

FEDERAL NEWS WEEKLY SUMMARY CONTINUED



At the insistence of NHTSA, Chrysler made a commitment to undertake a number of measures to encourage owners to bring the vehicles to their dealers for repairs. This included follow-up owner notification letters, phone calls and advertising. These activities will continue in an effort to boost the completion rate for the older vehicles.

—**NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION**
11/19/96

BRINKMANN CORP. TO PAY \$175,000 TO SETTLE CIVIL PENALTY CASE

■(WASHINGTON) The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission announced Wednesday that the Brinkmann Corp. (TBC) of Dallas, Texas, has agreed to pay a civil penalty of \$175,000 to settle allegations that it violated the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Act by failing to report defects associated with its charcoal smoker, electric smoker, and cooker/fryer.

CPSC alleges that TBC failed to report information indicating that its cooker/fryer, distributed under the name "Country Cooker," was susceptible to spillage of hot liquids and foods. The base lacked a protective lip around the burner grate allowing the cooking pan to become dislodged during use. Also, the basket of the cooker/fryer could be hung on the outside of the appliance, which could result in the pan and basket tipping and spilling its hot contents.

CPSC also alleges that TBC failed to report information indicating that its electric smoker, sold under the name "Smoke 'N Grill Electric," had loose brackets allowing the water pan to become dislodged and spill hot water.

Finally, CPSC alleges that TBC failed to report information indicating that its charcoal smoker, distributed under the "Brinkmann" and "COOK'N CAJUN" labels, had brackets and other parts with sharp edges. Also, CPSC alleges that TBC failed to report information indicating that the charcoal smoker had a hole in the bottom of the

charcoal pan that allowed hot ash to fall through creating a fire hazard. In September 1994, TBC voluntarily provided a kit to owners of the charcoal smoker to close the hole and replace the sharp brackets.

In agreeing to settle this matter, TBC denies that its products were defective or unreasonably dangerous. TBC also denies that it knowingly violated the reporting requirements of the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Act.

—**U.S. CONSUMER PRODUCT SAFETY COMMISSION**
11/21/96

TRANSPORTATION

NEW SAFETY RULES FOR AIRCRAFT CARGO COMPARTMENTS

■(WASHINGTON) New rules to require fire detection and suppression systems in the cargo compartments of all commercial passenger aircraft and to ban the transportation of oxidizing materials will be proposed as part of a continuing comprehensive aviation safety initiative, it was announced last week.

The actions to be taken strengthen other measures adopted earlier this year by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and the Research and Special Programs Administration (RSPA) to improve passenger air cargo safety.

The decisions announced last week would build on the previous safety initiatives. A first rulemaking, to be issued shortly, would propose banning oxidizing materials from commercial passenger aircraft cargo compartments.

A second rulemaking would propose requiring the retrofit of fire detection and suppression equipment on approximately 2,800 older commercial aircraft. Currently, most long-range passenger planes include the detection and suppression systems in the cargo compartments. On older planes, these compartments have been required to be virtually air-tight and lined with fire containment materials. However, while numerous complex issues remain outstanding, newly-concluded analysis has determined that such systems could be extended to all passenger aircraft cargo compartments.

A public notice and comment process will be required for both rulemakings.

—**FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION**
11/18/96

\$2.6 MILLION AWARDED TO NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY FOR TRANSPORTATION RESEARCH

■(CHICAGO) U.S. Secretary of Transportation Federico Pena last Friday announced a \$2.6 million Research and Special Programs Administration (RSPA) grant to Northwestern University for transportation research.

RSPA Administrator Dr. D.K. Sharma was joined by Congressman William O. Lipinski as he awarded the \$2.6 million grant in a check-presentation ceremony here. The grant will be used to operate the Infrastructure Technology Institute, a Transportation University Research Institute established by the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) of 1991.

In the coming year, the Infrastructure Technology Institute will conduct research and educational projects on several issues including nondestructive bridge testing, surface-tolerant paint coatings, new weldable high-strength steel and automated pavement repair vehicles.

Northwestern University, located in Evanston, is one of six schools comprising the department's University Transportation Centers, which advance U.S. technology and expertise in transportation through education, research and technology transfer programs at the university level. The research grants received by the universities must be matched on a dollar-for-dollar basis.

—**U.S. DEPT. OF TRANSPORTATION**
11/18/96

FAA OFFERS HOLIDAY TRAVEL TIPS

■(WASHINGTON) Thanksgiving and December holidays, traditionally the busiest time of the year for the nation's airlines and airports, are fast approaching. With heightened security levels still in effect, the FAA this week issued seven simple suggestions to help passengers avoid delays as they travel.

✓ Arrive early. Large holiday crowds coupled with heightened security measures may increase the time you need to check in.

✓ Do not leave your car unattended in front of the terminal, it may be towed.

✓ Bring picture identification with you. You will be asked to show it. If you do not have a photo ID, make sure you have two pieces of identification, one of which must be issued by a government authority. However, minor children will not require identification.

"To be just is not simply doing right, the governed must be convinced that it is right."

*Napoleon I
remarks in the Council of State
March 12, 1803*