



Extending Health and Safety Beyond the Workplace

Safety doesn't stop once you leave the jobsite; we need to bring that safety attitude with us on the roads, when we are running errands, during leisure activities, at home and during all seasons of the year, winter, spring, summer and fall. Summer is synonymous with barbecues, parades and fireworks. The National Safety Council advises everyone to enjoy fireworks at public displays conducted by professionals, and not to use any fireworks at home. They may be legal but they are not safe.

According to the Consumer Products Safety Commission, in 2017, eight people died and over 12,000 were injured badly enough to require medical treatment after fireworks-related incidents. Of these, 50% of the injuries were to children and young adults under age 20. Over two-thirds (67%) of injuries took place from June 16 to July 16. And while the majority of these incidents were due to amateurs attempting to use professional-grade, homemade or other illegal fireworks or explosives, an estimated 1,200 injuries were from less powerful devices like small firecrackers and sparklers. Additionally, fireworks start an average of 18,500 fires each year, including 1,300 structure fires, 300 vehicle fires and nearly 17,000 other fires.

If You Choose To Use Legal Fireworks: If consumer fireworks are legal to buy where you live and you choose to use them, be sure to follow the following safety tips:

- Never allow young children to handle fireworks
- Older children should use them only under close adult supervision

- Never use fireworks while impaired by drugs or alcohol
- Anyone using fireworks or standing nearby should wear protective eyewear
- Never hold lighted fireworks in your hands
- Never light them indoors
- Only use them away from people, houses and flammable material
- Never point or throw fireworks at another person
- Only light one device at a time and maintain a safe distance after lighting
- Never ignite devices in a container
- Do not try to re-light or handle malfunctioning fireworks
- Soak both spent and unused fireworks in water for a few hours before discarding
- Keep a bucket of water nearby to fully extinguish fireworks that don't go off or in case of fire
- Never use illegal fireworks

Better yet, grab a blanket and a patch of lawn, kick back and let the experts handle the fireworks show.

Sparklers are Dangerous Too: Every year, young children can be found along parade routes and at festivals with sparklers in hand, but sparklers are a lot more dangerous than most people think.

Sparklers burn at about 2,000 degrees – hot enough to melt some metals. Sparklers can quickly ignite clothing, and children have received severe burns from dropping sparklers on their feet. According to the National Fire Protection Association, sparklers alone account for more than 25% of emergency room visits for fireworks injuries. For children under 5 years of age, sparklers accounted for nearly half of the total estimated injuries.

Consider using safer alternatives, such as glow sticks, confetti poppers or colored streamers. For more information, visit:

www.nsc.org/home-safety/tools-resources/seasonal-safety/summer/fireworks



Monthly Toolbox Talk



SAFETY TIPS:

- Always follow the directions located on the packaging
- All sparklers are for outdoor use only, never use indoors
- Always wear eye protection when using sparklers
- Never light more than one sparkler at a time
- Never point a sparkler tube towards anyone or any part of your body
- Keep sparklers and novelty devices in a safe secure location when not in use
- Never use sparklers when under the influence of alcohol or drugs
- Always keep an approved fire extinguisher nearby during a display
- Never try to relight or handle malfunctioning fireworks.
- Douse malfunctioning and spent devices with water before discarding to prevent a fire
- Purchase sparklers and novelty devices from NY State registered retailers

FACTS:

- Sparklers burn at temperatures of about 2,000 F
- It is illegal for anyone under the age of 18 to buy or use sparklers in NY State
- In 2013 there were 8 deaths and 11,400 reported injuries in the United States related to fireworks. Sparklers accounted for 31% of these injuries. Many of these injuries were to people under the age of 18.
- Sparklers and certain novelty devices are the only consumer fireworks that are legal in certain parts of NY State. Learn more at: www.dhses.ny.gov/ofpc/news/sparklingdevices.cfm
- All consumer fireworks including sparklers, remain illegal in the City of New York



LINKS



Fireworks Safety Information from the National Fire Protection Association



Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) Reports Increase in Fireworks-Related Deaths and Injuries in 2013



Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) 2013 Fireworks Annual Report



Sparkling Device Information from the Office of Fire Prevention and Control



Information for this article provided by the National Safety Council, NFPA and NYS Homeland Security and Emergency Services

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