



Title: **LETTERS TO THE EDITOR**
 Author:
 Size: 23.25 square inch
 Princeton, IL Circulation: 3186



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Be safe; leave the fireworks displays to professionals

To the editor:

The Fourth of July holiday is fast approaching. Independence Day is a time to celebrate, reflect on freedom and, of course, enjoy fireworks.

Federal, state and local laws and ordinances restrict — and often prohibit the use of fireworks. Despite these limitations, hospitals treat thousands of firework-related injuries every year, and fire departments respond to numerous fires related to hot sparks and falling debris.

Fireworks are explosive and extremely hot. Mishandling them can have life-altering consequences. The Illinois Insurance Association and its member companies urge families to leave the firework displays to professionals. Residents resolved to putting on their own shows should keep the following tips in mind:

- Be familiar with federal, state and local laws related to fireworks.
- Only adults should use fireworks.
- Firecrackers, reloadable shells, roman candles, bottle rockets and novelties may seem harmless, but they cause 41 percent of firework-related injuries, according to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission.
- Another 19 percent are related

to sparklers, which can burn at temperatures as high as 1,200 to 2,000 degrees Fahrenheit.

- Set off fireworks outside, in a clear, flat, open area clear of combustible debris.
- Keep a water bucket or garden hose near the light-off location.
- Use water to extinguish deployed fireworks and then place them in a metal trash can.
- Do not relight duds.
- Soak the nonfunctioning firework in a water bucket before throwing it away.

The Illinois Insurance Association reminds residents to be cautious around fireworks in the coming weeks. Have a safe and happy holiday!

Kevin J. Martin
Springfield

Note to readers: Kevin J. Martin is executive director of the Illinois Insurance Association.

Write to us

Letters to the Editor should not be more than 500 words in length. The author of the letter must include his/her name, hometown and telephone number. The author's name and hometown will be published, however, the telephone number is only used to verify the authenticity of the author's signature and will not be published. Unsigned letters are never read or published.