

52 Weeks to Health: Leave Fireworks to the Pros!



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Many Kentuckians enjoy the tradition of viewing fireworks as they celebrate the Independence Day holiday. To help ensure that your holiday celebration is safe, attend a community fireworks show. Home fireworks carry substantial risks for little reward. In Kentucky, only Class 1.4G (consumer) fireworks are allowed by law. This excludes firecrackers, roman candles, and any other device that explodes or shoots in the air.

Every year throughout the United States, thousands of people end up in hospital emergency rooms with injuries from fireworks. The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) estimates that 8500 persons in the United States are treated in emergency departments each year for fireworks-related injuries

(1). Of all fireworks-related injuries, 70%--75% occur during a 30-day period that surrounds the July 4th holiday (June 23--July 23)

(2). Seven of every 100 persons injured by fireworks are hospitalized, approximately 40% of those injured are children aged ≤ 14 years, and males are injured three times more often than females. The injury rate is highest among boys aged 10--14 years

(3). Most commonly, injuries from fireworks affect the hands (34%), face (12%), and eyes (17%)

(4). Injuries are more frequent and more severe among persons who are active participants than among bystanders.

Beyond the injury factor, home fireworks cause many fires. Independence Day sees more fires in the United States than any other day of the year, with most fires caused by fireworks, the NFPA reports.

For those who choose to use home fireworks, here are some tips:

- Always read and observe label directions.
- Remember to keep water handy.
- Always have an adult present.

- Never re-light a “dud” firework.
- Do not give fireworks, including sparklers, to small children.
- Stay away from dry vegetation.

Most important, call 911 immediately if someone is injured from fireworks.