

Fireworks Safety



True Story

A 12-year-old boy was playing with sparklers in a garage. He was burned when the sparklers ignited a flammable liquid. The boy was hospitalized with 90% total body surface burns and died two days later.

-From the files of MECAP
(Medical Examiners and Coroners Alert Project)

The Facts

- Fireworks displays hosted by professionals are a safe and festive way to celebrate a holiday.
- More than 4,300 children ages 14 and younger were treated in hospital emergency rooms in 2003 for injuries from firework activities.
- Illegal fireworks aren't the only culprits. Firecrackers, rockets and sparklers (legal in many states) cause most injuries to children ages 5 to 14.
- Sparklers burn at 1800 degrees F, almost hot enough to melt gold.
- Fireworks-related injuries often involve the hands, fingers, eyes or head, and can sometimes result in amputations, blindings or even death. More than half of fireworks-related injuries result in burns.

What You Can Do

- Always supervise children using sparklers, snakes or caps.
- Do NOT let children under age five use sparklers.
- Avoid dressing children in loose or flowing clothes.
- Teach children not to wave sparklers near themselves or anyone else and not to run with them.
- Dispose of fireworks properly – make sure they are extinguished in a bucket of water, and pick up debris that could potentially be picked up and thrown by a lawn mower.
- Do not, under any circumstances, use illegal fireworks. Leave fireworks to the professionals.



Safe Kids Greater Des Moines, led by Blank Children's Hospital, is a grassroots organization dedicated to preventing unintentional injury in children ages 0-14.

For more information call (515) 241-6293 or visit www.dsmsafekids.org.