

Electronic Newsletter

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[The Law Firm of Stephen M. Reck, LLC](#)

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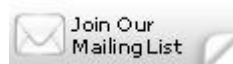
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Recent Headlines Show Importance of Civil Justice System

In an op-ed in [Roll Call](#), Linda Lipsen, CEO of the American Association for Justice, wrote, "It has been a daily occurrence to see the news dominated by the latest example of corporate misconduct," from runaway cars to the WV mine collapse to the exploding oil rig in the Gulf. At the same time, "we have also seen how federal agencies lack the resources to adequately protect and safeguard the American people." Only "after tragic accidents do we closely analyze the agencies and systems that failed, and what must be corrected. Every time we do so, there is only one institution that consistently protects consumers and holds wrongdoers accountable: America's civil justice system." This is why we oppose so-called "tort reform" - and why you should too.

Govt Provided Incentive for Drillers to Underestimate Risk of Oil Spill



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The Law Firm of Stephen M. Reck is proud to be named a

In a preview of a [New York Times Magazine](#) story, David Leonhardt said the "people running BP did a dreadful job of estimating the true chances of events that seemed unlikely - and may even have been unlikely - but that would bring enormous costs." When the "stakes are high enough, it falls to government to help its citizens avoid these entirely human errors," but in the "case of Deepwater Horizon, government policy actually went the other way. It encouraged BP to underestimate the odds of a catastrophe." Leonhardt noted that in a "a little-noticed provision in a 1990 law passed after the Exxon Valdez spill, Congress capped a spiller's liability over and above cleanup costs at \$75 million for a rig spill." Without the cap, "executives would have to weigh the possible revenue from a well against the cost of drilling there and the risk of damage."

Lithium Cell Batteries are Serious Threat to Small Children



Lithium batteries, also known as "button" batteries, the "flat silver discs used to power remote controls, toys, musical greeting cards, bathroom scales and other home electronics," pose a serious health threat to small children if swallowed. "About 3,500 cases of button cell battery ingestion are reported annually to poison control centers. But while swallowing batteries has occurred for years, the development of larger, stronger lithium cell batteries has increased the risk of severe complications," including damage to the esophagus, vocal cords, gastrointestinal tract, severe bleeding and in rare cases, even death. While there were less than 10 documented deaths in the last six years, "ingestion of lithium cell batteries, which children may mistake for candy and elderly adults for medication, is a surprisingly common problem," as documented recently in two reports in the medical journal [Pediatrics](#). In 60% of cases involving children under age 6, the child removed the battery from an electronic device, unbeknownst to the parents--a real problem since "the battery begins to cause severe damage within just two hours of ingestion. Read [more](#).

FDA Asks Doctors to Help Stop Misleading Drug Ads

The [AP](#) reported last month that the Food and Drug Administration "will begin asking doctors to keep an eye out for misleading drug advertisements as part of the agency's latest effort to police the pharmaceutical industry's multibillion-dollar marketing machine." The FDA's "[bad ad program](#)" urges doctors to report ads and sales pitches that violate FDA rules." As part of the new program, "FDA will offer doctors training at medical conferences to help spot misleading ads. They can report advertising violations anonymously by emailing badad@fda.gov or calling 877-RX-DDMAC."

FDA Asked to Require Warnings for Foods That Pose Choking Hazards

The American Academy of Pediatrics says that "food should be subject to as much scrutiny as toys" and is calling on the FDA "to require warning labels on foods that are known choking hazards, and to evaluate and monitor food for safety." While "there are no recent nationwide figures on food choking," data show that "in 2001, about 17,500 children 14 and younger were treated in emergency departments for choking, and 60 percent of the episodes were caused by food. In 2000, 160 children died from an obstruction of the respiratory tract." Experts say "children under 4 are at the highest risk, not only because their airways are small...but also because of the way their eating abilities develop." Read [more](#).

Less Common Strains of E. Coli Becoming Serious Threat to Food Safety

The [New York Times](#) reported that for nearly twenty years, "Public Enemy No. 1 for the food industry and its government regulators has been a virulent strain of E. coli bacteria" known as E. coli O157:H7. But while everyone "focused on controlling that particular bacterium, ... the six rarer strains of toxic E. coli were largely ignored." Now, however, those less common strains are "emerging as a serious threat to food safety." Recently, "romaine lettuce tainted with one of them sickened at least 26 people in five states, including three teenagers who suffered kidney failure." Michael R. Taylor, deputy commissioner for foods at the FDA, said, "We need to be developing our tools and abilities to assess' the full range of toxic E. coli."

Contaminants Found in Herbal Supplements

The New York Times reported that almost all of the herbal dietary supplements tested as part of a Congressional investigation contained trace amounts of lead and other contaminants, and "16 of the 40 supplements tested contained pesticide residues that appeared to exceed legal limits." Investigators also found that some supplement sellers "made illegal claims that their products can cure cancer and other diseases." Read [more](#).

Recall Central

To read about recent recalls and product safety news from the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, click [here](#).

Get the latest recall information from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration [here](#).

The Dept. of Agriculture's Food Safety and Inspection

FDA Warning Letters Sent to Dozens of Pharm. Factories



"At least 43 drug factories supplying medication to thousands of U.S. consumers have received government warnings in recent months for failing to correct shoddy manufacturing practices that may have exposed patients to health risks, a [USA TODAY](#) review of records shows." Violations that warranted FDA warning letters include "plants using equipment and ingredients contaminated with bacteria or insects, failing to do proper testing to ensure drug strength and purity, and ignoring consumer complaints that products were making them sick."

