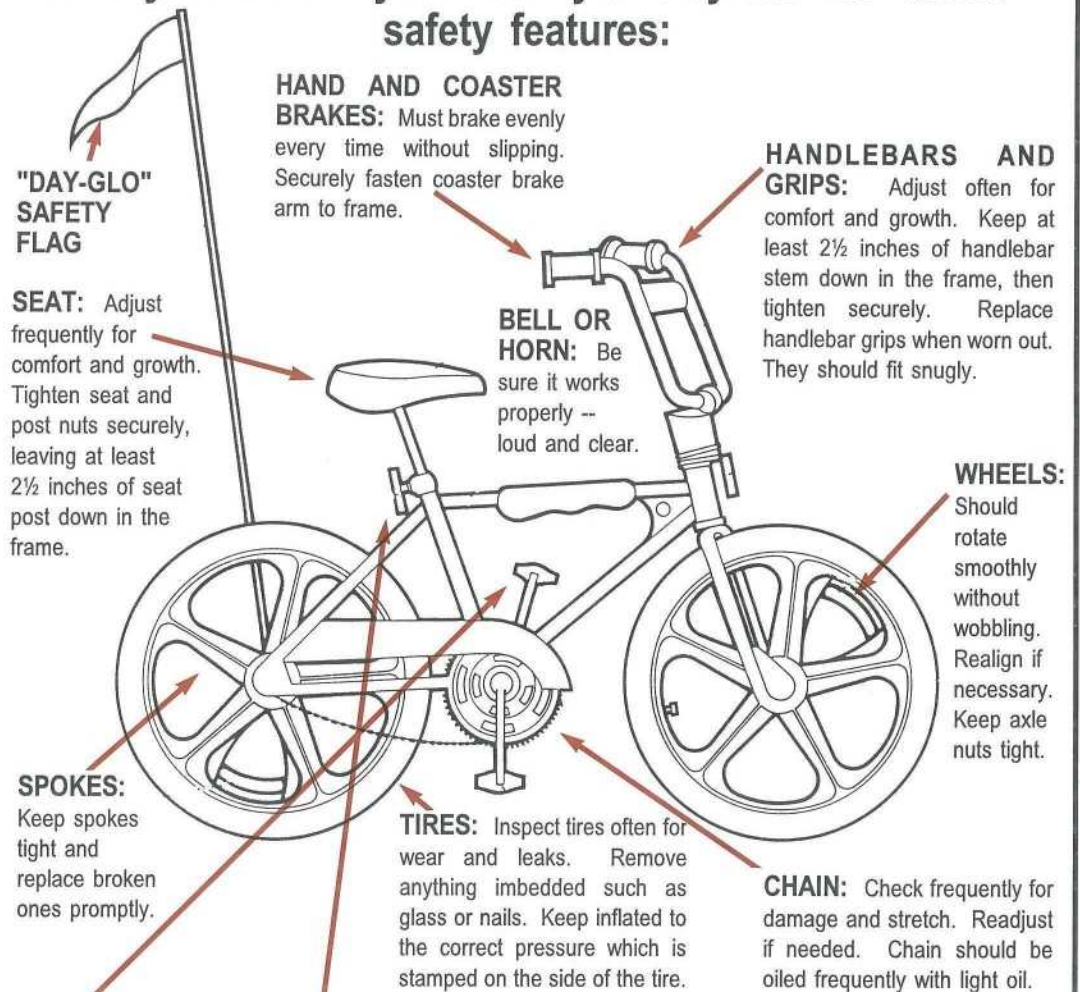
& THE LAW

A Newsletter to live by from the law firm of ROBERTS & ROBERTS

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Check this Listing of Potential Problem Products

Is your bike safe? We recommend that you check your family's bicycles for these safety features:



ROBERTS & ROBERTS

ATTORNEYS AT LAW

118 W. Fourth St.
Tyler, TX 75701

(903) 597-6000
1-800-248-6000

PEDALS: Pedals should have reflectors for safe night riding. Be sure pedal axle is *securely* tightened against the crank arm. Replace immediately if pedals are worn or damaged.

LIGHTS AND REFLECTORS:

Equip your bike with reflectors and lights. They should be visible at dusk and at night - 500 feet from headlights and 300 feet from the rear reflector. Use state approved reflectors. If they are damaged, replace immediately.

ACCOLADES

Ms. Karen Bryant of our office was elected Secretary of the East Texas Association of Legal Administrators.



*This Newsletter is
printed on
recycled paper.*

Baby walkers are not for babies

Family Safety Update

For many young parents, a baby walker may appear to be an excellent product for a young child. It allows the infant great mobility and many parents believe it assists the child in learning to walk.

This view may be changing. Many consumer groups and medical associations view the baby walker as a source of serious injury for America's infants. Last August a coalition of consumer groups and pediatricians, including the American Academy of Pediatrics, the National Safe Kids Campaign, Consumers Union, and the Consumer Federation of America, filed a petition with the Consumer Products Safety Commission seeking a ban on the manufacture and sale of baby walkers in the United States.

One of the main problems with the baby walker is that it gives the infant

mobility at a time when the child is not ready to be mobile and the parents are not prepared for the child to be mobile. Studies indicate that an infant in a baby walker can move as fast as 3-4 feet per second, getting into trouble before the parents become aware that their child is in danger.

