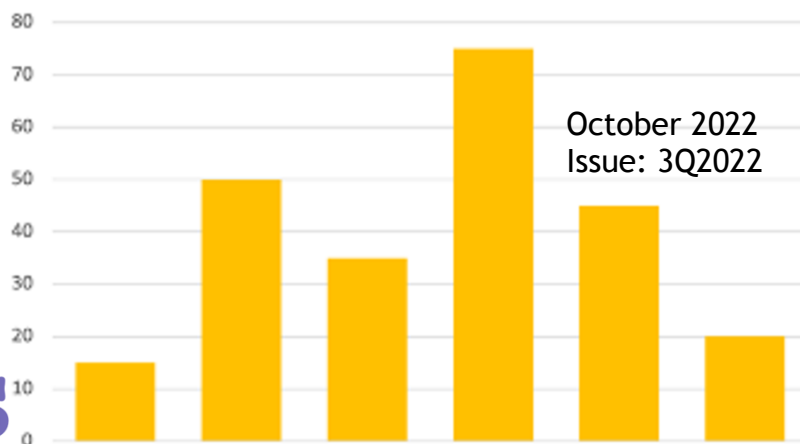




AFSL News



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AFSL Honors Jerry Bostocky

By Jay Howell



Jerry (left) receiving his
award from Mike Ingram,
AFSL Board President

During the Union Station Dinner and Fireworks Extravaganza at the recent APA Conference, the *Joel Anderson American Fireworks Standards Laboratory Fireworks Industry Safety Award* was presented to Jerry Bostocky in recognition of his years of service to the fireworks industry and his commitment to the safety of the American consumer.

Jerry was one of the “Shekou Six” who traveled to China in August 1988 to save the U.S. fireworks industry from increasing federal regulatory scrutiny. Earlier that year, the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) had executed three enforcement operations that resulted in the seizure of over 30 million fireworks devices for various violations of federal fireworks regulations.

Continued on next page

AFSL Honors Jerry Bostocky *continued*



Standing: Alan Zoldan, Dr. John Conkling
Seated: Jerry Bostocky, Joel Anderson

Jerry, Joel, and others spent ten days at the Nanhai Hotel in Shekou, Shenzhen, China testing fireworks devices from numerous factories and providing guidance on product modifications needed to bring the product into compliance with the CPSC regulations. If not for the efforts of Jerry and other members of the Shekou Six, the American Fireworks Standards Laboratory (AFSL), and perhaps even the

fireworks industry as we know it today, would not exist.

We are proud to be able to recognize Jerry Bostocky's achievements and honor him with the prestigious *Joel Anderson AFSL Fireworks Industry Safety Award*. The award honors Joel Anderson's vision and commitment to the industry, and to its customers, by recognizing someone in the industry, like Jerry Bostocky, who has demonstrated they share Joel's dedication to providing safe fireworks to the American consumer. In 1989, a group of fireworks industry leaders headed by Joel Anderson, formed the AFSL to ensure safe products were being imported into the United States. The formation of the AFSL was key in demonstrating to the CPSC that the industry could regulate itself and was a critical step for the safety and longevity of the industry.



Election of AFSL Board Members

By Jay Howell

We recently concluded the annual vote for open positions on the AFSL Board of Directors and want to thank all of the members who took the time to cast their vote. In addition to the votes cast by mail and email, we collected votes at the NFA Expo and the APA Convention.

We also wish to thank all who ran for the open positions. Serving on the Board is not glamorous and will not make one rich, but it's important and we appreciate the interest our members take in our work. The AFSL Board Members volunteer their time to provide guidance to the organization and ensure AFSL is fulfilling its mission to serve the fireworks industry.

AFSL Board of Directors 2022 - 2023

<u>Board Member</u>	<u>Term Expiration</u>	
Vince Bellino	2024	
Thomas Chan	2025	
Michael Collar	2025	Member at Large
Glenn Davis	2024	Secretary
Phil Grucci	2025	
Michael Ingram	2024	President
John (Yanhua) Mo	2024	
Nancy Nord	2025	
Jason Trout	2023	Treasurer
Joe Wan	2023	
Alan Zoldan	2023	Vice President

Why are there numbers on my shipping carton and what do they mean?

