



# PRESS RELEASE

## Darien-Woodridge Fire District

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### Contact Information:

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## Fireworks Dangers

According to the National Fire Protection Association, in 2006, hospital emergency rooms treated 9,200 fireworks related injuries. This is a trend that has been increasing since 1996. One-third of the fireworks injuries were to people under age 15. Ninety percent of emergency room injuries, related to fireworks, were caused by products that Federal regulations permit consumers to use. Injuries to the face accounted for 46% of the injuries, and 37% of the injuries were to the hand. Over 50% of the injuries were burns, and 30% were contusions and lacerations. Firecrackers and sparklers were each responsible for 21% of the injuries. Data from the United States Eye Injury Registry shows that bystanders are more often injured by fireworks than users themselves.

On July 4<sup>th</sup> alone, more fires are reported than on any other day of the year. Half of these fires are attributed to fireworks. In 2005, an estimated 2,500 structure or vehicle fires were started by fireworks. Those fires resulted in 60 injuries and \$39 million in direct property damage.

In Illinois, the term “fireworks” does not include snake or glow worm pellets, smoke devices, sparklers, trick noisemakers (known as party poppers, snappers, cigarette loads), toy guns (cap pistols), or other devices in which paper or plastic caps are used. These devices are often referred to as novelty fireworks. Basically if the “firework” explodes, shoots a flame, or goes up in the air, it is illegal.

Teach children at an early age that fireworks are explosive devices, not toys. Make sure children understand it is dangerous to touch or pick up fireworks. Teach them to tell an adult if they find any fireworks.

“Safe and sane” fireworks are neither safe nor sane. Sparklers are designed to throw off sparks, and can burn at temperatures of close to 1,800 degrees. You wouldn't hand a matchbook or lighter to a child to wave around and play with, so why would you give a child a sparkler?

Don't be blinded by the dangers of fireworks. Leave the use of fireworks to trained professionals at public displays, just sit back and enjoy the show – safely.

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