FIREWORKS SAFETY

Fireworks can brighten celebrations, and proper fireworks safety can help keep the festivities going longer and can protect spectators from injury.

SAFETY TIPS

Always remember the following safety tips when interacting with fireworks:

- Use extreme caution when lighting fireworks in the wind. Keep spectators where the wind is blowing smoke and debris away from them.
- Never smoke or consume alcohol when lighting fireworks.
- Store fireworks in a cool, dry place away from the reach of children.
- Steer clear of others setting off fireworks. They can backfire or shoot off in the wrong direction.
- Do not attempt to make or alter any fireworks or firework devices.
- Always have a fire extinguisher or water supply, such as a hose or bucket of water, nearby.
- Only light one firework at a time and never attempt to re-light or fix a "dud" firework.
- Be considerate of individuals with PTSD and other types of medical conditions. The noise can cause severe stress and reaction in neighbors.
- Think about pets. Animals have sensitive ears and can be very frightened or stressed by fireworks sounds.
FIREWORKS LAWS

Become more familiar with the state fireworks laws in Indiana. It is also important to check local ordinances for any fireworks limitations that might exist in the area:

- Throughout the year it is legal to set off fireworks from 9 a.m. to 11 p.m., but this may be limited further by local ordinances. Citizens should check with local officials.
- On state holidays it is legal to set off fireworks from 9 a.m. to midnight, but this may be limited further by local ordinances.
- The times on the following dates are protected in Indiana for consumer use of fireworks and may not be prohibited by local ordinance:
  - June 29 to July 3: from 5 p.m. until two hours after sunset;
  - July 4: from 10 a.m. to midnight;
  - July 5 to July 9: from 5 p.m. until two hours after sunset; and
  - December 31: from 10 a.m. to 1 a.m.
- Fireworks can only be purchased by persons 18 years of age or older.
- Fireworks use is limited to personal property, the property of someone who has approved the use of fireworks or a location designated specifically for the use of consumer fireworks.

INJURY STATISTICS

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission compiles an annual fireworks report and for the year 2018 found the following:

- There were an estimated 9,100 fireworks injuries treated at hospital emergency departments nationwide in 2018.
- In 2018, 62 percent of all reported firework injuries occurred between June 22 and July 22.
- Most fireworks injuries were sustained by males (64 percent).
- About half of the estimated emergency department-treated fireworks injuries happened to people younger than 20 years old, and 36 percent of fireworks injuries were to children younger than 15 years old.
- Injuries due to firecrackers accounted for about 1,000 trips to the emergency room; sparklers, 500; and bottle rockets, 200.
- The most common body parts injured were hands and fingers (28 percent), legs (24 percent), eyes (19 percent) and head, face and ears (15 percent).
- About 45 percent of fireworks injuries were burns.