



Jeb Bush
Governor

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Secretary, Department of Health

PINELLAS COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Wednesday, June 28, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Fireworks Safety Tips
Don't Let Fourth of July Fun Turn into Tragedy

Activities such as parades, cookouts and fireworks help us celebrate the summer season. However, fireworks can turn a joyful celebration into a painful memory when children and adults are injured while using fireworks. Fireworks can be extremely dangerous, causing serious burn and eye injuries. And while legal consumer fireworks that comply with Consumer Product Safety Commission regulations can be relatively safe, all fireworks are hazardous and can cause injury.

It's important to know that fireworks are classified as hazardous substances under the Federal Hazardous Substances Act, which prohibits the sale of the most dangerous types of fireworks to consumers. Banned fireworks include mortar shells, cherry bombs, aerial bombs, M-80's and larger firecrackers containing more than two grains of powder. Also banned are mail-order kits and components designed to build fireworks. Banned fireworks and fireworks used by professionals should never be used or handled by consumers or children.

If fireworks are legal where you live and you decide to set them off on your own, be sure to follow these important safety tips from the Pinellas County Health Department:

- Read and follow all warnings and instructions.
- Never allow children to play with or ignite fireworks – under any circumstances. Sparklers, which are considered by many to be the ideal "safe" firework for children, burn at very high temperatures and can easily ignite clothing. Children cannot understand the danger involved and cannot act appropriately in case of emergency.
- Older children should only be permitted to use fireworks under close adult supervision. Do not allow any running or horseplay.
- Be sure other people are out of range before lighting fireworks.
- Only light fireworks on a smooth, flat surface in a clear area away from the house, dry leaves and flammable materials.

(MORE)

FIREWORKS SAFETY TIPS – Page 2



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- Keep a bucket of water nearby for emergencies and for pouring on fireworks that don't go off.
- Have a phone nearby in case you need to call for help.
- Do not relight or handle malfunctioning fireworks. Douse and soak them with water and discard them.
- Never have any portion of your body directly over a firework while lighting.
- Don't experiment with homemade fireworks.
- Never ignite fireworks in any container, especially a glass or metal container.
- Keep unused fireworks away from firing areas.
- Store fireworks in a dry, cool place. Check instructions for special storage directions.
- Observe local laws.

Fireworks and celebrations go together, especially during the Fourth of July, but there are precautions you can take to prevent injuries. For more information, visit www.cpsc.gov

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The mission of the Pinellas County Health Department is to promote, protect and improve the health and safety of residents and visitors through public and private community efforts.
www.PinellasHealth.com