



Summertime celebrations have begun and the Fourth of July weekend is fast approaching. If you choose to celebrate with fireworks, the Michigan Poison and Drug Information Center at the Wayne State University School of Medicine advises you to stay safe during **National Fireworks Safety Month** and throughout the season.

Each July, poison centers across the country receive an increase in calls related to exposures to many types of fireworks. Fireworks contain a variety of poisonous chemicals such as arsenic, barium chlorate, phosphorus and potassium nitrate. The MiPDC advises everyone to avoid injuries and mishaps with these products. Do not ingest fireworks. Ingestion of fireworks can cause mild symptoms like upset stomach, vomiting and diarrhea. Life-threatening symptoms such as irregular heartbeat, difficulty breathing and seizures can develop with significant exposure.

According to the National Safety Council, the majority of burns related to fireworks treated in emergency departments occur in people younger than 20 years of age. Fireworks typically considered relatively safe for children, such as sparklers, burn at temperatures reaching 1,500 degrees Fahrenheit, and can cause severe injuries.

The MiPDC recommends the following safety tips to ensure your celebrations remain safe and enjoyable:

- Do not ingest fireworks
- Wear eye protection
- Avoid picking up lit fireworks
- Keep out of reach of young children
- Avoid letting small children handle fireworks, including sparklers
- Older children should be supervised by an adult when using fireworks
- Designate an area for the person setting off the fireworks, and prohibit anyone else from getting close
- Avoid lighting or using fireworks inside or near a house or garage
- Avoid lighting fireworks near other people or flammable materials and liquids
- Avoid attempting to re-light or handle fireworks that have malfunctioned
- Have a bucket of water nearby to fully extinguish fireworks, including those that have malfunctioned
- Light one firework item at a time
- Keep animals indoors in a quiet area
- Avoid using fireworks if you are using drugs or alcohol
- Avoid forcing anyone to vomit if fireworks have been ingested

The safest way to watch fireworks is by enjoying professional displays. Check your municipality's website to find professional fireworks displays near you or visit [www.michiganfireworks.com](http://www.michiganfireworks.com) for more statewide displays.

For questions about firework safety, or if someone has been exposed to fireworks, call the

**Michigan Poison and Drug Information Center**

**1-800-222-1222**

Fast, free and confidential expert advice from health care professionals