

NEWS RELEASE

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www.fireworksafety.com

KNOW YOUR FIREWORKS!: Consumers Warned of Illegal Explosives and Urged to Follow Consumer Fireworks Safety Tips

Everyone enjoys fireworks, particularly in the festive Fourth of July season. But some devices can be dangerous. The National Council on Fireworks Safety recommends that you only buy consumer fireworks from a licensed store or stand. Never buy firework devices from an individual's house, or out of someone's car. Such fireworks are likely to be illegal explosives that can seriously injure you.

Consumer fireworks regulated by the Consumer Product Safety Commission are packaged in bright colors and have safety warnings on the packaging. The packaging sets forth the country of origin, which is normally China. Typical consumer fireworks include fountains, cones, sparklers, fire crackers, bottle rockets, roman candles, ground spinners and multi-shot products.

Illegal explosives are often unpackaged and are wrapped with plain brown paper. They are very unlikely to have any safety warnings, or place of manufacture. Many of them are hand made in illicit factories and other unsafe environments. They may go by names such as M80, Quarter Stick or Cherry Bomb. If someone approaches you to sell one of these illegal explosives, politely decline and then call your local police department.

Consumer fireworks, if used in accordance with their instructions, are very safe. Injuries from consumer fireworks have shown a dramatic decrease over the past twenty years, despite an astonishing increase in usage by consumers. Some form of consumer fireworks are now allowed in 45 states, Puerto Rico and the District of Columbia.

The National Council urges consumers to follow these other important safety tips:

- Only use fireworks outdoors.
- Obey all local laws regarding the use of fireworks.

- **Never give fireworks to young children and always wear safety glasses.**
- **Always have a bucket of water, or water hose, nearby.**
- **Alcohol and fireworks do not mix!**

“Many times consumers don’t prepare for the evening’s fireworks display” says Ralph Apel, President of the National Council on Fireworks Safety. “The designated shooter should prepare a shooting area, assess how many people will be watching the display and lay out a spectator area that is far enough away from the shooting site. The shooter should carefully read the label of each firework and understand exactly what it will do. Preplanning makes for a safe and fun backyard fireworks display.”

The National Council has a new safety poster aimed at helping consumers distinguish between legal consumer fireworks and illegal explosives. We encourage consumers to look for these posters at participating consumer firework retailers.

For more details, please visit our website www.fireworksafety.com.