

July 1, 2022



## Celebrate Safely This Fourth of July



**Joseph Rettig, M.D.**

(SALEM, OHIO) – July 1, 2022 – Every Fourth of July, thousands of Americans are treated in hospital emergency departments for firework-related injuries.

“If not handled properly, fireworks can cause serious or even life-threatening injuries,” said Joseph Rettig, M.D., medical director of Salem Regional Medical Center’s Emergency Department. “These injuries often include severe burns; deep cuts; broken bones or trauma to the eyes, hands and fingers, head, neck, face and ears.”

Dr. Rettig noted that even fireworks some people might consider as being “safe” for children can be dangerous. “Sparklers can reach temperatures hot enough to melt gold and account for a significant number of injuries among young children,” he said.

Dr. Rettig recommends leaving the lighting of fireworks to trained professionals to ensure a safe Fourth of July celebration.

“The best way to prevent fireworks injuries is to enjoy public fireworks displays and not handle them yourself,” he advised.

Those choosing to use legal fireworks at home should follow these guidelines:

- Never use fireworks while impaired by drugs or alcohol
- Anyone using fireworks or standing nearby should wear protective eyewear
- Never hold lighted fireworks in your hands
- Never light fireworks indoors
- Only use fireworks away from people, houses and flammable material
- Never point or throw fireworks at another person
- Only light one firework at a time and maintain a safe distance after lighting
- Never ignite fireworks in a container
- Do not try to re-light or handle malfunctioning fireworks
- Soak both spent and unused fireworks in water for a few hours before discarding
- Keep a bucket of water nearby in case of emergencies
- Never experiment or make your own fireworks
- Avoid buying firework products in a brown paper bag, as they are likely for professional displays and not consumer use.