In 1991 nearly 29,000 infants required hospital emergency room treatment for injuries resulting from the use of baby walkers. Baby walkers are associated with more injuries each year than any other baby product. The most serious injuries include brain damage, fractures, and burns.

Approximately half of all injuries involving walkers are caused by falls down steps. Since the walkers also allow babies to reach higher, burns and severe scalds have occurred when babies were able to pull pots and pans off stoves.

Many doctors now believe that baby walkers do not increase a child's ability to walk at an earlier age and may actually delay a child's walking abilities. Safety advocates are urging parents not to buy walkers, and if they own one, to throw it away.

Law Update

Q: My car is a total loss as a result of an accident I had with a careless driver. His insurance company has only offered to pay me the fair market value of my car. Do I have any other rights?

A: Yes. In addition to paying you the fair market value of your car, the insurance company must reimburse you for the sales tax you will pay to get another car of similar value as well as for the cost of the new license plates and title. And remember, the fair market value of your car is based on its retail value -- not wholesale value.



CLIMBING RAILS: Modern protection for old hazards

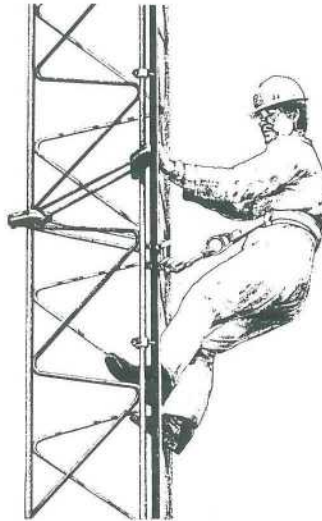
Falls from vertical working surfaces, such as tall towers, rigs, water tanks, poles, and radio or television antenna structures, are a cause of serious injury and death in the workplace. Workers can usually "tie-off" with a safety strap while at their work station on these tall structures. Workers, however, often have no protection from falls while climbing steep ladders to and from their work station on these structures.

Those responsible for the safety of tall structures often dismiss these tragic falls as unavoidable accidents. They point out that traditional fall protection measures, such as nets, platforms, or enclosed railings, are not practical or economical for protecting this type of work.

A climbing rail or cable is, however, a feasible way of preventing this type of fall. It is a rigid rail or tight cable that runs along the side or center of the ladder from the bottom to the top of the structure which the worker must climb. The worker's body belt is attached to the rail or cable by means of a climbing device called a carrier. This carrier is designed to move freely up and down the rail or cable, but it locks the instant it senses a fall.

The carrier and climbing rail or cable are permanently attached to the structure.

The carrier, however, will connect to the D-ring found on most brands of body belts worn by workers.



Tall towers and structures which must be climbed frequently for maintenance or other purposes require an adequate fall protection system. Prudent manufacturers and builders of communication towers and other tall structures will incorporate these safety devices into their products. Owners of these tall structures which do not have such climbing safety devices should consider installing them.



The Occupational Safety and Health Administration's hotline for emergency reporting of major workplace hazards is 1-800-321-OSHA.

Workplace Safety Update

ROBERTS & ROBERTS

Roberts & Roberts is an East Texas law firm with a history of helping people injured by unsafe practices and products. Randell C. Roberts and Bruce L. Roberts are certified by their state and national professional boards as specialists in Personal Injury Trial Law and Civil Trial Advocacy. They are also members of the:

- Institute for Injury Reduction
- Institute for Product Safety
- National Safe Workplace Institute
- National Safety Council
- Texas Safety Association
- American Society of Safety Engineers
- National Head Injury Foundation
- National Spinal Cord Injury Association

If you know of someone who is injured, Roberts & Roberts wants to help.



Address Correction Requested.



Consumer Product Warnings & Recalls

You may obtain more information about product recalls by calling the Consumer Product Safety Commission at 1-800-638-2772, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration at 1-800-424-9393, or the Food and Drug Administration at 301-295-8060 for drugs, 301-427-1122 for medical devices, or 202-485-0197 for foods and cosmetics.

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680,000 Graduate Booster Seats sold by Pansy Ellen Products are recalled. The seat component could slide out of the chair base allowing the child to fall out.

• • •

400,000 Sears Kenmore dishwashers sold since February of 1990 are recalled. The timer on the dishwashers could short-circuit, overheat, and cause a fire.

• • •

11,000 1993 Yamaha Waverunner III boats are recalled. The steering could fail.

• • •

11,000 Playskool Travel-Lite portable cribs are recalled. The side rails on the cribs could fold while in use and suffocate a small child. The recalled models (Nos. 77101 and 77103) were sold between 1990 and 1992.

• • •

165,000 1992-model Chevrolet Berettas and Corsicas are recalled because the brake stop lamps can fail to illuminate when a driver steps on the brake. GM dealers will replace the stop lamp wiring harness connector at no charge.

• • •

14,000 Huffy and Sears Free Spirit men's and women's 20", 24", and 26" bicycles sold between February and March of 1993 are recalled. The plastic hand brake levers may break during use, which could prevent riders from stopping.

• • •

1.8 million GM full-size trucks and sport utility vehicles are recalled to prevent fires that can occur when transmission fluid is vented near the catalytic converters. Full-size pickups (1988-1993) and 1992 Suburbans, Blazers, and Yukons with 5.0, 5.7, and 7.4 liter engines are involved.