



AMR News- For Immediate Release

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AMR Paramedics Offer Fireworks Safety Tips

Lauderdale-by-the-Sea, Florida (June 29, 2011) – The Independence Day holiday is filled with the bangs, whistles and pops of backyard fireworks. Too often, revelers forget that fireworks are dangerous explosives, not toys. Fireworks send thousands of people to hospitals and emergency rooms each year and cause millions of dollars in fire losses. The caregivers at American Medical Response (AMR) offer the following fireworks safety advice to help protect you and your family from injury and property damage this Fourth of July weekend.

Injuries

According to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, an estimated 8,600 fireworks-related injuries happen in 2010. An estimated 30 percent were injuries to the hands and fingers and nearly 21 percent of these injuries were to the eyes.

Firework-related injuries can range from minor burns to loss of sight, permanent hearing loss, second and third degree burns, even amputation.

Even seemingly harmless devices such as sparklers can be dangerous. Sparklers can reach temperatures of up to 1800 degrees Fahrenheit and remain hot enough to cause serious burns even after they are extinguished.

Penalties for Use of Fireworks

Many communities have restrictions and penalties on the sale and use of fireworks. Users of fireworks that cause injury, death or start a fire can be held liable for damages.

Fireworks Can Start Home and Business Fires

The U.S. Fire Administration reports that nationwide fireworks annually cause more than 30,000 fires, as well as millions of dollars in property damage.

Fireworks Safety Tips: If you use fireworks, AMR offers this advice:

- Matches and lighters are tools, not toys.
- Never point or throw fireworks at another person.
- Never shoot devices over roofs, over other structures or near power lines.
- Never attempt to re-light or fix fireworks that have not ignited.
- Always keep a safe distance from fireworks staging areas.
- Protect your eyes by wearing safety glasses or safety goggles if you are a fireworks operator or a bystander. Wearing prescription eyeglasses, sunglasses or contact lenses provide little or no protection against eye injuries that fireworks can cause.
- Collect all burned-out sparkler wires for proper disposal. Sparklers stay hot long after burning out.
- Keep younger children away from all fireworks. Older children must be supervised.
- Never use homemade fireworks.
- Never extend any part of the body over lit fireworks.
- Keep water and a first aid kit nearby for emergencies.
- Always follow local ordinances and directions of all local police and fire personnel.
- In case of eye injuries do not touch, rub or press the injured eye. Take the victim to a local emergency room or call 9-1-1 for help.
- In case of burn injuries, cover with a dry dressing and if necessary take the victim to a local emergency room or call 9-1-1 for help.

***American Medical Response Inc.** (www.amr.net), America's leading provider of medical transportation, provides services in 40 states and the District of Columbia. More than 17,000 AMR paramedics, EMTs, RNs and other professionals, with a fleet of 4,100 vehicles, transport more than three million patients nationwide each year in critical, emergency and non-emergency situations. AMR, a subsidiary of Emergency Medical Services Corporation, is headquartered in Greenwood Village, Colo.*

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