



# INVESTIGATION GUIDELINE

Appendix 113  
25 June 1997

## Bucket Drowning and Near-Drowning Incidents

Complete the Epidemiologic Investigation Report (CPSC Form 182), the Bucket Incident Data Record Sheet (Attachment A), and a narrative description of events leading to the incident. Attach any copies of death certificates, police reports, photographs, or other documents in the full investigation.

### I. Introduction

#### A. Background Information

CPSC has received reports of about 300 bucket-related drowning deaths since 1984. Recent data indicate about 40 deaths each year. The typical incident scenario involves a young toddler just learning to walk tumbling into the bucket and drowning while briefly unattended. Detailed information about drowning and near-drowning incidents is needed to monitor this hazard and the effectiveness of industry's voluntary labeling standards and information and education efforts. Specific information about physical features of the victim, bucket, and situation is very important.

#### B. Product Description

Buckets involved in drownings are typically plastic, cylindrical, slightly narrower at the bottom (to facilitate stacking), and from 4- to 6-gallons in rated capacity. However, some drownings involve buckets of other compositions, shapes, and sizes. The buckets exhibit a broad spectrum of original contents; some are purchased empty. They almost never contain their original contents at the time of the incident. At the time of the incident, they are usually being used for some household function such as cleaning floors, washing diapers or clothes, etc.



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## II. Instructions

### A. General Information

Collect precise information about physical features of the victim, bucket, and incident scenario in every case. Accurate physical information about the victim, such as his or her height, weight, and age, is crucial. Victim information may be obtained from recent medical records, autopsy reports, birth or death certificates, parents, or other reliable sources. If reliable victim height information is unavailable, try to determine the victim's date of birth and birth length (specified on a birth certificate), which will allow estimation of the victim's height at time of incident.

If the bucket can be examined, reliable measurements of its physical dimensions are indispensable. If the bucket is unavailable for inspection, but sufficient information about the bucket is available from reliable sources, it may be possible to obtain precise dimensions of an identical bucket from the manufacturer, retailer, or other source of the bucket. Report whether a drowning warning label was on the bucket and, if so, whether the caretaker knew about it and took precautions. If there was a warning label, report the language in which it was written (English, Spanish, or both). Identify the bucket manufacturer, date of manufacture, and original contents of the bucket. (The manufacturer's name is typically found on the bottom of the bucket with a clock indicating date of manufacture.)

Information about the incident situation is also essential. Include a narrative description of the proximal sequence of events leading to the incident. Determine how the baby entered the bucket. Did the baby crawl or walk to the bucket and topple into the bucket from a standing position on the floor? Did the baby fall from a bed or other object into the bucket? Note whether a toy or other object was found in the liquid in the bucket (which may have attracted the baby to the bucket). If available, photographs of the bucket, victim, and/or setting provide useful information. Report the principal language(s) spoken in the household where the incident occurred. Report evidence for or against homicide, abuse or neglect, alcohol or drug involvement, etc.

### B. Data Record Sheet

The Data Record Sheet (Attachment A) specifies primary questions to investigate. Full completion of the Data Record Sheet is essential, even if answers to some questions appear elsewhere in the full investigation report. Attach the completed Data Record Sheet and narrative description of events leading to the incident to CPSC form 182, Epidemiologic Investigation Report, followed by any copies of death certificates, police reports, photographs, or other documentary materials in the completed investigation.



