

**USING A SHOPPING CART PREVENTATIVE MAINTENANCE
PROGRAM TO MANAGE RISK**

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SHOPPING CART-RELATED INJURIES AND RISK MANAGEMENT

As a leading provider of shopping cart preventative maintenance programs, Jimco Maintenance has been helping to make communities safer for over 40 years.

Although many people don't realize it, the number of injuries related to the use of shopping carts has risen dramatically over the last couple of decades.

In a news bulletin published in May 1997, the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission revealed that the number of fall-related injuries increased from 16,900 in 1985 to over 22,200 in 1996. As noted below, this number would further increase to almost 35,000 in 2001.

CPSC data also indicates that two-thirds of 1995 fall victims were treated in hospital emergency rooms for head injuries. More than half suffered severe injuries, such as concussions and fractures.

Dr. Gary Smith, an emergency room physician at Children's Hospital in Columbus Ohio, said in a 2006 Associated Press article, "Shopping Cart Injuries Prompt Plea", that many injuries are life-threatening.

"Because of that, and because we don't have a standard that adequately addresses the major mechanisms of injury, the best we can do is to caution parents that these injuries are very real, they're very frequent, and if you have a possible alternative to standard shopping carts [for transporting children], use it," he said.

Dr. Smith was also the Chairperson for the American Academy of Pediatrics's Committee on Injury Violence and Poison Prevention, 2004 - 2005, as well as the lead author of its August, 2006, Policy Statement.

The statement's findings reports that 24,200 children under 15 years-old were treated in US hospital emergency departments in 2005 for shopping cart-related injuries. 85% involved children younger than 5. Yet the problem is by no means confined to young children only.

According to a [2003 article from the CPSC](#) almost 35,000 consumers wound up in emergency rooms in 2001 due to injuries involving shopping carts (57% were suffered by children under 5).

This means about 95 shopping cart-related injuries occur daily. Large retail

chains with a national market share of even 5% can therefore expect somewhere close to half a dozen customers being injured in or around their stores each day.

Injuries to the head and neck seem to be among the most prevalent type of injury. The AAP's 2006 Policy Statement offers some insightful statistics:

"The most common anatomic site of injury is the head and neck region, accounting for 74% of shopping cart-related injuries among children younger than 15 years, 79% among children younger than 5 years, and 92% among children younger than 1 year."

The statement goes on to state that "In addition to fractures and concussions, deaths have been reported from falls from shopping carts and tip-overs."

As a leading provider of shopping cart preventative maintenance services, Jimco Maintenance helps major retail clients reduce the risk of shopping cart-related injuries occurring in their stores. A diligent maintenance program can also help to effectively shift the risk burden from the owner of shopping carts to the service provider.

Jimco is the nation's premier cart company specializing in designing and implementing scheduled maintenance services to help ensure that clients' shopping cart fleets are cleaned, lubricated, and repaired on a regular basis. All services are thoroughly documented and are maintained both on and off-site for maximum data protection.

More importantly, Jimco thoroughly trains its technicians to detect failures that have occurred as well as those that can reasonably be expected to occur prior to the next scheduled service.

According to the AAP's Policy Statement, 58% of shopping cart-related injuries were caused by falls while 26% were due to carts tipping over. CPSC chairperson Ann Brown underscored these issues when she made the following statement at the launch of the National Shopping Cart Safety Program in 1997.

"Far too many children suffer injuries from shopping cart falls." She went on to say that these injuries can be prevented "...by ensuring that there is a safety strap available for every shopping cart, and to remind consumers of the importance of shopping cart safety."

Since the launch of the safety program in 1997, Jimco has worked closely with cart accessory manufacturers, such as the Safe-Strap Company, to ensure that every shopping cart serviced has a properly installed and effective safety restraint device.

As previously mentioned, cart tip-overs are also a leading cause of injury. A major cause has to do with engineering flaws as John Morse told Arnold Diaz in a 1999 20/20 piece entitled "Dangerous Shopping Carts".

Morse is an engineer and shopping cart design expert who has also been hired to testify in lawsuits against manufacturers. In 1998, he also filed a formal petition with the CPSC "Requesting the Development of a Safety Standard for Shopping Carts".

Although a mandatory standard never materialized (a voluntary one was published in 2004 by the CPSC), retailers can take steps to make their shopping carts as safe and stable as possible.

As stated in our article, "Shopping Cart Preventative Maintenance; Important Things to Consider," a standard part of Jimco's service includes making sure that wheels and casters (key components in shopping cart stability) are serviceable and free from defect. We do this by:

- Inspecting each shopping cart including all wheels and casters.
- Hot water pressure washing each cart with special attention paid to wheels and casters so that all debris and obstacles are removed allowing each part to roll and/or swivel freely.
- Replacing worn or otherwise defective parts.
- Performing welding when necessary to ensure the structural integrity of each cart.

Other related safety issues that Jimco addresses has to do with replacing worn or cracked leg-hole closures (aka, the baby seat--the plastic flap that the baby sits on when seated in the cart); worn or cracked handles; worn or missing cart bumpers; and, as stated above, SAFETY RESTRAINT DEVICES.

The major benefits of a Jimco preventative maintenance program are:

A. Carts and work equipment that last longer, allowing clients to realize the

full value of their capital investments.

B. Helps maintain the value of your brand, so that it isn't degraded by dirty or damaged equipment.

C. Last, but not, least, reduces the likelihood that unexpected failures or injuries will occur.

To receive more information about Jimco and its services, please call Jesse Roche at 800-392-8678, ext. 106.