



FORSYTHCOUNTY
Department of Communications
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**FORSYTH COUNTY FIRE DEPARTMENT URGES
FIREWORKS SAFETY THIS INDEPENDENCE DAY**

Officials say fireworks displays best left to professionals

FORSYTHCOUNTY, Georgia – When celebrating the nation’s independence this July 4, the Forsyth County Fire Department reminds residents to practice safe, responsible use of fireworks.

“We encourage citizens to leave the fireworks displays to trained professionals,” Fire Chief Danny Bowman said. “Fireworks are unpredictable, and accidents and injuries can occur even if a person is careful. The best way to avoid injury is to not use fireworks.”

According to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, U.S. hospital emergency rooms treated an estimated 9,600 people in 2011 for fireworks-related injuries. More than half of the injuries were burns, and most of the injuries involved the head, hands, fingers and legs. Children under the age of 20 accounted for more than 30 percent of the estimated injuries.

“A common fireworks-related hazard seen is the use of sparklers by young children,” Division Chief Jason Shivers said. “Many people do not realize that sparklers burn at temperatures of approximately 2,000 degrees, which is hot enough to melt some metals.”

Those who choose to use fireworks are urged to follow the safety tips below provided by the Forsyth County Fire Department and the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission:

- Read and follow all labels, warnings and instructions.
- Only use fireworks outdoors.

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- Always have an adult present and never allow young children to play with or ignite fireworks.
- Do not allow anyone under the age of 12 to handle sparklers at any time.
- Light only one firework at a time.
- The shooter should always wear eye protection and should never place any part of the body over the firework. Back up to a safe distance immediately after lighting fireworks.
- Never throw or point fireworks at other people.
- Be sure other people are out of range before lighting fireworks.
- Never carry fireworks in your pocket.
- Never shoot fireworks off in metal or glass containers.
- Never try to relight or pick up fireworks that have not fully functioned (wait at least 20 minutes and then soak it in a bucket of water).
- After fireworks complete their burning, douse the spent device with plenty of water from a bucket or hose before discarding it to prevent a trash fire.
- Stay away from illegal explosives and homemade fireworks.
- Dial 911 for any emergencies.

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