



# VITALS

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A Weekly Safety Newsletter For Medical Transport Professionals

## Ferno Cot Potential Issues

On August 11, 2008 Ferno issued a letter indicating that it is conducting a field inspection on some Model 35X cots. "Only 35X PROFlexX Cot Customers with Serial Numbers between 06 002156 and 07 054091 (manufactured between January 17, 2006 and August 16, 2007) need to inspect their cots." If you have any cots with serial numbers in the affected range, you should inspect the cot to see if there are any cracks, shavings, bent support arms or other deformities. If any deformities are found, immediately discontinue use of the cot and contact Ferno Technical Support at 866-987-3776 or [quality.products@ferno.com](mailto:quality.products@ferno.com).



Ferno also recommends that you place the cot in position 5 or 6 when rolling the patient, unless loading into the ambulance. Two hand contact by attendants, who are properly positioned, is essential. Ferno also recommends that shoulder and guide straps be used at all times. Refer to the Ferno User's Manual for complete details.

## Maybe Gas Prices Aren't Killing Us After All

Professor Michael Sivak at the Transportation Research Institute at the University of Michigan found that there was a huge decrease in auto fatalities when gas prices went above \$3.20 per gallon. If this trend continues, Sivak opines that highway deaths will drop below 37,000 for the first time since 1961. People drove 12.2 billion fewer miles in June of 2008 than they did a year ago. Apparently, people are also driving more slowly and are being more selective about where and when they're driving. Another way of looking at this is that people are actually thinking about driving before they do it and while they're doing it.



## Cutting a Battery Pack Cable Can Start a Fire

The FDA has warned that cutting battery pack cables can cause sparks, fires, toxic fumes and explosions. Cables were cut on a battery operated lavage system which was powered by 8 to 10 AA alkaline batteries. The battery pack was placed on a table, after a while exploded and spread an ash-like substance throughout the room.

Cutting the battery pack's cables can cause a short circuit in which the batteries discharge rapidly and produce intense heat and flammable gases. The subsequent pressure build up may result in an explosion that expels flammable gases and other toxins.

Follow all battery manufacturers' labeling, warnings and disposal instructions. Make sure your organizational policies are in compliance with all applicable regulations. Don't allow personnel to take batteries or other items from patient care settings for personal use. This is not compatible with sound infection control practices.

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