

AHAM Statement on Accidental Range Tipping

SITUATION: Without properly installed anti-tip hardware provided by the manufacturer, a free-standing or slide-in kitchen range can tip forward accidentally if the oven door is used as a step stool or makeshift seat. Unattended children and the elderly are most likely to be involved in these accidents.

More than 80 million ranges are installed in U.S. households. There are few range tipping incidents per year, but they often end in disastrous results. When these incidents do occur, they frequently involve children and the elderly. These incidents are particularly tragic because they are preventable. AHAM and its range manufacturing members implore consumers to install the anti-tip device provided with the range.

AHAM Range Manufacturers adhere to all safety and stability requirements set by U.S. safety organizations including UL. As part of these safety requirements, manufacturers provide with every new range an effective and reliable anti-tip device that can be easily installed. If recommended installation guidelines are followed by properly installing the anti-tip device, the range will not tip.

The anti-tip device that manufacturers provide will work in all new kitchen range situations. The anti-tip devices currently being used by manufacturers have been found to be an effective way to secure the range when they are properly installed. Anti-tip devices are simple to install and they work. Manufacturer instructions require that the device be installed. Manufacturers provide the safety device and several specific warnings and instructions about its importance. It is up to the installer and consumer to act.

The National Electrical Code indicates that listed and labeled products shall be installed and used in accordance with any instructions included in the listing or labeling. Consumers are urged to check whether an anti-tip device has been installed. Look under the range to see if an anti-tip device is installed on the floor, or gently pull the back of the range to see if it pulls off the floor.

If the consumer believes that the anti-tip device is not installed, they should call their installer or place of purchase to request that the anti-tip device be installed. If consumers do not have an anti-tip device, they should contact the manufacturer to obtain an appropriate device for their particular product.

AHAM and range manufacturing members are committed to safety and have been engaged in a consumer and installer education campaign for several years. In 1991, upon the implementation of safety standards requiring the use of anti-tip devices, AHAM undertook a public education campaign to inform consumers and building officials of the importance of the devices. AHAM members then incorporated this material into their use and care manuals to ensure broader dissemination of the safety information. AHAM also maintains anti-tip information on its website.

Manufacturers, in addition to providing special hardware and safety information with all new ranges, are also communicating to the general public ways to eliminate the hazards of range tipping by alerting interested organizations to the problem and soliciting their assistance in communicating important safety messages. These organizations represent building inspectors and code officials, HUD, home inspectors, building managers and landlords, insurance companies and agents, manufactured housing, child care givers and health care.

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The Association of Home Appliance Manufacturers (AHAM) is a not-for-profit trade association representing manufacturers of major, portable and floor care home appliances, and suppliers to the industry and is headquartered in Washington, DC. You can visit the AHAM web site at <http://www.aham.org>