



U.S. Department  
of Transportation  
**Federal Aviation  
Administration**

# SAFO

Safety Alert for Operators

SAFO 13001

DATE: 1/3/13

Flight Standards Service  
Washington, DC

[http://www.faa.gov/other\\_visit/aviation\\_industry/airline\\_operators/airline\\_safety/safo](http://www.faa.gov/other_visit/aviation_industry/airline_operators/airline_safety/safo)

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*A SAFO contains important safety information and may include recommended action. SAFO content should be especially valuable to air carriers in meeting their statutory duty to provide service with the highest possible degree of safety in the public interest. Besides the specific action recommended in a SAFO, an alternative action may be as effective in addressing the safety issue named in the SAFO.*

**Subject:** Safety Hazard Concerning Bursting Coffee Filter Packages

**Purpose:** This SAFO serves to inform air carriers and operators about a safety hazard related to standard issue coffee filter packages.

**Background:** Several airlines and individual Flight Attendants (F/A) have reported cases of coffee filter packages bursting in-flight during coffee preparation, causing 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> degree burns to F/As and bystanders.

**Discussion:** The apparent cause of the hazardous situation appears to be a pressure build-up in the prepacked coffee filter package while installed in the coffee pot drawer. Precursors to these events include, water overflow from the brew drawer and a hissing noise. When the coffee pot handle is lifted, the coffee filter containing the hot coffee grounds can burst causing burns to the face, neck, hands, arms and torso in varying degrees of severity. Several ways of mitigating the risk of the coffee filter-packages bursting is to ensure the packages are not folded, use only one package per pot, and place the package in the brew-drawer seam side down. If the water begins to overflow from the basket or makes a hissing sound, step to the side, do not raise the handle, and turn off the unit using the on/off selector switch or circuit breaker. After the coffee maker has been turned off, brief all crewmembers, and follow appropriate maintenance procedures.

**Recommended Action:** Air carriers and operators are encouraged to add cautionary instructions and procedures to the Flight Attendant Manual (FAM) and training program, warning crew members of the dangers to personnel and equipment. Directors of safety, directors of operations, directors of in-flight and in-flight training and directors of maintenance, program and training managers should be aware of the safety hazard and mitigation strategies described in this SAFO.

**Contact:** Questions or comments regarding this SAFO should be directed to the Part 121 Air Carrier Operations Branch, AFS-220 at (202) 267-8166.