



News Release

WISCONSIN EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Department of Military Affairs ■ 2400 Wright Street ■ Madison WI 53704

For more information contact: Tod Pritchard, WEM Office: (608) 242-3324 Cell: (608) 219-4008

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4th of July Holiday: Play It Safe

Injuries from fireworks a major concern

(MADISON) – The 4th of July and fireworks just go together. With the holiday approaching this is a great time to remember the dangers of fireworks which can cause serious injuries and death if not properly used.

- In 2012 (latest available statistics), doctors treated 8,700 fireworks-related injuries in U.S. hospital emergency rooms.
- 57% of fireworks injuries were burns.
- 18% of injuries were contusions and lacerations.
- 30% of those victims were under the age of 15.
- 74% of the injured were males.
- Sparklers, fountains and novelties accounted for 25% of firework related injuries.
- Sparklers are designed to throw off showers of hot sparks with temperatures exceeding 1200 degrees.
- 17,800 fires were started by fireworks resulting in 40 injuries and \$32 million in direct property damage. (Courtesy National Fire Protection Association)
- On Independence Day, fireworks account for two out of five fires.

"We all like to celebrate the 4th of July, but mishandling fireworks could cause a tragic end to the festivities," said Wisconsin Emergency Management Administrator Brian Satula. "Make sure you purchase only legal fireworks, follow the manufacturer's directions on storing and lighting fireworks and NEVER have a child light them."

Here are more tips to protect yourself and your family:

- Adults igniting the fireworks should always wear eye protection and never have any part of the body over the firework.
- Only buy fireworks from reliable sellers.
- Use fireworks only outdoors.
- Be sure other people are out of range before lighting fireworks.
- Always have water handy (a garden hose or a bucket).
- Light fireworks on a smooth, flat surface away from buildings, dry leaves and flammable materials.
- Light only one firework at a time.
- Never throw or point fireworks at other people or animals.
- Keep your pets indoors to reduce the risk that they will run loose and get injured. Many animals have very sensitive ears and can be stressed or frightened by fireworks.

Also remember to play it safe when traveling over the holiday:

- Temperatures are forecast to hit the mid to upper 80's. Make sure you drink plenty of water and limit your alcohol and caffeine intake.
- When traveling to and from a holiday destination, never leave people or pets inside a parked car. Even with the windows cracked open, temperatures inside a vehicle can reach 100 degrees in less than 10 minutes
- Make sure your car is in shape to make the trip. Having a first-aid kit, bottled water and some energy bars is a good idea in case you get stranded. Also, remember to bring a car adaptor for your cell phone in case you need to call for help.
- We want everyone to come home safely. If you're feeling tired, drank alcohol, or feel ill, either let someone else drive or postpone the trip.
- Check www.511wi.gov or call 511 for the latest traffic and road information on your route.

For more information go to readywisconsin.wi.gov. For daily safety tips, follow us on Facebook (www.facebook.com/readywisconsin) and Twitter (www.twitter.com/readywisconsin).