



For Immediate Release

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American Pyrotechnics Association Urges Fireworks Safety This Independence Day
Backyard Fireworks Use to Hit an All-Time High, Experts Say Safety Remains Top Priority

Bethesda, MD, June 22, 2020 – Fireworks are among the most widely anticipated traditions of celebrating our nation’s independence. As the Fourth of July rapidly approaches, there are widespread cancellations of community Independence Day celebrations nationwide due to social distancing mandates related to COVID-19. More families than ever before are visiting the thousands of consumer fireworks retail sales establishments across the country to stock up on sparklers, cones, fountains, and many other varieties of consumer fireworks devices to bring the celebration home to their backyards.

According to the American Pyrotechnics Association (APA), consumer fireworks retailers have reported that sales are off to a record-breaking start. “The APA predicts an all-time high in backyard consumer fireworks sales and use as families prepare to celebrate Independence Day at home due to the pandemic and cancellation of large public celebrations,” says Julie L. Heckman, Executive Director of the APA. Consumer fireworks retailers recommend that customers shop early in order to avoid long lines and crowd-controlled showrooms on July 1-4 which are the busiest days for fireworks sellers.

Backyard fireworks have never been more popular or more in demand. 49 states plus the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico allow the sale and use of some types of consumer fireworks. Massachusetts is the only state that continues to have a prohibition on all consumer fireworks. Because of industry safety education efforts and the ever-improving quality of its products, the fireworks-related injury rate is 56% lower than it was in 2000.¹

“While the number of fireworks-related injuries have declined significantly, this is not the time for consumers to be lax about safety. With anticipated record-breaking use this Fourth of July, especially by families who may be purchasing fireworks for their first backyard celebration, we want to emphasize the importance of reading the instructions for use and following common sense safety tips when using backyard fireworks as well as obeying local fireworks laws,” urged APA President, Michael Collar. Several critical safety tips to always keep top of mind include (1) discharge fireworks

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<https://www.americanpyro.com/assets/docs/FactsandFigures/rev19ConsumpVinjuriesLiberalizationgraph,%201976-2018.pdf>

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from a hard, flat, level surface; (2) never hold aerial or reloadable tube devices in your hand – they are safe when discharged from a hard, level surface but extremely dangerous when suspended in the air as there is no place for the energy to go but downward, which can cause severe injury; (3) never allow children to handle fireworks, even sparklers can be unsafe when not used properly; and (4) always have a sober, responsible adult in charge of all fireworks activities.

The APA through its Safety & Education Foundation is committed to educating the public on the proper use of fireworks and encourages consumers to become familiar with key fireworks safety tips before engaging in backyard fireworks celebrations this Fourth of July. Learn more by downloading the following safety tip flier: <https://www.celebratesafely.org/assets/FactSheets/apsef-safetyflyer-final-2016.pdf>

And by watching this brief animated safety video: https://youtu.be/_rukcgqXbcM

Have a safe and spectacular 4th of July and remember to always #CelebrateSafely!

About the American Pyrotechnics Association

The APA is the leading safety and trade association of the fireworks industry representing manufacturers, importers, distributors, retailers, suppliers, and professional display companies. Founded in 1948, APA's mission is to encourage safety in the design and use of all types of fireworks, to provide industry information and support its members, and to promote responsible regulation of the fireworks industry. Additional information about the fireworks industry, facts & figures, history of fireworks, state laws and safety tips, can be found on APA's website at www.americanpyro.com