FASNY urges New Yorkers to play it safe this Fourth of July: Leave fireworks to the pros!

BY THE FIREMEN’S ASSOCIATION OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK

The Fourth of July may feel a little different this year due to COVID-19. Smaller barbecues, less parties and limited celebrations filled with displayed fireworks. Although sparklers and similar items can be bought and sold in much of New York, the Firemen’s Association of the State of New York urges residents to let professionals handle the fireworks.

FASNY reminds New Yorkers that, although sparklers may look harmless, and even toy-like, they are incredibly harmful and can cause serious injuries or deaths.

“Fireworks and sparkler devices are extremely dangerous in the hands of non-professionals,” FASNY President Steven Klein said. “Although they seem fun, fireworks and sparkler devices can cause serious bodily harm and even death. Fireworks should only be used by professionals who have undergone proper training.”

The tip of a sparkler burns at a temperature of nearly 2,000 degrees Fahrenheit, which can cause severe third-degree burns. According to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), sparklers cause roughly 25% of all fireworks-related emergency room visits, the most of any type of fireworks device. A 2019 report from the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission shows that, in 2018, fireworks were involved in an estimated 9,100 injuries. Between June and July of 2018, emergency rooms treated 5,000 patients for fireworks-related injuries. Children under the age of 15 accounted for 35% of these injuries. According to the report, 44% of the emergency department-treated injuries were burns, with the most common injury to hands, fingers and arms.

“Rather than take the risk of getting hurt, FASNY is urging New Yorkers to either attend a fireworks display in their town or county – while maintaining proper protocols – or to watch one of the professional shows that will be «replayed» or live-streamed,” Klein said.

He added, “On behalf of the Firemen’s Association of the State of New York, and all of the dedicated firefighters who serve the Empire State, we wish everyone a happy, healthy and safe Fourth of July. And should there be an emergency or unsafe situation, we urge everyone to call 911. It’s better to be safe than sorry.”

About FASNY

Founded in 1872, the Firemen’s Association of the State of New York represents the interests of the more than 90,000 volunteer firefighters and emergency medical personnel in New York state. For more information, visit www.fasny.com.