



For Immediate Release

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Stay Safe and Leave Fireworks to the Professionals on July 4th

Approximately 1/4 of all injured persons suffered multiple injuries due to fireworks

Springfield, Ill- The Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) and the Office of the Illinois State Fire Marshal (OSFM) remind organizations and individuals to leave the fireworks displays to licensed, trained professionals this Fourth of July season.

According to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), fireworks started an estimated 12,264 fires in 2021, including 2,082 structure fires, 316 vehicle fires, and 9,866 outside and other fires. These fires caused 29 civilian injuries and \$59 million in direct property damage. These fires are not only caused by commercial/consumer fireworks, but also by unregulated novelty fireworks that are sometimes purchased at local supermarkets.

In addition to fireworks, novelties such as sparklers, snappers, and poppers are dangerous. Sparklers account for the greatest number of fireworks injuries, and often to the youngest victims. Sparklers burn in excess of 1,200 degrees – hot enough to melt many metals and turn steel glowing red. An instantaneous touch of this will cause a burn and may result in permanent damage or scarring.

“Fireworks and the 4th of July go hand-in-hand, but if not used properly or by professionals they can cause serious injuries such as burns, dismemberments, amputations, or worse, an accidental death. Consider using other items such as glow sticks or silly string to celebrate the holiday or simply attend a professional display,” **said Illinois State Fire Marshal James A. Rivera.**

During the July 2023 seasonal reporting period, 34 hospitals and facilities reported a total of 108 injuries to the OSFM. There were no fatalities reported during the 2023 reporting period. The reported injuries were related to a wide variety of fireworks with “Mortars” (47%) listed as the most frequent type of fireworks or pyrotechnic effect involved in injury. This was followed by Roman Candles (13%), Firecrackers (11%), and Bottle Rockets (10%). Nearly 50% of all injuries affected hands (21%), torso (13%), and eyes (14%). Lacerations were the leading type of injury at 21% followed by second degree burns at 20%. Abrasions accounted for 15% of the injuries and first degree burns at 13%. Dismemberment/amputation injuries decreased to 10 as compared to 20 in 2022.

IDNR reminds those who are sponsoring fireworks displays in Illinois to be sure their fireworks vendor has the required state licenses and certificates issued by the IDNR and the OSFM prior to their fireworks show.

The Illinois Explosives Act requires that anyone who purchases, possesses, uses, transfers, stores or disposes of explosives, including display fireworks, must have an explosives license and explosives storage certificate issued by the IDNR. Licensing and storage requirements administered by the IDNR do not apply to Consumer Fireworks (classified as 1.4 explosives).

Approved consumer fireworks are regulated by the OSFM and are permitted only in villages, counties and municipalities that have passed ordinances allowing such displays. Consumer fireworks may be purchased and displayed only by adults who have obtained permits from their local jurisdiction. Hand-held fireworks – including firecrackers, roman candles, and bottle rockets or any consumer firework with an unreliable trajectory are not approved for sale or use in Illinois. A complete list of approved and prohibited consumer fireworks can be found at:

<https://sfm.illinois.gov/content/dam/soi/en/web/sfm/sfmdocuments/documents/firepreventio ndocs/pyfi-approvedprohibitedfireworks.pdf>

“The last thing anyone wants during the Fourth of July is a fireworks-related accident that leads to life-altering injuries or even death,” said **IDNR Director Natalie Phelps Finnie**. “Understand the rules and play it safe.”

The Illinois Explosives Act is administered by the IDNR Office of Mines and Minerals, Explosives and Aggregate Division. This Division is staffed by trained and experienced blasting specialists located throughout Illinois. In addition to requiring comprehensive licensing, training and examination for individuals, the law requires that unattended display fireworks and explosives must be stored in an explosives magazine, storage facility or container that is inspected and certified by IDNR.

IDNR currently has 2,206 individuals licensed for the use of explosives in Illinois, of which approximately 742 are specifically for the use of display fireworks. There are 740 certified explosives storage magazines in Illinois, which contain nearly 41 million pounds of explosives. Of those storage magazines, 99 are certified specifically for the storage of display fireworks.

Anyone possessing, using, transferring, or purchasing display fireworks without a valid IDNR individual explosives license or storage certificate is violating Illinois law and could incur penalties. A violation of the Illinois Explosives Act can be a Class 3 felony, with a maximum penalty of five years in prison and a \$10,000 fine. In addition, IDNR can assess administrative fines for violations involving display fireworks and other explosives.

Emergency responders are reminded to contact IDNR and the OSFM immediately with reports of personal injury or property damage resulting from the use of explosives, including display fireworks.

[Go online](#) for more information on the IDNR explosives regulatory program or for more information concerning the [OSFM pyrotechnics regulatory program](#).

To report an explosives incident or accident concerning display fireworks, the public should contact IDNR Office of Mines and Minerals, Explosives and Aggregate Division at 217-782-9976 and the OSFM at 217-785-0969.