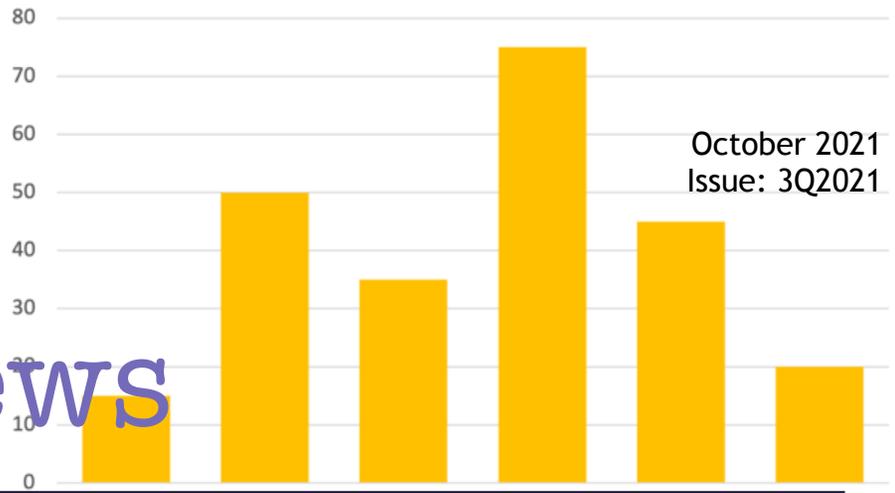




# AFSL News



## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

1. Rogers Recieves Joel Anderson Award
2. Task Group Investigates Hand Injuries
3. The Cost of Poor Quality
4. Compliance Certificate Update
5. By the Numbers
6. On the Calendar
7. Board of Directors Election Results

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## Industry Honors John Rogers' Achievements

By Jay Howell

During the recent APA Conference, the newly created *Joel Anderson American Fireworks Standards Laboratory Fireworks Industry Safety Award* was presented to John Rogers in recognition of his years of service to the fireworks industry and his commitment to the safety of the American consumer.

While John was unable to attend the conference, he recorded a video of his acceptance remarks. John received a standing ovation after sharing his fond recollections of Joel and inspiring comments on the future of the industry and AFSL.

This memorial award honors Joel Anderson and his commitment to the industry and its customers by recognizing someone in the industry who has advanced AFSL's mission of fireworks safety. In 1989, a group of fireworks industry leaders headed by Joel Anderson, formed the American Fireworks Standards Laboratory (AFSL) to ensure safe products were being imported into the United States.



## **AFSL Standards Committee Task Group to Investigate Hand Injuries**

*By Jerry Wingard*

So far this year, AFSL has investigated forty-two incidents reportedly associated with fireworks. Our investigation determined the incidents resulted in eighteen severe trauma injuries to the hands, including the loss of hands and fingers. Evidence indicates the possibility that other reported traumatic injuries, reported as firecracker-related incidents, should be included in the scope of our hand injury work. To better understand the possible causes of these types of fireworks-related incidents, and to generate approaches that could reduce the risk associated with these incidents, AFSL has formed a task group to work on this issue and report their findings to the AFSL Standards Committee and the AFSL Board of Directors.

The Task Group members currently include Jay Howell, Chris Musto, Graham Walsh and Jerry Wingard. Initially, they have been charged with working on hazard scenarios presenting an elevated risk of severe hand injuries resulting from the handling of discarded reloadable shells. Our investigations revealed that almost half of the reported forty-two incidents reviewed resulted in the loss of hands and fingers. The devices reportedly involved in the incidents we reviewed were not all large shells; some were single-break ball shells as seen in the photograph below.

The Task Group continues to develop ideas on ways to reasonably mitigate the risk of fireworks-related hand injuries and welcomes all ideas and suggestions from AFSL members.



Two teenagers relight a single break ball shell, which resulted in the loss of a hand and fingers.

## The Cost of Poor Quality – COPQ

*By William Zhou*

As the fireworks industry resumed production in September, after a well-deserved summer break, manufacturers found themselves faced with significant increases in the costs of their key chemicals and other raw materials.

These types of pricing pressures are challenging, but not new, to those who have been in manufacturing for many years. The experienced manufacturer will address these increases, in part, by carefully managing those costs that they can control, such as the cost associated with scrap, rework, and rejected product.

We understand that all our manufacturers are working hard to continue to produce safe and compliant product for their customers and we encourage manufacturers to avoid making unwise decisions to lower cost through the use of poor-quality materials or unacceptable changes to the fireworks compositions. The COPQ can exceed any anticipated savings generated from poor quality materials and workmanship.

During our last shipping season, the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) failed many lots of Colored Smoke items due to the use of prohibited chemicals in the smoke composition. The non-compliant product cannot be sold to consumers and the CPSC has directed that they be destroyed. The law requires that designated products containing Chlorates contain an equal or greater amount of Sodium Bicarbonate. We have reason to believe that cost motivated some to substitute Chlorate for Perchlorate without understanding their decision then required the addition of Sodium Bicarbonate to make the device compliant with the law.

The loss of several production lots of smoke devices for poor quality and non-compliance with the standards, along with the loss of customer goodwill, cost to replace rejected product, and potential penalties likely exceeded any savings associated with an unwise material substitution decision.

Remain diligent in your quest to produce safe and compliant fireworks and reach out to the AFSL China Team if we can assist in any way.

