Top Tips to keep safe this Halloween

Top Tips to keep safe this Halloween

As Autumn descends, there are usually so many festivities to look forward to, this year things will certainly be very different but for those who may be planning some excitement for little ones over Halloween it is important to be aware of the risks, so that you can protect yourself and your children and ensure your evening is memorable for all the right reasons. In this guide we aim to give you with some top tips to keep safe this Halloween if you are using fireworks or building bonfires.

Each year the fire and ambulance services are called to incidences at bonfires and injuries connected to the use of fireworks. Fireworks are items which burn and explode to produce noise or a visual effect for entertainment including sparklers, bangers, fountains and rockets. Most fireworks can only be bought and used by professional, licenced operators. Only the least dangerous fireworks can be sold to the general public. Fireworks are dangerous and you need a licence to import them to Ireland. The way they are stored and sold is regulated by laws on explosives ***(www.citizensinformation.ie).***

If you are planning to have a firework display in your home, it is vital that the fireworks you purchase conform to EU Standard and it is essential that they are suitable for the size of your garden. You should always have at hand:

- an appropriately stocked first aid kit
- a bottle of sterile saline to irrigate eyes if sparks are blown into them
- a bucket of sand to put out fireworks safely, easy access to plenty of water, and a fire blanket.

Never return to a firework that has not gone off and keep everyone, especially young children far away from the site of ignition.

Top Tips to keep safe this Halloween – Sparklers

- Sparklers can be lots of fun, however they can get up to six times as

hot as a pan of cooking oil, that is over 900 degrees Celsius, and have the potential to cause some serious damage.
- Children under 5 years old should not be allowed to use sparklers and children older than this should be supervised at all times, ensuring they remain a safe distance away from others.
- Be particularly careful with children in fancy dress, as costumes are rarely fire resistant. Sparklers should be lit one at a time and you should always wear gloves.

No matter how careful or prepared you are, injuries can still happen. The following first aid advice covers the most common eventualities.

Minor burns

- If someone is burnt and the affected area is larger than the size of the casualty's hand, you should seek medical help immediately.
- All deep burns of any size will require urgent hospital treatment.
- Special care should be taken if the burn is on a young child or an elderly person.
- Hold the affected area under cold, running water for a minimum of 15 minutes.
- Once the burn has been cooled for a minimum of 15 minutes, the burn can be covered with cling film or a burns dressing.
- Never rush to dress a burn. The most important treatment is to cool the burn under cool running water

Clothing on fire

- If clothing goes on fire remember to **STOP, DROP, WRAP and ROLL**
- **Stop** the person who's clothing is on fire from panicking or running as any movement or breeze will fan the flames causing them to spread.
- **Drop** the casualty to the ground and **wrap** them in a blanket, coat, or rug. Check that the fabrics are not flammable before doing this.
- **Roll** the casualty along the ground until the flames have been smothered.

Severe burns

- A severe burn exposes the casualty to a greater risk of infection, hypothermia and shock.
- Dial 999 or 112 for an ambulance.
- Start cooling the burn immediately under cool running water. Ensure you are cooling the burn and not the casualty, keep areas that are not burnt as warm and dry as possible.
- Use a shower or hose if the burns are large.
- Keep cooling the burn while waiting for professional help to arrive.
- The area should be cooled for a minimum of 15 minutes.
- Make the casualty as comfortable as possible.
- Where appropriate, lie them down and elevate their legs.
- Whilst cooling the area try remove any constricting items such as jewellery or clothing from the affected area, in case the area swells. Do not remove any clothing that is stuck to the burn.
- Do not
    - touch the burn,
    - use lotions, ointments and creams,
    - pop or puncture blisters,
    - use adhesive dressings.

In the event of smoke inhalation

- Move the casualty away from the smoke so they can breathe in some fresh air.
- Help them sit down in a comfortable position and loosen any tight clothing around their neck to help them breathe normally.
- Call 999/112 for an ambulance if they do not recover quickly.

In the event of an eye injuries

- Debris and sparks from the fireworks may land in the eye and this can cause extreme discomfort.
- Always wear sterile gloves or wash your hands thoroughly before touching the affected area.

- Open the casualty’s eye and look carefully.
- If you see anything embedded in the eye, cover both eyes and phone for an ambulance.
- If you can see an object moving freely in the eye, use a sterile eye wash and gently irrigate the eye to remove it.
- If the casualty is still in pain or discomfort seek medical advice.

Please note this information provided by Donegal Safety Services Ltd is basic and shortened. Donegal Safety Services Ltd is not responsible or liable for any actions taken based on this information. To make detailed decisions about your fire safety provisions, you might require further advice or need to consult the full standards and legislation. Any changes made to standards of legalisation following article date will not have been considered.

Hope you enjoyed this article on top tips to keep safe this Halloween. Why not have a look at our article on ***fire safety in the home*** which stresses how important it is that your home is fully adapted for fire safety and that you and your family are fully aware of what to do the event of an emergency.