



For Immediate Release

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Backyard Fireworks Retailers Anticipate Strong Fourth of July Season

Bethesda, MD, June 21, 2006 — As the Fourth of July approaches, consumer or backyard fireworks retailers are stocking up and bracing for another strong year of sales and profits.

According to the American Pyrotechnics Association, backyard fireworks have never been more popular or more in demand.

The association attributes the increase in fireworks use to an upsurge of patriotism, as fireworks are historically a symbol of American independence, and to an overall improvement in the quality and variety of fireworks available today.

Julie L. Heckman, Executive Director of the American Pyrotechnics Association, said that the fireworks available today are the highest quality, safest, and most spectacular ever made. All of today's consumer fireworks meet stringent safety standards set by the Consumer Product Safety Commission, Ms. Heckman said. "Even though the majority of fireworks are produced in China, they must conform to U.S. Government safety standards or they cannot be imported and sold here."

According to Heckman, growth in backyard fireworks use is unprecedented. Since 2000 the use of backyard fireworks has more than doubled. In 2000, Americans used 102 million pounds of backyard fireworks. By 2004, backyard fireworks usage climbed to 212 million pounds. And in 2005, the industry experienced the largest increase ever reported in a single year — over 43 million pounds — bringing the backyard fireworks consumption total to 255 million pounds!

Other factors contributing to the significant growth in backyard fireworks use is that more states than ever before allow the sale of backyard fireworks, now legal in 45 states and the District of Columbia. Heckman said that there has also been significant growth in the number of retail venues where the public can purchase fireworks. "Members of the fireworks industry have expanded their territories with more permanent fireworks stores, temporary stands, and tents as well as big box or general merchandise stores offering fireworks for sale," says Heckman.

Fireworks retailers are optimistic that this year will be another record breaking year for fireworks sales and they encourage the public to celebrate safely!

For information on how to safely enjoy fireworks, please visit the National Council on Fireworks Safety web site at www.fireworksafety.com

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 public display firms. Additional information about the fireworks industry, facts & figures, history of fireworks, and state laws, can be found on APA's web site at www.americanpyro.com