

U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission

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CPSC, Rheem Manufacturing Announce Recall to Repair Electric Furnaces and Air Handlers

WASHINGTON, D.C. - In cooperation with the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), Rheem Manufacturing Co., of Fort Smith, Ark., is recalling about 135,000 electric furnaces and air handlers for repair. The heating elements in the electric furnaces and air handlers can disintegrate, and expel small particles of molten metal through the duct system and into the living area of the residence. The molten metal particles can ignite nearby combustibles, presenting a fire hazard to consumers.

Rheem has received 16 reports of fires resulting in minor to serious property damage, including one report of a total house fire. No injuries have been reported.

Only certain down flow and horizontal installations are involved in this recall. Specifically, only Rheem RBEA, UBEA, WBEA, and WBEMA model electric furnaces and Rheem RBHA, UBHA, WBHA, and WBHMA model electric air handlers with date codes between 3592 and 4595 are part of this recall. The model and date code are on an identification plate affixed to the front of the unit. The date code is the four digits following the letter "M" in the unit's serial number. The first two digits of the date code specifies the week and the last two digits specifies the year. The recalled units have cabinets, which are constructed of sheet steel painted beige or platinum, that house a circulating air blower, electric heating elements, mechanical controls, and an air filter. The physical dimensions of the units are 35 inches in length, 22 inches in depth and in varying widths of 14, 17.5, 21 or 24.5 inches, depending on model size.

Rheem sold the furnaces and air handlers nationwide from August 1992 through December 1995 to distributors who, in turn, sold them to heating, ventilating, and air conditioning dealers. The furnaces and air handlers reportedly were sold to consumers for about \$600 to \$950.

Consumers with recalled furnaces and air handlers should call Rheem's toll-free number (877) 749-6035, available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Rheem will provide information on how to arrange to have a qualified service technician repair the unit by installing a new blower assembly, which contains a heating element with improved reliability. Rheem will pay for the new part, as well as provide a labor allowance for its installation.

[Send the link for this page to a friend!](#) The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission is charged with protecting the public from unreasonable risks of serious injury or death from more than 15,000 types of consumer products under the agency's jurisdiction. Deaths, injuries and property damage from consumer product incidents cost the nation more than \$700 billion annually. The CPSC is committed to protecting consumers and families from products that pose a fire, electrical, chemical, or mechanical hazard or can injure children. The CPSC's work to ensure the safety of consumer products - such as toys, cribs, power tools, cigarette lighters, and household chemicals - contributed significantly to the 30 percent decline in the rate of deaths and injuries associated with consumer products over the past 30 years.

