



# News Release

## OFFICE OF LOUISIANA STATE FIRE MARSHAL CODE ENFORCEMENT AND BUILDING SAFETY

Department of Public Safety and Corrections  
Public Safety Services

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### **MISHANDLED FIREWORKS CAUSE SERIOUS INJURIES**

**BATON ROUGE, LA** - The State Fire Marshal's Office released information today concerning firework related burn injuries reported during the past fireworks season. Investigators determined the injuries to be the result of the mishandling of fireworks. The injuries came to the attention of the Fire Marshal's Office through the State's Burn Injury Reporting System which tracks the most serious burn injuries across the state.

In Broussard, a 24 year old man lighting sparklers for two children, seriously injured his middle and index fingers. It was reported to the State Fire Marshals that the sparklers were over three years old at the time of the incident and that the injured man was handling the sparklers improperly. The victim was taken to Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital.

In Gretna, a 13 year old male was seriously injured when a firework device called "Slam Dunk" detonated while the 13 year old attempted to re-light it. The teenager was transported to Children's Hospital in New Orleans and then transferred to Baton Rouge Medical Center. He was hospitalized nine days due to second and third degree burns which led to the loss of his index and middle fingers.

In Harvey, a three year old female was injured when a bottle rocket flew between her jacket hoodie and the left side of her face and neck. The hoodie caught fire burning the child. The toddler sustained second degree burns to her neck, face, ear and scalp which required her to spend ten days in the hospital due to her injuries.

In Marrero, a 15 year old male sustained injuries to the palm of his right hand and was transported to West Jefferson Medical Center. The injuries occurred when the teen picked up a firework device called an "Artillery Shell" and lit the device while holding it in his hand rather

than putting it in the tube that is provided with the product. The teen was eventually transferred to Children's Hospital in New Orleans where he underwent surgery.

In New Orleans, a 13 year old male sustained second degree burns to the palm of his left hand. The teen was treated at Children's Hospital and released. His injuries occurred when the teenager attempted to light sparklers using a cigarette lighter. The sparklers ignited all at once and the molten material dripped down into the palm of his hand.

In Westwego, a 25 year old man sustained burn injuries to both hands, with the left hand incurring the more serious injuries, with his thumb being almost severed from his hand. The victim was taken to West Jefferson Medical Center. The injuries occurred when he picked up a firework identified as an "Artillery Shell" which detonated in his left hand. It was reported that alcohol was being consumed on the premises at the time of the incident.

In Baton Rouge, a homemade device resembling a small mortar, discharged while two men, ages 27 and 34, were attempting to compact gunpowder obtained from fireworks as well as pelletized black powder intended for use in a muzzle loaded firearms. Initial reports to the State Fire Marshal's Office indicated that a lit fuse to the device, which had previously been discharged a number of times during a New Year's Eve Party, failed to ignite the gun powder. A group of men, that included the homeowner, placed the device atop a glass-top table where it subsequently discharged, severely injuring the 27 year old male. He suffered serious wounds to his face, neck, head, eyes, legs and arms. His most severe injury was the amputation of his left hand. The discharge also caused light to moderate injuries to others in the group.

Pyrotechnic devices ranging from sparklers to aerial rockets cause thousands of fires and serious injuries each year. "When things go wrong, they go wrong very fast, and often with disastrous consequences," stated Fire Marshal H. "Butch" Browning. "Due to the fire hazard as well as the inherent risk of injury involved in fireworks, citizens are urged to use extreme caution when handling fireworks to ensure a safe, fire-free holiday. The few moments of pleasure consumer fireworks bring are not worth the risk of property loss, injury, or death. Avoid needless risks."

"Let's Work Together in Keeping Louisiana Safe!"

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