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Leave fireworks to the professionals

Independence Day and fireworks go hand in hand, but fireworks shouldn't go in consumers' hands.

That's the message the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) is reinforcing this Fourth of July.

Fireworks annually cause devastating burns, injuries, fires, and even death, making them too dangerous to be used safely by consumers.

"Each year, thousands of people are injured from using consumer fireworks," said Lorraine Carli, NFPA's vice president of Outreach and Advocacy. "Even sparklers, which are often thought of as harmless enough for children to hold, burn at 1,200 degrees Fahrenheit and can cause significant injuries."

NFPA takes aim at consumer fireworks. View the latest public service announcement, featuring Dan Doofus, urging people not to use consumer fireworks because they are too dangerous.

On Independence Day in a typical year, fireworks account for two out of five of all reported U.S. fires, more than any other cause of fire.

On average each year, fireworks start 18,500 fires, including 1,300 structure fires, 300 vehicle fires, and 16,900 outside and other fires.

These fires cause an annual average of three deaths, 40 civilian injuries, and \$43 million in direct property damage.

However, the vast majority of fireworks injuries occur without a fire starting.

According to the Consumer Product Safety Commission's (CPSC) 2015 Fireworks Annual Report, U.S. hospital emergency rooms treated an estimated 11,900 people for fireworks-related injuries; 51 percent of those injuries were to the extremities and 41 percent were to the head. Two-thirds (65 percent) of the injuries were burns, Children younger than 15 years of age accounted for one-quarter (26 percent) of the estimated injuries.

Sparklers were the leading cause of fireworks injuries. More than half of the fireworks injuries incurred by children under five years of age were caused by sparklers.

"Knowing the harm fireworks inflict each year, particularly

among young people, we urge everyone to leave fireworks to the professionals who are trained to safely put on spectacular displays. It is by far the safest way to enjoy them," said Carli.

NFPA offers a wealth of information on fireworks safety, including videos and other resources that visually demonstrate just how dangerous consumer fireworks can be.

For this release and other announcements about NFPA initiatives, research and resources please visit the NFPA press room.

About the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA)

Founded in 1896, NFPA is a global, nonprofit organization devoted to eliminating death, injury, property and economic loss due to fire, electrical and related hazards.

The association delivers information and knowledge through more than 300 consensus codes and standards, research, training, education, outreach and advocacy; and by partnering with others who share an interest in furthering the NFPA mission.

For more information visit www.nfpa.org.

All NFPA codes and standards can be viewed online for free at www.nfpa.org/freeaccess.

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