

# SAFETY SPOTLIGHT

## FIREWORKS SAFETY

Fireworks are a traditional way to celebrate summer holidays, especially the Fourth of July. They can be beautiful and fun, but they are also extremely dangerous. Every year, thousands of people die or wind up in the emergency room with fireworks-related injuries, from burns to eye injuries to missing limbs.

The safest way to experience fireworks is from a distance with professional sky displays. However, if you do choose to celebrate with personal fireworks, keep these tips in mind:

- ❖ Legal fireworks have the name of the manufacturer, the words "Class C Common Fireworks," and a warning on the label. Fireworks without this label should not be used. Never use homemade or improvised fireworks, and do not modify or tamper with purchased fireworks.
- ❖ Keep fireworks in a cool, dry place away from direct sunlight, heat, and open flame, and out of reach of children. During use, keep all unused fireworks out of range of the one being lit.
- ❖ Only use fireworks in areas where they are allowed. Many counties, cities, and towns in California do not allow personal fireworks, and some limit certain types of fireworks.
- ❖ Keep pets indoors in a quiet area. The bright lights and loud noises could frighten them.
- ❖ Over half of all fireworks injuries happen to children. Never let children handle or light fireworks, including sparklers. Never leave children unsupervised around fireworks.
- ❖ Wear safety goggles and tight-fitting clothing. Keep long hair tied back, and long facial hair groomed back.
- ❖ Avoid alcohol use when around fireworks, especially if you are the one lighting them.



- ❖ Only light fireworks outdoors in a well-cleared, level area that is free of brush, grass, and other flammable items.
- ❖ Keep a bucket of water nearby to place all used fireworks into.
- ❖ Keep a hose or fire extinguisher handy in case of stray sparks.
- ❖ Place the firework on the ground and then light it. Never hold a firework to light it and never throw it.
- ❖ Only light one firework at a time. Light it, step away quickly, and keep a safe distance until the firework display has finished. Clear the used firework and put it into the water bucket, then place the next firework.
- ❖ Only use ground-level fireworks. Avoid any fireworks that launch into the air, as they could travel and set a fire or injure someone elsewhere.
- ❖ If a firework is a dud, assume it is still active. Do not try to relight it or make it work. Wait at least five minutes, approach it carefully and drench it in water, then place it into the bucket of water.
- ❖ Sparklers can be just as dangerous as other fireworks and can cause severe burns. Only use these outdoors away from flammable materials, light them one at a time, and hold only one at a time. Hold the lit sparkler away from your body but not pointing towards anyone else. Do not stare at the sparkler; this could cause eye injury and blindness. Immediately discard used sparklers into the bucket of water.

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