Statement from the NEMA Dry Battery Section  
Regarding Ingestion of Button Cell Batteries  
February 2010

Like all batteries, miniature coin and button cell batteries perform a valuable function by supplying power to a broad range of products. Accidental ingestion of small batteries, while rare, may lead to serious health consequences. Battery manufacturers are concerned about these events and committed to actions aimed at reducing their occurrence.

Specifically, battery manufacturers are

- Continuing their long-time financial support to the National Capitol Poison Control Center in Washington DC, thereby helping the NCPCC conduct research, engage in education and outreach, and maintain a “Battery Hotline” for emergency assistance worldwide.

- Placing warning notices on packaging of batteries of ingestible size (i.e., triple AAA and smaller), as per the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) C18.1M, Part 2 and C18.3M, Part 2 to alert consumers to ingestion hazard and provide NCPCC’s hotline number.

- Participating in the standards development process for battery-powered electronics and toys, with focus on making access to batteries harder for children, such as ensuring they are protected by screw-in plate.

- Working through the American National Standards Institute, the International Electrotechnical Commission, and other standard setting organizations to improve battery construction and safety.

In addition, in response to reports that children are ingesting larger size batteries (i.e., 20 mm and above) obtained from products, the battery industry encourages toy and device manufacturers to incorporate designs that further restrict access to the battery, such as ensuring that battery compartments can only be opened with a tool.

Battery ingestion is not pervasive, but it occurs in rare instances in all age groups. NEMA members are committed to seeking additional measures within their control that will help minimize this hazard.