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Report of the State Fire Marshal's Office on the Sale and Use of Consumer Fireworks in Maine for 2014

Maine Office of the State Fire Marshal

Maine Department of Public Safety

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**STATE OF MAINE
127th LEGISLATURE
FIRST REGULAR SESSION**

**REPORT OF THE STATE FIRE MARSHAL'S OFFICE ON THE SALE and USE OF CONSUMER
FIREWORKS IN MAINE FOR 2014**

Joint Standing Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety

MARCH 2015

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Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The use, possession or sale of consumer fireworks became legal with the passage of Chapter 416, LD 83 “An Act to Legalize the Sale, Possession and Use of Fireworks” during the first session of the 125th Maine Legislature. The law took effect on January 1, 2012.

In 2014 the Office of State Fire Marshal (FMO) attempted to gather better data on fireworks-related injuries and burns by working with the Bureau of Emergency Medical Services (EMS) to get data from their reporting system. Data reports from the EMS system started being sent to the Maine Fire Marshal on January 22, 2014. Any EMS reports that are entered with a code involving fireworks are now automatically sent to the Fire Marshal. However, the drawback to this data source is that the EMS data only records those injured people that are transported by an ambulance.

LICENSING

In 2014, nineteen stores were successfully licensed for a total of \$39,000.00. This includes four new stores that were licensed in 2014.

TOWN ORDINANCES

As required in statute, municipalities choosing to restrict or prohibit the sale and or use of consumer fireworks, or those permitting the sale of consumer fireworks must provide the FMO with a copy of the ordinance. At the conclusion of 2014, the FMO had received a total of 76 municipal ordinances, which was an increase of 6 ordinances from 2013. The ordinance documents are available from the FMO website at this webpage: <http://www.maine.gov/dps/fmo/fireworks/ordinances.htm>.

CONSUMER FIREWORKS-RELATED INJURIES AND FIRES

A single voluntary injury report was created in 2014 (Appendix A) to capture fireworks injury data from hospitals and clinics. Nine injury reports were sent to the FMO in 2014, which was an increase of two from the seven reports submitted in 2013. The FMO collected information from the EMS reporting system on eleven injury or fire-related incidents in 2014, and some of these incidents may have been included in the nine injury reports that were sent to the office. The EMS reports only collect data on those people transported by an ambulance, and don't capture data on injured people who self-transport to a hospital or who don't go to a health care provider at all. As a result of potential injury reporting uncertainty, the reported number of injuries is not considered by the FMO to be accurate injury data.

There were a total of eleven fires reported by Maine's fire departments to be caused by fireworks in 2014, which was an increase of three fires from 2013.

Appendix A: Injury Reporting Form

**MAINE FIRE MARSHAL'S OFFICE
CONSUMER FIREWORKS INJURY REPORT**



The Office of the Fire Marshal would greatly appreciate the assistance of Maine's medical community in tracking consumer fireworks related injuries. The purpose of reporting these injuries is to assist the Fire Marshal in developing any necessary statutory, rule, or policy changes essential to minimizing the frequency of fireworks injuries in Maine. For more information call (207) 626-3873. Thank you.

Demographic Information:

Hospital/Clinic Name: _____

Date of Injury (month/day/year): _____

Municipality in which the injury occurred: _____

Age

0 – 4 5 – 14 15 – 20 21 - 25 26 – 44 45 and older

Type of Device:

- Hand-held (sparkler, firecracker, roman candle, smoke bomb, ground spinner)
- Display (stationary mortar, wheel, missile rocket, fountain)
- Other _____

Reason for Injury:

- Bystander (not involved with igniting device)
- User error (mishandled, relit fuse, device not set up correctly, throwing, etc.)
- Device malfunctioned (errant flight pattern, uncontained explosion)
- Other _____

Severity of Injury (circle one only)

1. No injury
2. Minor (1st degree burn, minor cut (no stitches), bruising)
3. Moderate (2nd degree burn, laceration (stitches), broken bone)
4. Significant injury (3rd degree burn, partial or total loss of digit, hearing or sight)
5. Fatality

Body Part Injured (check one):

- Head/face
- Extremity
- Torso

Comments

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FOR AN ONLINE POSTING OF THIS FORM AND MORE INFORMATION ON CONSUMER FIREWORKS IN MAINE SEE: <http://www.maine.gov/dps/fmo/fireworks/index.html>