



## NEWS RELEASE

### ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

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## ADPH reminds the public that fireworks are dangerous

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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According to the Consumer Product Safety Commission, there were an estimated 9,000 fireworks-related injuries treated in U. S. hospital emergency departments in 2009 which is an increase from the estimated 7,000 injuries in 2008. In the month of June and the time immediately surrounding July 4, there were an estimated 6,000 injuries related to fireworks.

The Alabama Department of Public Health reminds the public that fireworks continue to pose a danger and urge vigilance to protect families from these injuries. The injury breakdown is as follows:

- Sixty-two percent of the fireworks-related injuries sustained were to males and 38 percent were to females.
- Children under 15 accounted for 40 percent of the estimated injuries.
- Children and young adults under 20 accounted for 58 percent of the estimated injuries.
- There were an estimated 800 injuries associated with sparklers, 300 estimated injuries with bottle rockets, and 900 estimated injuries associated with firecrackers.
- Most injuries occurred to the extremities and eyes.
- Burns were the most common injury to all parts of the body, except the eyes. The eye injuries frequently occurred in the form of contusions, lacerations and foreign bodies in the eye.

There are no "safe and sane" fireworks. Fireworks and sparklers are designed to explode or throw off showers of hot sparks at temperatures that may exceed 1,200 degrees F. Educate all members of your family and community about the dangers of fireworks and teach children to practice safety at all times. The best way to prevent fireworks-related injuries is to leave fireworks displays to the trained professionals.

#### Safety Tips for Fireworks

- Only buy from reliable fireworks sellers; read and follow all the warnings and instructions.
- Use fireworks outdoors only; keep them away from houses and flammable materials.
- Have a bucket of water nearby.
- Do NOT try to re-light or handle malfunctioning fireworks; soak them in water and throw them away.

- Be sure other people are a safe distance away before lighting fireworks.
- Never ignite fireworks in a container – especially a glass or metal one.
- Store fireworks in a cool, dry place according to their specific storage instructions.
- Never experiment or attempt to make your own fireworks.
- Do not wear loose clothing near a fire or while using fireworks.
- Rockets should be launched from a rocket launcher, not a bottle.
- Individuals under age 18 should be supervised.
- Do not let children younger than 14 years of age use fireworks.
- Light sparklers one at a time at arm's length. Always wear gloves while holding a sparkler and never give one to a child under 5 years of age.

For more information on fire safety visit the Alabama Department of Public Health at [www.adph.org](http://www.adph.org), the U.S. Fire Administration at [www.usfa.dhs.gov](http://www.usfa.dhs.gov), or the Consumer Product Safety Commission at [www.cpsc.gov](http://www.cpsc.gov).