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Date: July 2, 2024

State Fire Marshal Shares Fourth of July Fireworks Safety Tips

As the Fourth of July holiday approaches, the South Carolina State Fire Marshal is reminding citizens to put safety first when participating in any fireworks activities.

“Independence Day is a time to reflect on our country’s history,” State Fire Marshal Jonathan Jones said. “During this time, many choose to watch the ‘rockets’ red glare’ by using consumer fireworks or attending a free professional fireworks display.”

According to the [U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission 2023 Fireworks Annual Report](#), during a one-month special study focused on the Fourth of July holiday season, there were an estimated 6,400 fireworks-related injuries nationally.

“One injury is one too many,” Chief Jones said. “We want every celebration to begin and end safely. If not handled properly, fireworks can cause injuries. We don’t want a happy occasion to turn into an emergency room visit.”

South Carolina law prohibits fireworks from being sold to anyone younger than 16 years old. For those choosing to use consumer fireworks, the State Fire Marshal suggests these “Top 10” safety tips:

1. Know and observe local laws. If unsure, whether it is legal to use fireworks, check with local officials.
2. Observe local weather conditions. Only use fireworks outdoors, away from homes, dry grass, and trees. Dry weather can make it easier for fireworks to start a fire.
3. Buy from permitted fireworks retailers.
4. Store fireworks in a cool, dry place.
5. Always read and follow the directions on each firework. Find the fuse before it is dark.
6. Keep a garden hose on hand.
7. Always have an adult present when shooting fireworks.
8. Use an area that is clear and flat. Ensure that structures, people, and pets are a safe distance away before lighting fireworks.
9. Light one firework at a time and keep a safe distance.
10. Throw away the duds. Put used fireworks in a bucket of water.

Lastly, never place any part of your body directly over a fireworks device when lighting the fuse. Back up to a safe distance immediately after lighting fireworks.

“Across the state, there are so many permitted professional fireworks displays available to South Carolinians to enjoy the Fourth of July holiday,” Jones said. “Residents can consult their local fire officials for displays in their area.”