# INVESTIGATION GUIDELINE

## Attachment A

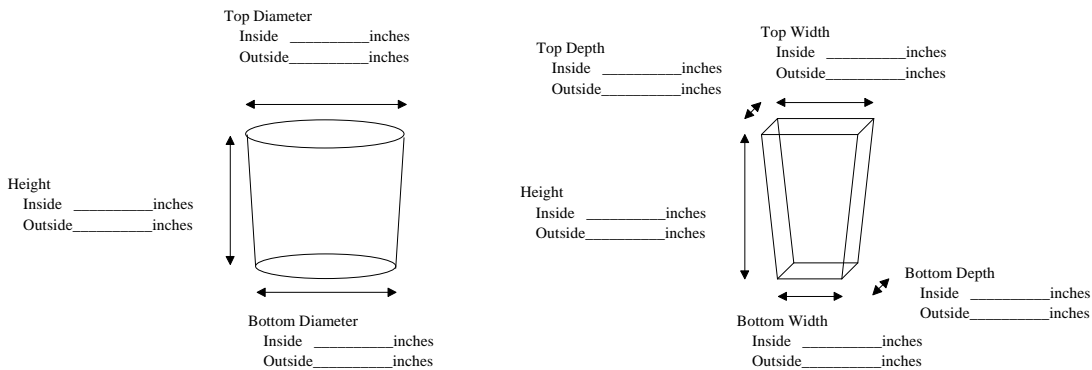
### Bucket Incident Data Record Sheet

(Attach to CPSC Form 182, Epidemiologic Investigation Report, with narrative summary of event sequence and other documents.)

**Task Number** \_\_\_\_\_ **Incident Date** \_\_\_\_\_

1. **Victim walking stage (circle one):** walking pulling-up crawling sitting-up none
2. **Victim Height:** \_\_\_\_\_ inches; **Weight:** \_\_\_\_\_ pounds; **Age:** \_\_\_\_\_ months;  
**Race** (Circle all that apply): Asian Black Hispanic Native-American White Unknown
3. **Did the incident occur at the victim's home?** Yes No Unknown
4. **Principal language(s) of victim/caretaker household:** \_\_\_\_\_
5. **Caretaker(s) at time of incident** (e.g., mother): \_\_\_\_\_
6. **Location of caretaker(s) at time of incident** (e.g., room): \_\_\_\_\_
7. **Location of bucket at time of incident:** \_\_\_\_\_
8. **Use of bucket at time of incident:** \_\_\_\_\_
9. **Contents of bucket at time of incident:** \_\_\_\_\_
10. **Bucket physical dimensions** (enter actual measurements for most similar shape):

Measurements to nearest eighth of an inch, please (e.g., 14 3/8 inches).





## INVESTIGATION GUIDELINE

11. **Height of liquid in bucket at time of incident:** \_\_\_\_\_ inches
12. **Bucket Capacity:** \_\_\_\_\_ gallons; **Color:** \_\_\_\_\_
13. **Material bucket made of:** Plastic Metal Other(\_\_\_\_\_)
14. **Name of manufacturer of bucket:** \_\_\_\_\_
15. **Original contents of bucket:** \_\_\_\_\_
16. **Name of manufacturer of original contents of bucket:** \_\_\_\_\_
17. **How/where did owner originally obtain bucket?** \_\_\_\_\_
18. **Total number of similar buckets in home (counting involved bucket):** \_\_\_\_\_
19. **Was there a drowning warning label on bucket?** Yes No Unknown  
**If Yes:**  
**Did caretaker know about it before incident?** Yes No Unknown  
**In what language was label written?** English Spanish Both Unknown
20. **Father's Age:** \_\_\_\_\_ years; **Occupation:** \_\_\_\_\_
21. **Mother's Age:** \_\_\_\_\_ years; **Occupation:** \_\_\_\_\_
22. **How many adults or children, other than the victim, were present at the residence (inside or outside) when the incident occurred?** \_\_\_\_\_
23. **How did child get into bucket?** \_\_\_\_\_
24. **Any evidence of alcohol involvement?** Yes No Unknown
25. **Any evidence of drug involvement?** Yes No Unknown
26. **Any evidence of child abuse/neglect involvement?** Yes No Unknown
27. **Any evidence of homicide (if applicable)?** Yes No Unknown NA
28. **Please explain any Yes answers to questions 24-27 below:**