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**4<sup>th</sup> of July Weekend: Play It Safe**  
**Injuries from fireworks a major concern for the holiday**

(MADISON) – The 4<sup>th</sup> of July and fireworks just go together. With the holiday weekend approaching this is a great time to remember the dangers of fireworks which can cause serious injuries and death if not properly used.

- In 2009, doctors treated 8,800 fireworks-related injuries in U.S. hospital emergency rooms.
- 39% of those victims were under the age of 15.
- 53% of the injuries were to extremities like hands, arms and legs.
- 84% of the injuries involved fireworks that Federal regulations permit people to use.
- 18,000 fires were started by fireworks resulting in 30 injuries and \$38 million in direct property damage.

(Courtesy National Fire Protection Association)

But you can protect yourself and your family by knowing these simple facts and tips:

- NEVER allow children to play with or ignite fireworks.
- Young children often suffer injuries from sparklers which burn at about 2,000 degrees, hot enough to melt some metals.
- Adults igniting the fireworks should always wear eye protection and never have any part of the body over the firework.
- Only buy fireworks from reliable sellers.
- Use fireworks only outdoors.
- Be sure other people are out of range before lighting fireworks.
- Always have water handy (a garden hose or a bucket).
- Light fireworks on a smooth, flat surface away from buildings, dry leaves and flammable materials.
- Light only one firework at a time.
- Never throw or point fireworks at other people or animals.
- Keep your pets indoors to reduce the risk that they will run loose and get injured. Many animals have very sensitive ears and can be stressed or frightened due to the lighting of fireworks.

The best advice, leave the fireworks displays to trained professionals. Then sit back and “ohhh...ahhh” as you enjoy the show!