



PRESS RELEASE

Date: June 20, 2011

Contact: Neal Olson, Operation Chief/PIO

Subject: 11 YEAR OLD BOY INJURED WHILE PLAYING WITH ILLEGAL FIREWORKS

On Thursday, June 16, 2011, Polk County Fire District No. 1 emergency units were dispatched to a report of an eleven (11) year old male that had a firecracker go off in his hand. Arriving Paramedics found the visibly shaken and injured boy on his front porch being cared for by a neighbor with substantial burns and abrasions to the left hand and fingers.

In interviewing the boy, it was determined that he had found a single firecracker in his home, lit it with the kitchen stove, and while attempting to throw the firecracker, it exploded in his hand, causing the injury.

"This young man was very lucky," stated Fire Marshal Jeff Donahue. "The injuries to his hand, though painful, are not that severe and will heal with some time. In many incidences like this, we see missing fingers and deep burns that require surgery to repair."

"I can't stress enough, especially with the 4th of July right around the corner, do not buy or use illegal fireworks," continued Fire Marshal Donahue. "Even the Safe and Sane labeled fireworks that can be bought at our local retail outlets require safe practices and adult supervision. Sparklers and fireworks designed to throw off showers of sparks can easily exceed 1200 degrees."

According to the National Fire Protection Association, nationally in 2009, fireworks caused an estimated 18,000 reported fires, including 1,300 structure

fires, 400 vehicle fires, and 16,300 outside and other fires. These fires resulted in 30 civilian injuries and \$38 million in direct property damage. Also, in 2009, U.S. hospital emergency rooms treated an estimated 8,800 people for fireworks related injuries; the majority of these injuries are to the hands and fingers.

“The best word of advice,” says Fire Marshal Donahue, “leave the fireworks to the professionals, and enjoy the great public displays over the 4th, especially here during our Independence Days event.”

The injured boy was treated on the scene by paramedics and released to his father who was transporting him to the hospital for further evaluation and treatment. No citations were issued for possession of the illegal firework.