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Attorney: Hoverboard hot Christmas item is a lawsuit waiting to happen

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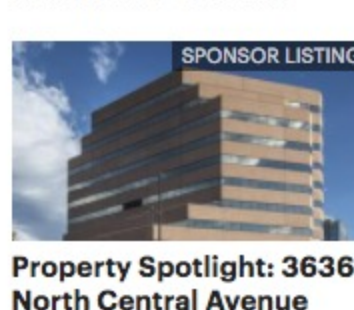


Hoverboard electric scooters are one of the hottest gifts this year, but reports of some of them exploding and causing fires is raising safety concerns.

"We've got exploding hoverboards, and that is not a good thing," said James Goodnow, a partner at the Lamber-Goodnow Injury Law Team at Fennemore Craig PC. "The market is flooded with these hoverboards manufactured by a variety of different companies. You have lithium ion batteries coupled with bad plugs causing bad fires."



Hoverboard electric scooters are at the top of many kids' Christmas list this year, but... more



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Some of these batteries don't have the proper mechanism to stop charging when the battery is fully charged because they are coming from unregulated markets, he said.

"They're putting in bare-bones technology that hasn't been tested," Goodnow said.

Consumers injured by these exploding hoverboards who are looking to sue will find a difficult path ahead of them because many of these manufacturers are overseas, he said.

"You're gonna have a lot of problems getting jurisdiction over these entities and that can be impossible at times," he said.

And if you are able to get jurisdiction, then there are all kinds of international legal requirements for suing foreign entities, which also can be very onerous.

So, that leaves the seller and the distributor as targets for a lawsuit, he said.

"As a business, if you want to be safe, don't put these on the shelves," Goodnow said. "Yes, you'll miss out on revenue opportunity - no doubt - but exposing your business could be huge. You're going to be the target in the cross hairs if something goes wrong."

Devin Rose, co-founder of Future X LLC in Scottsdale, said he started his hoverboard manufacturing business earlier this year, but uses U.S.-listed battery packs and certified Samsung batteries. Prices range from \$400 to \$900 for custom-made hoverboards.

He said the problem is there are now so many knock-offs in the market that are giving the product a bad name.

"Everyone is looking for a great bargain," Rose said. "These, you can't bargain with them."

Angela Gonzales covers health, biotech and education.

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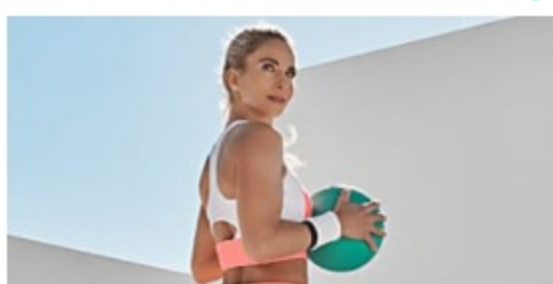
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