Winter Holiday Fireworks-Related Injuries in South Carolina

Fireworks-related injuries are preventable. They range from minor and major burns to fractures and amputations. In South Carolina, the most common fireworks-related injuries are burns and open wounds to the hands, legs, head, and eyes.

SC averages 130 hospitalizations and ED visits each year

- 54% (70) are in their teens and 20s
- 15% (19) are children ages 1-9
- 87% (113) are men

21% (27) of injuries happen in December and January

Fireworks injuries cost South Carolinians an average:

- $115,500 in hospital charges each year
- OR $4,259 per incident

Fireworks injuries occur most frequently to:

- Hand 42%
- Head 11%
- Arm 6%
- Eye 10%
- Leg 11%
- Trunk 6%

The most common types of fireworks injuries are:

- Burn 55%
- Open Wound 15%
- Fracture 6%
- Contusion 4%
- Abrasion 7%
- Amputation 4%
Fireworks Safety Tips

Fireworks can be dangerous, causing serious burn and eye injuries. You can help prevent fireworks-related injuries by following these tips or by leaving the fireworks to the professionals.

- Never allow young children to play with or ignite fireworks.
- Avoid buying fireworks that are packaged in brown paper because this is often a sign that the fireworks were made for professional displays and that they could pose a danger to consumers.
- Always have an adult supervise fireworks activities. Parents don’t realize that young children suffer injuries from sparklers. Sparklers burn at temperatures of about 2,000 degrees - hot enough to melt some metals.
- 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.
- Never try to re-light or pick up fireworks that have not ignited fully.
- Never point or throw fireworks at another person.
- Keep a bucket of water or a garden hose handy in case of fire or other mishap.
- Light fireworks one at a time, then move back quickly.
- Never carry fireworks in a pocket or shoot them off in metal or glass containers.
- After fireworks complete their burning, douse the spent device with plenty of water from a bucket or hose before discarding it to prevent a trash fire.
- Make sure fireworks are legal in your area before buying or using them.

Sources:
SC Department of Health and Environmental Control, 2016.