



For Immediate Release:

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Backyard Fireworks are Safer and More Popular than Ever

Bethesda, MD, June 17, 2008 – As July 4th approaches, consumers are visiting the thousands of fireworks retail establishments across the nation to stock up for their backyard Independence Day celebrations.

According to the American Pyrotechnics Association (APA), backyard fireworks have never been more popular or more in demand. Since 2000, the use of backyard fireworks has more than doubled. In 2000, Americans used 102 million pounds of backyard fireworks. In 2007, Americans used over 238 million pounds!

Fireworks industry revenue soared to \$930 million in 2007, with backyard fireworks sales representing \$620 million. In comparison, in 2000, industry revenue reached \$610 million with backyard fireworks sales representing approximately \$400 million.

The association attributes the significant increase in fireworks use to an upsurge of patriotism, as fireworks are historically a symbol of American Independence, and to an overall improvement in the quality and variety of fireworks available today.

Julie L. Heckman, Executive Director of the APA, said that the backyard fireworks available today are the highest quality, safest and most spectacular ever made. All of today's consumer fireworks meet stringent safety standards set by the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission.

According to Heckman, growth in backyard fireworks use is unprecedented. In addition to patriotism, other factors contributing to the significant growth in backyard fireworks use include Americans' fascination with the 500 gram cake devices –the fastest growing segment of the retail sales firework market. These devices allow the “average Joe” to safely put on a dazzling display at home similar in style to the beautiful aerial displays orchestrated by trained professionals.

While these devices first debuted in 1998, their popularity has skyrocketed during the past several years, now representing about 25% of all backyard fireworks sales. Although these are the most powerful pyrotechnics legally available for the backyard user, they have an outstanding safety and performance history. “The really good news”, according to Heckman, “is that during this period of rapid growth, the fireworks-related injury rate had declined sharply from 7.2 injuries per 100,000 pounds of fireworks used in 2000 to 3.3 injuries per 100,000 pounds in 2006”.

About the American Pyrotechnics Association

The APA is the leading trade association of the fireworks industry. The APA supports and promotes safety standards for all aspects of fireworks. The APA has a diverse membership including regulated and licensed manufacturers, distributors, wholesalers, retailers, importers and suppliers of fireworks and professional public display firms. Additional information about the fireworks industry, facts & figures, history of fireworks, state laws, and safety tips can be found on APA's website at www.americanpyro.com

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