Maytag Recalls Dishwashers, McDonald's Recalls 'Shrek' Glassware

Discovery of cadmium in the painted design on 'Shrek'-themed drinking glasses being sold nationwide at McDonald's has forced the company to recall 12 million of the US-made collectible glasses, "while dramatically expanding contamination concerns about the toxic metal beyond imported children's jewelry." Read [more](#). Meanwhile, "Maytag Corp. is recalling about 1.7 million dishwashers because of a fire hazard, following "12 reports of electrical failures in the dishwasher heating element that led to fires and damage." The recall includes Maytag, Amana, Jenn-Air, Admiral, Magic Chef, Performa by Maytag and Crosley brand dishwashers with plastic tubs. More [here](#).

Florida Initiative Aims to Reduce Medical Errors, Surgical Complications

The [South Florida Sun-Sentinel](#) reported that Florida hospitals and surgeons recently launched "a new effort to find and prevent system problems that cause needless complications from surgery." The effort "will try to find even simple errors that cause patients to develop infections and other problems that keep them in the hospital longer or force them to return with relapses." According to the Sun-Sentinel, "the first step is to analyze patient files to collect more-detailed data about complications in four areas where problems are common: surgical site infections, urinary tract infections, colorectal surgery and surgery on the elderly."

Top Causes of Car Accidents



Distracted driving takes many forms. A [study](#) by the Virginia Tech Transportation Institute last year found that reaching for a moving object (dropped phone, spilled drink, etc.) was twice as

dangerous as any other non-driving task. The other items (in order): 1. reading and writing (unclear why this would ever be done behind the wheel); 2. grooming and applying makeup; 3. dialing a phone; 4. eating and drinking; 5. texting; 6. talking and listening on a phone; 7. adjusting the radio or changing a CD; 8. interacting with passengers; and 9. daydreaming. Each of these activities would make a lousy excuse for injuring or killing someone.

Service regulate meat, poultry products and processed eggs. Check their recalls [here](#).

Click [here](#) for Food and Drug Administration recalls, market withdrawals and safety alerts.

For updates on the peanut products recall click [here](#).

Target Storage Trunks Recalled



The [AP](#) recently reported that Target Corp. and the CPSC announced that 350,000 woven storage trunks were recalled "after an 18-month-old girl suffered brain damage when the lid fell on her neck. The recall involves 14 models of trunks made of woven rattan, abaca or banana leaf with standard hinges. They were sold at Target stores nationwide and on the chain's web site from February 2009 through last month, for between \$50 and \$130."

Medtronic Discloses Physician Payments

The [Wall Street Journal](#) reported that Medtronic Inc. disclosed over \$15.7 million in physician payments, which included royalties and consulting fees, in the first quarter. Most of those payments (\$14.2 million), were paid to orthopedic specialists. The company did not report payments less than \$5,000, or payments to foreign physicians or those conducting clinical tests.

CDC: 1 in 5 High Schoolers Abusing Prescription Drugs

A new report by the CDC

"shows one in five high school students have taken a prescription drug that they didn't get from a doctor. The abused drugs include pain pills and attention deficit drugs used as study aids." Article [here](#).

Woman Gives Birth While Driving

Here's one highly unusual distracted driving [story](#) with a happy ending: Amanda McBride of Minnesota was in labor and driving to the hospital when she realized she wouldn't make it there in time. Instead of pulling over, however, she "told the baby's father, who can't drive due to a medical condition, to grab the wheel. She quickly pulled down her pants and gave birth right there. *In the driver's seat.* According to McBride, the baby 'just slid out.'"



Supreme Court Rules Against Bysiewicz



A unanimous CT Supreme Court overturned a lower court's decision and [ruled](#) that CT Secretary of the State Susan Bysiewicz is not qualified to run for the position of state Attorney General. A trial judge had previously ruled that she had the necessary legal experience to run for AG and that she could satisfy the statutory requirement of 10 years of "active practice" of law despite her limited legal experience. Bysiewicz now must abandon her bid for the AG position, which she sought after dropping out of the governor's race. She was considered the Democratic front-runner in the governor's race before AG Richard Blumenthal announced he would run for Dodd's Senate seat, prompting Bysiewicz to switch contests.

Proudly Serving Connecticut and Rhode Island

The trial attorneys at The Law Firm of Stephen M. Reck, LLC represent individuals in all types of personal injury cases throughout the state of Connecticut and the state of Rhode Island, including, in Connecticut: New London County, New Haven County, Middlesex County, Hartford County, Tolland County, and Windham County; and in Rhode Island: Bristol County, Kent County, Newport County, Providence County, and Washington County.

Referrals Welcome



RI Man Sues Facebook for Violation of Privacy

The [Providence Journal](#) reported that "An East Providence man has filed a class-action suit in US District Court against Facebook, saying the immensely popular social networking site violated the privacy of users by releasing personal information to advertisers without proper notice or the ability to opt out first." Read [more](#).

Remember we are here if you need a referral to an attorney in a different area of law.

About Our Firm



At [The Law Firm of Stephen M. Reck](#), justice is our mission. Our firm is well known and well respected for its ability to handle personal injury, wrongful death, and professional malpractice cases in Connecticut and Rhode Island. Call today or visit us on the web at www.stephenreck.com.

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