

Firework Safety

Who doesn't enjoy the majesty of fireworks; the bomb bursts, beautiful colors, that are often coordinated with music when done by professionals. I strongly recommend that it be left to professionals who even get injured themselves.

What Are the Dangers of Fireworks?

If not handled properly, fireworks can cause burns and eye injuries in kids and adults. The best way to protect your family is not to use any fireworks at home. Leave it to professionals and attend public fireworks displays.

Lighting fireworks at home isn't even legal in many areas, so if you still want to use them, be sure to check with your local police department first. Here in the Western Communities it causes unnecessary stress to the many horses in the equestrian community and are not legal.

Fireworks Safety Tips

If fireworks are legal where you live, keep these safety tips in mind:

- Kids should never play with fireworks. Things like firecrackers, rockets, and sparklers are just too dangerous. Sparklers can reach 1,800°F which is hot enough to melt gold and precious metals. If anyone uses sparklers that should be outside and kept away from face, clothing and hair.
- Buy only legal fireworks which have the manufacturer's name and directions and store them in a cool, dry place. Illegal fireworks like M-80s and blockbuster have been banned since 1966, but still account for many fireworks injuries.
- Never try to make your own fireworks.
- Always use fireworks outside and have a bucket of water and a hose nearby in case of accidents. The hose should be on with the nozzle in the closed position.
- Be sure to wear eye protection.

- Never throw or point fireworks at someone, even as a joke.
- Steer clear of others setting off fireworks. They can backfire or shoot off in the wrong direction.
- Don't hold fireworks in your hand while lighting.
- Don't carry fireworks in your pocket because the friction while you walk or run could set them off.
- Point fireworks away from homes, and keep away from brush and leaves and flammable substances.
- Light one firework at a time and never in glass or metal containers.
- Never relight a dud. Also, don't allow kids to pick up pieces of fireworks after an event. Some may still be ignited and can explode at any time.
- Soak all fireworks in a bucket of water before throwing them in the trash can.
- Think about your pet. Animals have sensitive ears and can be very frightened or stressed by the Fourth of July and other big celebrations. Keep pets indoors to reduce the risk that they'll run loose or get injured.

If an Injury Happens

If a child is injured by fireworks, immediately go to a doctor or hospital.

If your child's eye is injured:

- Don't let your child touch or rub it, as this may cause even more damage.
- Don't flush the eye out with water or try to put any ointment on it.
- Cut out the bottom of a paper cup, place it around the eye, and get medical care right away — your child's eyesight may depend on it.

If your child is burned:

- Remove clothing from the burned area.
- Call your doctor immediately.

Fireworks are meant to be enjoyed, but you'll enjoy them much more knowing your family is safe. Please think twice and leave it in the hands of professionals.