

For Immediate Release

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THE SAFE USE OF INDOOR PYROTECHNICS
Industry Group Issues Recommendations

Bethesda, Maryland – March 10, 2003 – In response to questions about the safe use of indoor pyrotechnics following the Rhode Island nightclub fire on February 20, the American Pyrotechnics Association (APA) today issued the following safety recommendations to meeting planners, banquet facilities, hotels, theaters, stadiums, convention centers and conference sites that use indoor “proximate” pyrotechnics to enhance their events:

- Only use a professional pyrotechnic company or certified pyrotechnic operator.
- Require and verify references from the pyrotechnic company or certified operator.
- Request that NFPA Standard 1126, Standard for the Use of Pyrotechnics before a Proximate Audience, be strictly adhered to, especially if your state or local jurisdiction has no detailed legal requirements for indoor pyrotechnics.
- Understand what pyrotechnic effects will be used and make certain that the local fire marshal has approved the plan and issued the necessary permit.
- Prohibit any pyrotechnic supplies or devices on-site that have not been approved for use at the event.
- Ensure all venue staff are advised of the intended use of indoor pyrotechnics in the facility and designate appropriately trained staff to be responsible for executing the facility’s emergency response and evacuation plans.
- Insist that personnel have appropriate fire extinguishing equipment on hand to extinguish any accidental fire involving flammable or combustible materials.
- Request a certificate of liability insurance coverage from the pyrotechnic company or certified pyrotechnic operator.
- Insist that the venue be named as an additional insured for the duration of the event.

The APA emphasized that indoor pyrotechnics are not appropriate for use in venues with flammable or combustible interior surfaces or furnishings and may not be appropriate in certain facilities that do not have sprinklers. All staging areas, including draperies and carpet, must be flame retardant.

“By adhering to these common sense, practical safety tips, and employing the services of a licensed professional pyrotechnics company or certified pyrotechnics operator, indoor pyrotechnics can be an exciting and safe entertainment medium,” said Julie L. Heckman, Executive Director of the APA.

Heckman noted that for more than 30 years, indoor pyrotechnics have been enjoyed by millions of spectators and have enhanced theatrical productions, rock concerts, sporting events, ice shows and political conventions.

About the American Pyrotechnics Association

The APA is the leading trade association of the pyrotechnics industry. The association supports and promotes safety standards for all aspects of pyrotechnics. Its diverse membership includes regulated and licensed manufacturers, distributors, wholesalers, retailers, importers and suppliers of pyrotechnics and professional public display firms. Additional information on the pyrotechnics industry can be found on APA's web site: www.americanpyro.com

About Indoor or Proximate Pyrotechnics Regulations

While there are no national certification and licensing requirements for pyrotechnic operators, many states have implemented certification or licensing programs. Professional pyrotechnic companies have licenses issued by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives with regard to manufacturer and distribution of pyrotechnic materials.

The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) Standard 1126, Standard for Use of Pyrotechnics before a Proximate Audience, is the national consensus code applicable to indoor pyrotechnics as well as outdoor fireworks displays when the audience is "proximate" or closer than would be permitted for outdoor aerial fireworks displays. While the NFPA 1126 Standard has not been adopted in every state, the APA deems this standard to be the prudent operator's definitive guide and urges members of the industry to strictly comply with the standard.

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