



## **Pa. family sues Walmart, Jetson Electric Bikes after 2 children die in fire allegedly caused by defective hoverboard**

The fire destroyed a home in Hellertown, Northampton County in April, claiming the lives of Brianna Baer, 15, and Abigail Kaufman, 10.

Credit: WPMT

Author: Keith Schweigert (FOX43)

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HELLERTOWN, Pa. — Update, Sept. 22: A spokesperson for Walmart issued the following statement in response to the lawsuit:

“Our thoughts go out to the Kaufman family for their loss. We expect our suppliers to provide safe, quality products that meet all applicable laws and regulations. We will respond with the Court as appropriate after we are served with the complaint.”

A lawsuit was filed in federal court Wednesday against Walmart and Jetson Electric Bikes, alleging a hoverboard purchased at the retailer caught fire, destroyed a Pennsylvania home, and killed two children who lived there.

The incident occurred in April in Hellertown, Northampton County, according to the lawsuit.

The incident claimed the lives of Brianna Baer, 15, and Abigail Kaufman, 10, who were trapped on the second floor of the house when the fire erupted sometime after midnight on the first floor.

Their mother, Jennifer Lee Kaufman, escaped from the first floor and their father, Damien Kaufman, was in the detached garage when the fire broke out, the lawsuit alleges.

Damien Kaufman reportedly tried to get back into the home to rescue the girls but was unable to do so.

Later, he and his wife could only stand on the front lawn of their home and watch, helpless to save their daughters as the fire raged, according to the lawsuit.

The lawsuit alleges that the Jetson Rogue Hoverboard purchased at a Walmart store and marketed primarily to children had a “defective and unreasonably dangerous design” and the manufacturer knew or should have known that it could short-circuit and cause fires while charging.

Nevertheless, the companies continued to market, sell, and advertise the hoverboard.

The suit, filed in U.S. Eastern District Court, alleges the defendants “knowingly, purposely, and consciously concealed their knowledge of these serious dangers.”

It notes that the manufacturer’s manual and website fail to acknowledge the risk of the product and that the defendants engaged in “negligent, reckless, fraudulent and/or outrageous conduct.”

**“We intend to hold the seller and the manufacturer of this dangerous product responsible for the deaths of two innocent young children, and, in doing so, seek to prevent future preventable injury, death, and grief from occurring,” Tom Kline, of Kline & Specter, PC, who is representing the Kaufmans along with Aaron Dunbar and Jack O’Neill, said.**

While further investigation is forthcoming, the lawsuit claims the hoverboard’s batteries were subject to short circuits and degradation through self-discharge.

Also, it asserts, the product was not adequately tested before distribution and sale.