## **Update to the Certificate of Compliance (COC) Form**

*By Jieli Tan*

We recently updated the Certificate of Compliance (COC) form on the AFSL website. This form is also known as a General Certificate of Conformity (GCC).

We added two fields required by the CPSC to the COC form:

- **Place of Manufacturing** - You must provide at least the city (or administrative region) and country where the product was manufactured, or final assembly was completed. If the manufacturer operates more than one location in the same city, provide the street address of the factory. You will find the name of the city and country in the “Manufacture Address” section of the AFSL test report.
- **Actual Place of Testing** – Provide the location of the testing on which certification is based. This is typically the manufacturer’s address, unless otherwise noted on the test report. Like the Place of Manufacturing, you must enter at least the city (or administrative region) and country where the product was tested.

If you are filing the COC by using the “Upload a CSV file” method, please download the new sample spreadsheet and make sure that you fill out these two new fields before you save the form.

The importer of fireworks must issue the COC for products manufactured overseas, and the U.S. manufacturer of fireworks must issue the COC for products manufactured domestically (See 16 CFR part 1110). Certification of these products must be based upon the results of a reasonable testing program. The manufacturer or importer of fireworks subject to consumer product safety rules or other standards is always legally responsible for issuing a GCC, even if a laboratory or another third party helps draft the GCC.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

## By the Numbers

*By Jay Howell*

**98%**

of the lots submitted for AFSL testing in September were turned around within 48 hours. Thus far this year, about 9 out of 10 lots have been tested by Bureau Veritas and AFSL within 48 hours of your request.

**8.2 MILLION**

cases of fireworks have been tested by Bureau Veritas and AFSL from January through September 2021. During the same period in 2020, Bureau Veritas and AFSL had only tested 4.6 million cases.

**4**

Commissioners will soon be setting policy at the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), now that Congress has confirmed the nomination of Alexander Hoehn-Saric for both a seat on the CPSC Commission and to serve as chair of the agency. Once he is sworn into office, the Commission will operate with two Democrats and two Republicans until Congress acts on the President's other two nominations.

**95.2%**

of the cases tested from January through September 2021 have been determined to be compliant to AFSL standards. This is down slightly from the 2020 compliance rate of 95.9%.

## **On the Calendar**

*By Jay Howell*

In November, AFSL Standards Committee members will be meeting with Jerry Wingard and Jieli Tan in Kansas City, Missouri, to finalize proposed changes to the AFSL Consumer Fireworks Standards to align with the 2018 APA 87-1A standards that are incorporated by reference into DOT’s regulations.

As you can see from the list below of our current members, the Standards Committee is comprised of representatives from the fireworks industry, federal and state regulatory authorities, consumers, the insurance industry, and technical experts.

<b>Category</b>	<b>Member</b>	<b>Category</b>	<b>Member</b>
Manufacturer	Carson Anderson	Consumer	Anne Craigmyle
Manufacturer	Vincent Terrizzi, Jr.	State Fire Service	Chris Wyman
Shipper	Chi-Kay Cheung	State Fire Service	Steven Site
Shipper	Herb Chan	Insurance Industry	John Stringer
Importer/Distributor	Jessi Dragoiu	Insurance Industry	Tami Towne
Importer/Distributor	Shelly Hastings	Technical Advisor	Chris Musto
Importer/Distributor	Michael Marietta	Technical Advisor	Graham Walsh
Importer/Distributor	Sally Wilson	AFSL	Jay Howell

### **Non-Voting Members – Federal Regulators**

- Neal Gasser - PHMSA
- Stephen Lee - CPSC
- Vallary Maxey - PHMSA
- Harpreet Singh - PHMSA
- Rodney Valliere - CPSC

Standards developed by the Standards Committee incorporate all performance and labeling requirements of the regulations for fireworks established by the CPSC and applicable regulations governing transportation, shipping, and storage established by the DOT. The Standards Committee monitors regulatory activity to ensure that changes to federal regulations are incorporated into the AFSL Standards. Also, as product designs and materials change, the Committee reviews and revises the AFSL Standards as necessary to ensure that innovations are appropriately reflected in the AFSL Standards to ensure the product is compliant and safe when used as intended.

## **AFSL Board of Directors Election Results**

*By Jay Howell*

AFSL members voted to have Vince Bellino, Mike Ingram, and John Mo serve another term on the AFSL Board of Directors. Vince and Mike will serve in the Consumer Fireworks Importer, Distributor, Retailer Category, while John will serve in the Consumer Fireworks Shipper Category.

We thank all who took the time to vote and extend a special thanks to all the candidates who offered to contribute their time and expertise to advance AFSL's mission.

At the conclusion of the AFSL General Membership Meeting, it was announced that Tad Trout, AFSL Treasurer, would be retiring from his position on the Board. Tad has served the AFSL and its members for many years and he will be missed. The Board voted to have Jason Trout serve as Treasurer for the remainder of Tad's term. We welcome Jason to the Board and look forward to working with him to manage the finances of the organization.

AFSL was unable to convene a General Membership Meeting at the NFA Expo, and we are sorry that we missed that opportunity to meet with many of our members and share information. However, we did meet with many who stopped by the AFSL booth to say hello. We do appreciate your support.

We were able to hold our 2021 General Membership Meeting at the APA Convention in San Antonio, Texas. Thanks to all who were able to attend the meeting.

For those unable to attend this year's AFSL General Membership Meeting, presentation materials can be found on the AFSL website under the Program Updates tab.