

# **SAFETY CORNER**

## **Public Safety Newsletter**

### **TOPIC: Focus on Fire Safety: Fireworks**

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### **By the Numbers: Fireworks**

Estimated number of fires caused by fireworks each year **30,100**

Estimated number of injuries caused by fireworks each year **9,500**

Fireworks-related deaths occurred in 2007 **11**

Amount of direct property loss caused by fireworks in 2006 **\$34 million**

For Americans, Fourth of July celebrations usually signify summer fun, vacations, and the gathering of family and friends, but Independence Day can also bring tragedy. In a typical year, more U.S. fires are reported on July 4 than on any other day and fireworks account for half of those fires. Sparklers, firecrackers, and rockets are the leading contributors to these injuries. Because most fireworks injuries are preventable, everyone can enjoy a safe and happy holiday by following a few fireworks safety tips.

#### **Who is at Most Risk?**

In 2007, U.S. hospital emergency rooms treated an estimated 9,800 people for fireworks related injuries.

56% of 2007 emergency room fireworks-related injuries were to the extremities and 36% were to the head.

49% of the 2007 fireworks injuries were burns, while 29% were contusions and lacerations.

Two of 5 people injured by fireworks were under the age of 15.

The risk of fireworks injury was 2 ½ times as high for children ages 5-14 as for the general population.

Sparklers, fountains, and novelties alone accounted for 56% of the emergency room fireworks injuries in 2007.

### What are the regulations in Mitchell?

Fireworks use and sale are prohibited within the city limits of Mitchell. This does not include small consumer novelties with less than 0.25 of a grain of powder, an example of which would be party pops and snaps.

Class 1.3 (formerly class C) fireworks can be sold in the County with a permit from the State. These fireworks can then be discharged outside of city limits.

- Make sure you have the land owner's permission.
- Find level ground.
- Bring a bucket of water to place duds into and in case of fire.
- Find an area with no grass or recently mowed short grass.
- Observe the area after the display to make sure that there are no spot fires.
- Please clean-up after yourself and properly dispose of all paper and plastic garbage.

### Can I modify fireworks?

The modification of consumer fireworks is not only extremely dangerous, it may be illegal. The use or sale of any fireworks other than those approved by the *American Pyrotechnics Association Inc and Consumer Product Safety Commission labeling standards* are illegal. The internet is full of videos showing these explosive devices being used and just as many resulting in injuries. M-80's (approx 1.5"), Silver Salutes (up to 2") and Cherry Bombs (1" diameter) are illegal in all 50 states and should be reported to the authorities immediately if you come across them.

Just remember.... Be safe, and enjoy the holiday.

Fire Marshal

*Steve Nedved*

Fire Marshal -City of Mitchell

If you would like to learn about certain topics please email [cindy@mittchelldps.com](mailto:cindy@mittchelldps.com) and reference Safety Corner.

