

2016 Fireworks "Accidents" – again
July 4th, 2016

Damn, its that time of year again. I look forward to it – and I dread it at the same time because I know that Fourth of July Celebrations will bring the inevitable Fireworks horror stories. In Ojai, California, we saw a virtual replay of the Charles City, Iowa 'accident' – shells firing into the crowd as in Charles City – and the same number – 37 more people injured because someone didn't do it right.

As always, the anti-Fireworks groups, and even some so-called proponents of Fireworks like the APA are blaming Fireworks instead of the real causes. No one will step up and just say "Hey – I'm the one who did this – I just used Fireworks as the tool." That would be so refreshing to hear someone just speak the Truth for once.

In New York's Central Park a couple of days ago, someone left a plastic bag with "something" in it laying out on some rocks. A guy either stepped on it (most people wouldn't have), or in some way disturbed it (I think he must have kicked it), and set it off, blowing his foot off in the process. Police definitely have more info than they are letting out, and have already blamed a "Fireworks Hobbyist" for leaving the bag there. They were also very quick to point out that this was not an act of terror on the part of some group.

OK – so what follows is pure conjecture on my part: Someone may have mixed a batch of Flash Powder, got cold feet for whatever reasons, and (very stupidly) put it into a garbage bag, or some similar type of Plastic bag which conducts static electricity, and dumps it right off the beaten path thinking it will be alright there. An unsuspecting victim comes along and either seeing the bag and kicks it to see what was up with it, or not seeing it does actually step on it – either way – BOOM.

No matter what happened –

(A: Fireworks AND Fireworks Hobbyists are illegal in New York.

(B: You never put any composition (unstable or not), in a plastic bag

(C: You never leave it unattended.

(D: A Plastic bag is NEVER an appropriate storage container.

Then, we have the "normal" horror stories – a 9 (yes that's NINE) year old girl (what the hell, was a 9 yo child doing playing, unattended, with Fireworks anyway?), blew her hand off while (evidently) holding it as it went off. Not a "normal" use of a Firework device – but hey – its the Firework's Fault – right? Another, in the Simi Valley area was that a man (an innocent – not even an onlooker), was at home, when a Shell (Shot sideways) struck him between the eyes. He received 15 stitches to close the wound. Again – ignore the Fact that should your rack fall over – for whatever reason – that it did not meet Safety Codes – and – blame the Firework for functioning as it was intended to, and yet somehow "causing" the accident.

A man in Lowell, IN set off a Firework. It failed to ignite. He walked up to see what was wrong and STOOD OVER IT. It went off – it killed him. Yep – blame the Firework (maybe it was manufactured wrong?), after all they aren't supposed to blow out of a tube at 200+ miles per hour are they? And; you ARE supposed to stand over them while lit – right? Oh yeah – they are, and oh yeah – you are not.

A man in Grand Traverse, MI also stood over a lit tube. This Rhode Scholar was lucky. He “only” had part of his junk blown off (makes a great bedroom story – huh?). Once more, don’t blame the guy standing over the lit tube – its the Firework.

In Valley, NE a 31 year old man had his hand blown off – and some 90 feet away from the rest of him, by lighting and holding a Firework device. His left eye was also bloodied and swollen. This too is an obvious sign of a Fireworks Malfunction. ALL Fireworks Devices are labeled: Light Fuse. Stay where you are. Hold in Hand. (Yeah – right.)

At the Muckleshoot Casino, about 20 Miles South of Seattle, WA, two men BOTH lost their hands in two separate instances (one about 10:30, one about 11pm), on Monday as well. The commonalities? Both were at the Casino, both lost a hand, and both abused/misused the Firework. Fireworks were NOT the cause – THEY were.

Even the cops are not immune. In the Chicago’s 17th District PD, a fellow officer (presumably), placed an unknown Fireworks Device in a toilet – set to blow when the toilet was used. An unidentified Officer went to a nearby ER when it did. It is not known if a fan was involved, but the **** at least – did hit the wall.

I apologize for my facetious nature and snide comments – but do you see a commonality here? Year after year, people do dumb things that cost them either body parts, or their lives, and we blame the FIREWORK. Substitute the word gun for Fireworks in any of these scenarios to fully appreciate the lack of thinking on their parts.

Some “News” agencies (who have not the slightest clue about Fireworks), claim that since 2000, Fireworks Laws have become more relaxed, and Injuries have gone up – Wow. OK, for those out there who ‘link’ these two things together, let me attempt to explain. Everyone MUST be treated as Equals under the Law (its one of the most basic tenets of Law), so when a Law is countermanded altogether, or even “relaxed”, it must apply to everyone. ANYONE over the Legal Age of 21 (for Federal Law), is LAWFULLY ENTITLED to purchase whatever the Feds mandate regardless of their competency to use (think guns in the hands of a mentally unbalanced individual) – tragic but it happens. If a person (anyone) over the age of 21, Legally buys a Firework Device (which can ALL potentially kill), and has no clue as to how to Safely use it, or intentionally abuses it – what do you think will happen?

As I’ve said over and over again – countless times – the one and only way to SAFELY use a Firework Device is to know, and understand it. Lacking training, there is no way to reduce injuries/death. It’s really simple. Those who are trained and respect Fireworks for what they are WILL be Safer. Those who don’t are WAY more likely to become Statistics. Government cares about MONEY, NOT PEOPLE. You have to look after you – no one else will.

I would hazard a guess that if you knew the details of each of the Firework ‘accident’ stories of 2016 (or ANY year for that matter), that unless you have the IQ of a wet washrag, you would HAVE to acknowledge that: Yes – Fireworks ARE dangerous – when you use them incorrectly. Fireworks ARE dangerous – when you abuse them. Fireworks ARE dangerous – when you misuse them. And; Fireworks ARE dangerous – when you don’t have a clue.

Get training – and do NOT abuse/misuse Fireworks.