



**For Immediate Release**

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**APA Credits Safety Groups for Record Low Injury Rate**

***Active Safety Program, Product Testing, and Strict Adherence to Regulations  
Leads to Lowest Injury Rate Ever***

Bethesda, Maryland, June 16, 2004 --Since 1976, when the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) promulgated the current federal standards for consumer fireworks, the fireworks-related injury rate has fallen by a startling **88%**, setting a 28-year low. Amazingly, this has occurred while fireworks usage has skyrocketed during the same time period. Fireworks usage has increased 661% from 29.0 million pounds in 1976 to over 220 million pounds in 2003, whereas the injury rate has dropped dramatically from 38.3 injuries per 100,000 pound of fireworks to 4.4 injuries per 100,000 pounds of fireworks.

Julie L. Heckman, Executive Director of the American Pyrotechnics Association (APA), credits the fireworks industry along with safety groups including the American Fireworks Standards Laboratory (AFSL) and the National Council on Fireworks Safety (NCFS) for the sharp decline in injuries. The combined efforts of the AFSL and NCFS working with industry, along with thorough enforcement by the CPSC, has helped ensure that the fireworks available today are the highest quality and safest ever made. "The efforts made by these organizations to ensure that only the safest products enter the marketplace and that consumers have access to important safety information, has resulted in an astonishing decline in fireworks injuries. The results achieved to date by these organizations are commendable," says Heckman.

Added John D. Rogers, AFSL's Executive Director, "when the AFSL was founded in 1989, the level of understanding of and compliance with the U.S. fireworks regulations was alarmingly low. It has taken a sustained commitment by the U.S. industry in reducing the potential risks of injury associated with fireworks, as well as broad acceptance by the China manufacturers of the AFSL standards and testing program, to achieve the dramatic reduction in injuries and quality improvements that are so evident today."

"The fireworks industry has witnessed unprecedented growth during the past decade and has responded with an enhanced resolve to ensure that these devices are manufactured, distributed and used in a safe manner," said Heckman. The APA is appreciative and supportive of the roles that AFSL, NCFS and CPSC have played in reducing fireworks injuries. "We are extremely proud of the dramatic decline in fireworks-related injuries and we look forward to a long partnership with these safety organizations to promote public safety and further reduce fireworks injuries," Ms. Heckman said.

**About the American Pyrotechnics Association**

The APA is the leading trade association of the fireworks industry. The APA supports and promotes safety standards for all aspects of fireworks. The APA has a diverse membership including regulated and licensed manufacturers, distributors, wholesalers, retailers, importers and suppliers of fireworks, and professional display firms. Additional information about the fireworks industry, facts & figures, and state laws, can be found on APA's web site at [www.americanpyro.com](http://www.americanpyro.com)

**About the American Fireworks Standards Laboratory**

The AFSL is an independent, non-profit organization established by members of the fireworks industry to reduce the potential risks of injury associated with consumer fireworks products. The AFSL administers design and performance standards developed and maintained by its Standards Committee comprised of representatives from the fireworks and insurance industries, federal and state regulatory authorities, consumers and technical experts. Additionally, the AFSL tests fireworks products for its members at the factory level in China to confirm conformance with its standards prior to export to the United States. For more information contact the AFSL at (301) 907-9115 or [afslhq@afsl.org](mailto:afslhq@afsl.org)

**About the National Council on Fireworks Safety**

The NCFS is a non-profit organization that conducts educational safety campaigns and produces safety materials aimed at educating the public, media and public safety officials about the safe use of fireworks. The NCFS distributes safety pamphlets, videos, public service announcements and conducts an annual media outreach program. Additional information about the NCFS can be found on their web site at [www.fireworksafety.com](http://www.fireworksafety.com)

**U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission Links :**

Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) Regulations:

<http://www.cpsc.gov/BUSINFO/regsumfirework.PDF>

CPSC Safety Tips:

<http://www.cpsc.gov/CPSCPUB/PUBS/july4/4thjuly.html>

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