



News Release

OFFICE OF LOUISIANA STATE FIRE MARSHAL

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Public Safety Services

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Fireworks Are a Blast—Only When Handled With Care

Baton Rouge, LA – The Fall fireworks season in Louisiana began this week and will continue until midnight on New Year's Day. While immensely popular, fireworks also hold an inherent and significant danger if improperly handled.

To help ensure this season will be a safe and happy time for all, the State Fire Marshal's Office wishes to remind the thousands of Louisianans of the potential of catastrophic injury and property damage fireworks can cause. Each year, severe burns, disfigurement, and deaths are directly attributed to the unsafe use of fireworks.

Sadly, the majority of those most at risk for injury due to fireworks are children under the age of five. Likewise, children ages 10 – 14 are the second group most susceptible to injuries.

To illustrate the importance of understanding the tragic aftermath that fireworks can bring, sparklers, which are considered by many to be harmless, can reach temperatures in excess of 1,200 degrees Fahrenheit.

A safer alternative is to attend public fireworks displays which are conducted by professional and licensed pyrotechnic operators in controlled venues, approved by an appropriate regulatory agency.

While there is no such thing as "safe fireworks," the National Council on Fireworks Safety suggests the following steps to help ensure an injury-free season:

- Obey all local laws regarding the use of fireworks.
- Know your fireworks; read the cautionary labels and performance descriptions before igniting.
- A responsible adult SHOULD supervise all firework activities. NEVER give fireworks to children.
- Alcohol and fireworks do not mix. Save your alcohol for after the show.
- Wear safety glasses when shooting fireworks.
- Light one firework at a time and then quickly move away.
- Use fireworks OUTDOORS in a clear area; away from buildings and vehicles.
- Never relight a "dud" firework. Wait 20 minutes and then soak it in a bucket of water before disposing of it.
- Always have a bucket of water and charged water hose nearby.
- Never carry fireworks in your POCKET or shoot them into METAL or GLASS containers.
- Do not experiment with homemade fireworks.

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- Dispose of spent fireworks by wetting them down and place in a metal trash can away from any building or combustible materials until the next day.
- FAA regulations PROHIBIT the possession and transportation of fireworks in your checked baggage or carry-on luggage.
- Report illegal explosives, like M-80s and quarter sticks, to the fire or police department.

For more information on fireworks safety, please visit our website at www.lasfm.org, or the websites of the National Fire Protection Association (<http://www.nfpa.org/safety-information/for-consumers/holidays/fireworks>), and the National Council on Fireworks Safety (<http://www.fireworkssafety.org/safety-tips>).

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