



*The Maryland State Medical Society*

**News: For Immediate Release**

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## **PRACTICE SAFE AND RESPONSIBLE USE OF FIREWORKS THIS JULY 4<sup>TH</sup>**

BALTIMORE, June 29, 2015 — MedChi, The Maryland State Medical Society, wants to remind people to be safe and responsible while handling fireworks this 4<sup>th</sup> of July. Fireworks can be a fun and exciting way to celebrate our nation's freedom but they can also be harmful or even deadly if not used properly. According to [Fireworksafety.com](http://Fireworksafety.com), more than 65 percent of all fireworks-related injuries occur during the month of July. Of those, more than half are to the hands, fingers and eyes.

Remember to practice these common sense safety tips while using consumer fireworks in hopes of minimizing injuries:

- Parents and caretakers should always closely supervise teens if they are using fireworks.
- Always have an adult supervise fireworks activities. Parents don't realize that young children suffer injuries from sparklers. Sparklers burn at temperatures of about 2,000 degrees - hot enough to melt some metals.
- Fireworks should only be used outdoors.
- Keep a bucket of water or a garden hose handy in case of fire or other mishap.
- Avoid buying fireworks that are packaged in brown paper because this is often a sign that the fireworks were made for professional displays and that they could pose a danger to consumers.
- Obey local laws. If fireworks are not legal where you live, do not use them.
- Alcohol and fireworks do not mix. Save your alcohol for after the show.
- Light fireworks one at a time, then move back quickly.
- Never try to re-light or pick up fireworks that have not ignited fully.
- Avoid using homemade fireworks or illegal explosives: They can kill you!
- Report illegal explosives to the fire or police department.
- Soak spent fireworks with water before placing them in an outdoor, fire resistant garbage can away from buildings and flammable materials.
- Never point or throw fireworks at another person.
- Never carry fireworks in a pocket or shoot them off in metal or glass containers.

MedChi President, Dr. Tyler Cymet, says "fireworks can be dangerous, causing serious burns and eye injuries. You can help prevent fireworks-related injuries and deaths by following common sense safety rules this Fourth of July during holiday celebrations. Spectators should keep a safe distance from the shooter and the shooter should wear safety glasses and be aware of their surroundings making sure spectators are out of range of the fireworks being used.

### About MedChi

MedChi, The Maryland State Medical Society, is a non-profit membership association of Maryland physicians. Formed in 1799, it is still the largest physician organization in Maryland today. The mission of MedChi is to serve as Maryland's foremost advocate and resource for physicians, their patients and the public health of Maryland. For more information, please visit [www.medchi.org](http://www.medchi.org).