

Firework Safety and Injury Prevention Meeting Kit

Fireworks Safety Talk

The Fourth of July brings colourful fireworks that symbolize bombs bursting in air to remind us of those who valiantly fought for our freedom and independence. But with so many community displays being cancelled this year due to the coronavirus pandemic, it's more important than ever to realize that those fireworks can cause a lot of pain if not handled safely.

The hands and fingers are the most often injured body parts resulting from fireworks, but injury can occur to any part of the body. Hand Safety is constantly preached at most workplaces because of the effect hand injuries can have on your life. Because of this fact, hand safety should also be a focus point at home. While injuries from fireworks are often just burns that will heal with time, many individuals experience completely losing their hand or fingers. It is important to consider how losing even just one finger will affect your life at home as well as your ability to work. If you choose to use fireworks, it is important to handle them safely.

DANGER OF FIREWORKS

If not handled properly, fireworks can cause burns and eye injuries in kids and adults. The best way to protect your family is not to use any fireworks at home – period. Attend public fireworks displays, and leave lighting to the professionals.

Any firecracker with more than 50 milligrams of explosive powder and any aerial firework with more than 130 milligrams of flash powder are banned under federal law, as are mail order kits and components designed to build these fireworks.

However, 92% of the fireworks injuries treated in hospital

emergency rooms involved fireworks that Federal regulations permit customers to use.

TYPES OF FIREWORKS

Among the various types of fireworks, some of which are sold legally in some states, bottle rockets can fly into people's faces and cause eye injuries or start roof fires; sparklers can ignite clothing. Sparklers burn at 1,200°F, which is hot enough to cause third degree burns; and firecrackers can injure the hands or face if they explode at close range.

Damage Associated with Fireworks:

- 30,100-Estimated number of fires caused by fireworks each year.
- These fires resulted in \$34 million in direct property damage.
- Younger children often lack the physical coordination to handle fireworks safely.
- There were 1,100 injuries associated with sparklers, many never being reported.
- Sparklers cause 200 injuries to children less than 5 years of age.
- Think about your pet. Animals have sensitive ears and can be extremely frightened or stressed on the Fourth of July. Keep pets indoors to reduce the risk that they'll run loose or get injured.

The safest way to prevent fireworks-related injuries and to keep your family protected is to attend fireworks displays and leave the lighting to trained professionals.

FIREWORKS SAFETY FIRST

Keep these safety tips to mind:

- Kids should never play with fireworks. Things like firecrackers, rockets, and sparklers are just too dangerous. If you give kids sparklers, make sure they keep them outside

and away from the face, clothing and hair. Sparklers can reach 1,800°F (982°C) – hot enough to melt gold.

- Buy only legal fireworks (legal fireworks have a label with the manufacturer's name and directions; illegal ones are unlabeled), and store them in a cool, dry place. Illegal fireworks usually go by the names M-80, M100, blockbuster, or quarterpounder. These explosives were banned in 1966, but still account for many fireworks injuries.
- Never try to make your own fireworks.
- Always use fireworks outside and have a bucket of water and a hose nearby in case of accidents.
- Steer clear of others setting off fireworks. They can backfire or shoot off in the wrong direction.
- Never throw or point fireworks at someone, even as a joke.
- Don't hold fireworks in your hand or have any part of your body over them while lighting. Wear eye protection, and don't carry fireworks in your pocket – the friction could set them off.
- Point fireworks away from homes, and keep away from brush and leaves and flammable substances. The National Fire Protection Association estimates that local fire departments respond to more than 50,000 fires caused by fireworks each year.
- Light one firework at a time (not in glass or metal containers), and never relight a dud.
- Don't allow kids to pick up pieces of fireworks after an event. Some may still be ignited and can explode at any time.
- Soak all fireworks in a bucket of water before throwing them in the trash can.
- Never lean over lit fireworks when lighting the fuse. Back up to a safe distance right after lighting them.
- If you find unexploded fireworks, leave them be. Never try to relight or handle them. Soak them with water and throw them away.
- Light fireworks one at a time, then move away from them quickly.
- Never carry fireworks in a pocket or shoot them off in metal

or glass containers.

- Parents and caretakers should always closely supervise teens using fireworks.
- Only use fireworks outdoors.

FINAL WORD

Holiday weekends are meant to be enjoyed. The 4th of July is a major holiday for most Americans. If you choose to celebrate with fireworks please do so safely. Protect not only yourself, but your loved ones as well, especially children. Injuries sustained resulting from making a poor decision can last a lifetime.