



SAFER CELEBRATING

By Kenwyn Caranna

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With the lack of professional fireworks displays because of COVID-19 restrictions, local fire officials are urging residents to think carefully before lighting their own — especially this year.

“Something that we have

encountered this year, that we probably have not encountered before, is the high rate of usage of hand sanitizer,” said Greensboro Deputy Fire Chief Dwayne Church.

That’s worrisome because hand sanitizer contains a high level of alcohol, which is flammable.

“Make sure that you wash your hands with soap and water before

you use fireworks,” Church said.

Although he urged people to avoid lighting fireworks altogether, if they do, he advised parents to not allow their children to handle sparklers.

“A sparkler burns at 1,200 degrees Fahrenheit, that’s really, really hot,” he said. “These fireworks, as harmless as they seem, can really cause a lot of injuries.”



ALERT!
Hand sanitizer is flammable!

1,200° F
Temperature of a sparkler (can be even higher)

900° F
Temperature at which some glass begins to melt

About 575° F
Temperature at which wood begins to burn

350° F
Cake-baking temperature

212° F
Temperature at which water boils

0° F

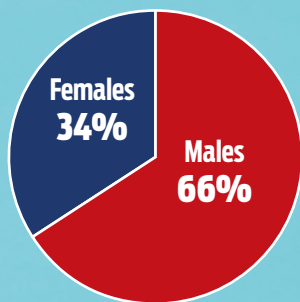
Sparklers account for about 12% of all emergency room fireworks injuries.*

What’s legal in North Carolina?

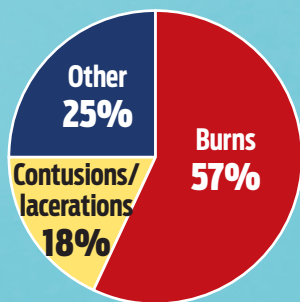
■ All fireworks that leave the ground or explode are illegal without a license, including bottle rockets, firecrackers and ground spinners. That leaves such things as sparklers, poppers, snake and glow worms, and smoke devices.



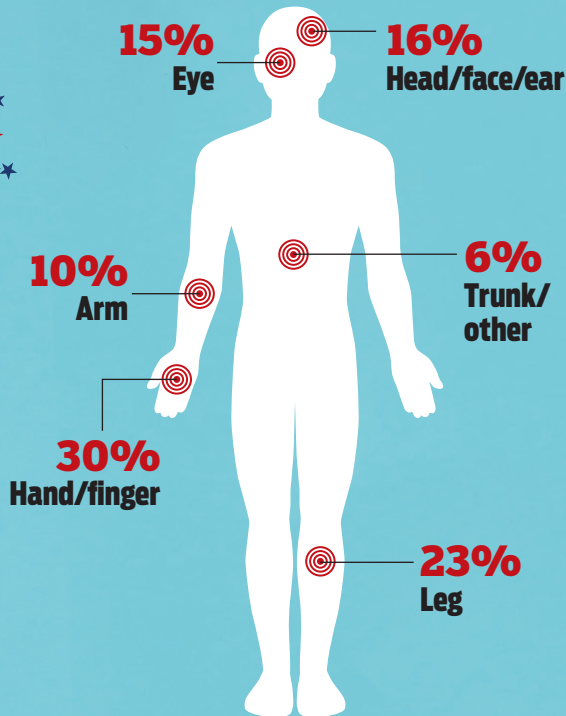
Injuries by gender



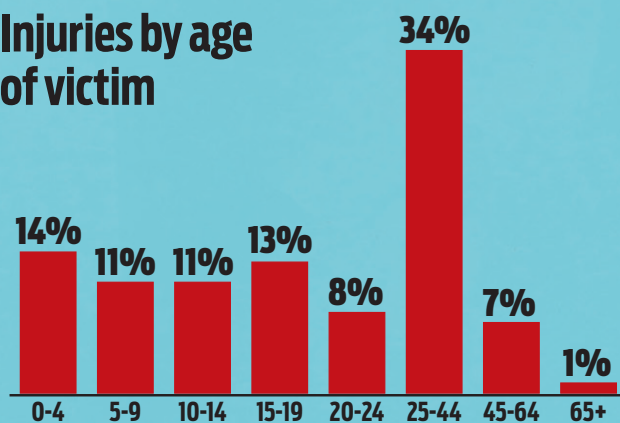
Types of injuries



Injuries by body part



Injuries by age of victim



19,500 The number of reported fires started annually by fireworks

Patriotic alternatives to fireworks

- Use glow sticks. They are a safer option than sparklers — and they also last longer!
- Noisemakers can make a loud statement. Just be mindful of neighbors (and pets who get anxious from noises), so wrap up the noisemaking early in the evening.

- Set up a screen and projector and have an outdoor movie night. Remember the bug spray!
- Have the whole family make a patriotic craft together or play a USA-themed trivia game.
- Throw a birthday party for the United States, complete with cake.

*During detailed study period of June 21 to July 21, 2019.