

## IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 30, 2011

### **The U.S. Fire Administration and Safe Kids USA Encourage Everyone to Practice Fire Safety During Independence Day Celebrations**

EMMITSBURG, MD – The U.S. Fire Administration (USFA) and Safe Kids USA are encouraging families and individuals to prepare for a safe and memorable Fourth of July by practicing safe grilling and leaving the fireworks to the professionals.

“Independence Day is a major highlight of the summer and for many people there’s a lot of excitement around setting off colorful fireworks and starting up the grill,” said Deputy U.S. Fire Administrator Glenn Gaines. Meri-K Appy, President, Safe Kids USA joins Deputy Administrator Gaines in urging all Americans to have a fun and safe weekend. “We are reminding everyone of simple steps they can take to protect their children who are most vulnerable to fire-related burns, injuries, and deaths,” says Appy.

#### ***Fireworks***

Many children and adults are fascinated by fireworks, but they can be extremely dangerous. According to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission’s (CPSC) [annual death and injury report](#) (PDF, 325 Kb) on fireworks, approximately 40 percent of fireworks injuries occur to children younger than 15 years of age. In addition, CPSC received reports of three fatalities related to fireworks in 2010.

The best way to protect your family and friends is not to use any fireworks at home. Attend public fireworks displays and leave the lighting to the professionals.

#### **Fireworks Fire Safety Tips**

- Sparklers are not toys. They can reach 2,000° Fahrenheit--hot enough to melt some metals.
- Leave pieces of fireworks on the ground after an event. Some may still be ignited and can explode.
- Stand several feet away from the professionals lighting fireworks; fireworks have been known to backfire or shoot off in the wrong direction.

For more information, please visit the USFA’s [Focus on Fire Safety: Fireworks](#) webpage and Safe Kids USA at [www.safekids.org](http://www.safekids.org).

#### ***Grilling***

Every Fourth of July Americans look forward to picnics, camping, and other outdoor activities. The holiday, however, also brings fires and injuries due to outdoor cooking. By taking a few fire safety precautions, you can ensure that everyone enjoys a safe Independence Day.

#### **Grilling Fire Safety Tips**

- Propane and charcoal BBQ grills must only be used outdoors. If used indoors, or in any enclosed spaces such as tents, they pose a fire hazard and a risk of exposing occupants to deadly carbon monoxide poisoning.
- Place the grill a safe distance from lawn games, play areas, and foot traffic. Grills should be positioned at least 10 feet away from siding, deck railing, and out from under eaves and overhanging branches.
- Keep matches, lighters, and starter fluid out of the reach of children in a locked drawer or cabinet.
- Keep children and pets away from the grill area: declare a three-foot "kid-free zone" around the grill.
- Use long barbeque mitts and long-handled grilling tools to protect the chef from heat and flames when cooking.
- Periodically remove grease or fat buildup in trays below the grill so it cannot be ignited by a hot grill.

For more information, please visit Safe Kids USA at [www.safekids.org](http://www.safekids.org) and the USFA’s [Focus on Fire Safety: Summer Fire Safety](#) webpage.

To arrange an interview with a USFA official, please contact Christy Bennett at (202) 842-3600 ([cbennett@hagerssharp.com](mailto:cbennett@hagerssharp.com)).

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*U.S. Fire Administration Mission Statement*

**We provide national leadership to foster a solid foundation for local fire and emergency services  
for  
prevention, preparedness and response.**