

# Injuries Aren't Just a Crock

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Now that summer is over, we've started putting away our kids' sandals, but we just can't bear to put away their Crocs. The kids love these lightweight, comfy, colorful shoes/sandals combo. We love them because they're inexpensive and the kids don't need our help putting them on.

Millions of parents like us have bought Crocs for their children for the same reasons. Some parents, however, are deeply regretting their purchases.

New York-based attorney Andrew Laskin (I call him the Croc Hunter) has filed five lawsuits against Crocs Inc., the Colorado-based footwear company. The most recent case was filed on behalf of Clark Meyer, whose four-year-old son "severely and permanently damaged" his right foot when his Crocs got caught in an escalator. The lawsuit seeks \$2 million in damages.

The accident happened on July 15 at the Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport and marks the third child to have been injured in the past three months there. It's also the second federal lawsuit filed this summer involving a child wearing Crocs injured on escalators at the airport. As a result, airport officials have posted signs warning of escalator dangers.

Laskin has also filed lawsuits against Crocs on behalf of a 3-year-old girl from Louisville, Ky., who was injured when an escalator ripped skin from her foot and broke three toes in June, and a child who was hurt at a Los Angeles mall. Finally, he has settled two other cases with the shoe company.

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission has documented 77 soft shoe entrapments on escalators since January 2006 and issued a warning in May. In response, Crocs sent a 16-page letter to the agency in June acknowledging the company is aware of 186 accidents involving its shoes and has initiated "safety investigations." The company also stated, "Crocs shoes neither present nor introduce a unique hazard pattern when worn by children or adults on escalators."

In April, Japanese and Filipino authorities asked Crocs to consider changing the footwear's design because of similar escalator accidents in their countries. The footwear company has promised to insert safety tags into its packaging by next year. Maybe we'll stick to sneakers.