Fact sheet

Fireworks safety – sparklers

The danger of sparklers comes through underestimating their potential to burn and expecting that all children will be responsible. It's no coincidence that the only fireworks given directly to children, leads to firework accidents.

The following incident was reported to NT WorkSafe following Territory Day celebrations:

> *It was the evening of July 1 - Territory Day. The family had gathered to enjoy the celebrations together. All the fireworks we had purchased were legal fireworks, and the night was underway as we stood back to watch as one of the adults lit the fireworks. My six year old grandson was enjoying the show and between fireworks we gave him a lit sparkler with strict instructions to hold it out in front of him and not to run around with it. When the sparkler had finished burning, we hadn't realised he threw the spent sparkler which landed in his baby brother's pram. Within two minutes the lining of the pram had melted and the pram burst into flames. The only positive to this event was the fact that his baby brother had been taken out of the pram five minutes earlier. We realized how close we had come to a fun night becoming a tragedy.*

We know that warnings about sparklers can be boring, especially if you assume they're one of the safest fireworks. But sparklers can be dangerous; they may cause injuries requiring trips to the hospital. Sparklers can heat over 1000 degrees Celsius. That's hot enough to melt gold! The truth is ignorance accounts for the majority of accidents. People simply do not realise how HOT these get, or that they remain hot after use. That's when people get burnt. Children especially have no way of knowing how hot sparklers can stay.

The pictures below show you HOW HOT we mean:

On the left a finished sparkler is pressed against a PVC plastic tube... notice no flame, but as you can see on the right, the sparkler simply cuts its way into the tube.

Imagine what that could do to skin or clothing.

Always dispose of sparkler carefully, preferably in a bucket of water or sand.

Temperature Comparison (Celsius)

- Sparklers: ~1,000°C – 1,600°C+
- Melting Point of Glass: ~900°C
- Blowtorch: ~1,000°C - 1,500°C
- Iron Melting Point: ~1,500°C
- Wood Fire: ~575°C
- Oven Heating Element: ~815°C
- Boiling Water: 100°C
- Human Body: 37°C

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