



pennsylvania

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

AMUSEMENT RIDE SAFETY DIVISION

TO: Owners and inspectors of Rides and Attractions that include Red Point and Auto Belay Decenders manufactured by MSA Corporation
FROM: Joseph G. Filoromo, supervisor
SUBJECT: *****STOP USE ORDER*****
DATE: November 17, 2009

It has come to my attention that MSA North America, headquartered in Pittsburgh Pennsylvania has issued a Stop Use Order to discontinue use of Red point and Auto Belay decenders immediately due to safety concerns. Please do not confuse this stop use order with the requirement that was issued several years ago for regular inspections of this equipment. Some of this equipment is pictured below.



Many manufacturers of Climbing Walls, Inflatable Climbing Walls, Challenge Courses and Obstacle Courses include the equipment referred to above in their products. If any of your equipment employs these decenders as a component, as required by MSA North America, all said equipment is to cease operation immediately and until further instructions are issued by MSA North America. Any questions are to be directed to MSA Customer Service at 800-MSA-2222. Please contact this office upon returning affected equipment in Pennsylvania to service in compliance with MSA.

Please find the Stop Use Notice and first update on subsequent pages. Other information on file and available upon request include Red Point Decender operator instructions and the Stop use order that was issued for Australia.

THANK YOU

E-mail: jfiloromo@state.pa.us



Redpoint® & Auto-Belay Descenders Stop-Use Notice Update

November 3, 2009

As you are already aware, MSA issued a Stop Use Notice on Redpoint and Auto-Belay Descenders on October 14, 2009. The Stop Use Notice was emailed and mailed to all Redpoint and affected Auto-Belay purchasers that MSA has on record. In addition, this notice has been circulated via the Internet through climbing wall organizations and social networking sites, and it has been posted on the MSA website. We have made every effort to ensure that all users of the Redpoint and Auto-Belay Descenders have been notified of this situation.

We understand the difficulties and challenges that our Stop Use Notice creates for owners of climbing walls and/or climbing gyms, and we regret any inconvenience that users may experience as a result of this equipment being out of service. However, user safety is our primary concern.

Both units involved in the reported accelerated descents, specified in the recent Stop Use notice, have been returned to us for evaluation. Our review discovered no evidence of any physical damage that would have affected the rate of descent. Over the past two weeks, we have conducted a thorough investigation and several key performance tests in attempt to pinpoint the root cause of the reported accelerated descents. We have dimensionally checked the brakes, induced stresses on the brakes and one-way bearing in several ways, and conducted a dimensional and chemical analysis of the bearing; however, to date, our testing has not produced an accelerated descent. Bearings have been sent to the bearing manufacturer for further independent analysis, and we are currently awaiting a report. We are also conducting additional tests to determine the effect of vibration on the performance of the bearing. We expect to have the results of these tests in approximately one week.

It is important that the Stop Use remain in effect. Please do not use any Redpoint Descender or affected Auto-Belay Descender until advised by MSA. As a reminder, the Stop Use Notice applies to the following descender units:

- All Redpoint Descenders (part numbers 10024873, 10027646, and 10027798) regardless of the date the unit was manufactured or last serviced,
- Auto-Belay Descenders (part number 10021806) manufactured or last serviced on or after June 30, 2000.

Rest assured we are making every effort to complete our investigation as quickly as possible and, more importantly, provide you with an effective and safe resolution to this matter.

MSA North America
Corporate
Headquarters
121 Gamma Drive
Pittsburgh, PA 15238
800.MSA.2222
www.MSAnet.com



As additional information becomes available, we will be sure to communicate it to you in a timely fashion. We appreciate your patience and understanding as we work to provide you with the answers you need.

If you have any questions, please contact MSA Customer Service in North America at 1-800-MSA-2222 or your nearest MSA affiliate listed at www.MSAnet.com.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Charles J. Seibel, Jr." The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "C".

Charles J. Seibel, Jr.
Manager of Product Safety

MSA North America
Corporate
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121 Gamma Drive
Pittsburgh, PA 15238
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Stop Use Notice

Redpoint™ and Auto-Belay Descenders

October 14, 2009

MSA very recently became aware of two incidents where climbers using Redpoint Descenders experienced rapid rates of descent resulting in injuries. Our preliminary investigation indicates an issue with the one-way bearings provided by our supplier, which may prevent the brakes from engaging during descent. Due to the nature of this condition, the users were not able to detect the problem before the rapid descents occurred.

This Stop Use Notice applies to the following descender units:

- All Redpoint Descenders (part numbers 10024873, 10027646, and 10027798) regardless of the date the unit was manufactured or last serviced,
- Auto-Belay Descenders (part number 10021806) manufactured or last serviced on or after June 30, 2000.

The part number, date of manufacture, and date of last factory service of the unit is located on the white date of manufacture label affixed to the back of the housing.

Based on these findings, we are advising affected users to discontinue using the Redpoint and Auto-Belay Descenders indicated above. Please forward this notice to all appropriate personnel.

We regret this inconvenience; however, we recognize that this condition represents a potential safety concern. MSA will issue a follow-up notice shortly, after conducting further investigation into this matter. During our investigation, we will not be shipping any Redpoint Descenders currently on order or in for service, and we will not be taking any new orders.

If you have any questions, please contact MSA Customer Service at 1-800-MSA-2222 or 412-967-3000.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Charles J. Seibel, Jr.", written in a cursive style.

Charles J. Seibel, Jr.
Manager of Product Safety