By William Zhou

The next time you receive a shipment of consumer fireworks produced in China, take a look at the shipping cartons. In the upper right corner of the carton, you should see an 11-digit number like the following example:

49F459/053/22

This number is assigned by the China Customs authorities and is used to identify the source of the fireworks and when they were produced. The left most digits are the Factory ID number. This identifying number is assigned by the China Customs authorities and identifies the factory and province where the factory is located. For example, “49” is the provincial code for the Hunan province and “459” is the unique number assigned to the factory which manufactured the products in the shipping carton. You will see other province codes, such as “40” for fireworks produced in the Jiangxi province and “72” for fireworks coming out of the Guangxi province.

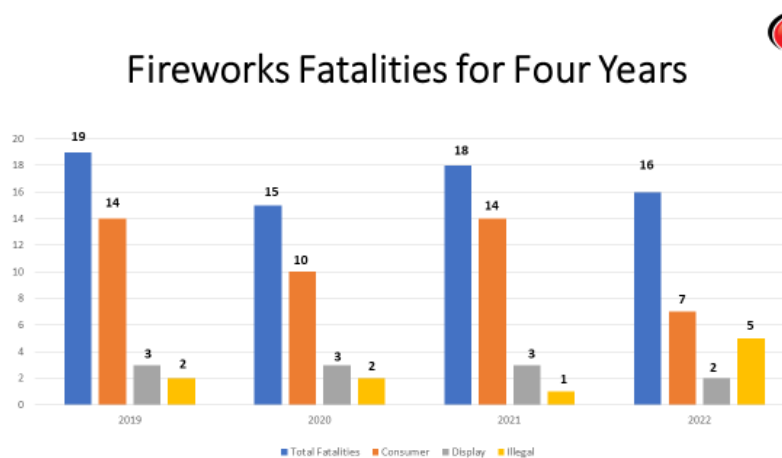
The middle part of the number is the lot number assigned by China Customs to a specific lot of shipping cartons and has been approved for use by the designated factory. The last two digits represent the year. In the above example, “22” means 2022. The 11-digit number will be on the China Customs export permit, which should be attached to the shipping documents.

Currently, there are 310 valid factory ID numbers in the Hunan Province (code “49”), 100 valid factory ID numbers in the Jiangxi Province (code “40”), and 15 in the province of Guangxi (code “72”).

Consumer Fireworks-related Fatalities Down in the U.S.

By Jerry Wingard

We approach year-end with mixed feeling about fireworks-related injuries we've investigated in 2022. On one hand, we are disappointed the overall number of fireworks-related fatalities has not changed significantly over the past few years. However, it is encouraging to note that the number of consumer fireworks-related fatalities in 2022 was half of what we saw last year.



Thus far this year, AFSL has investigated sixteen fatalities. Seven of the sixteen were associated with the use of consumer fireworks, five resulted from the use of illegal explosives disguised as consumer fireworks (this includes “overloaded consumer fireworks”), two occurred because display fireworks were being used by unlicensed individuals, and two involved fireworks devices that have not yet been identified.

AFSL has also investigated twenty-eight fireworks-related cases involving personal injury or property damage. Seventeen of the twenty-eight were severe hand injuries resulting in the loss of fingers and part or all of the hand.

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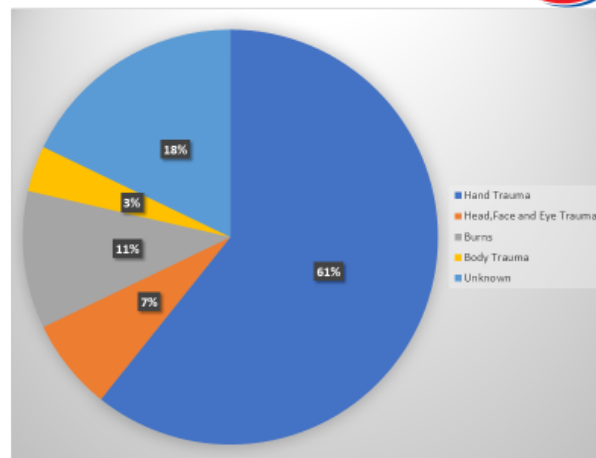
Fireworks-related Fatalities Down in the U.S.

continued

The information we've collected in our investigations indicates many of the injuries were likely due to a failure to follow the instructions and/or heed the warnings on the product. Regardless of the reason, we take all fireworks-related incidents seriously and use the information we collect to inform the work of our Standards Committee.

28 Fireworks-Related Injuries Investigated

- 17 – Severe trauma to hands; loss of hands and/or fingers
- 2 – Trauma to head, face, and eyes
- 3 – Fires and burns.
- 1 – Trauma to abdomen and legs
- 5 – unknown or unidentified



AFSL's Standards Committee has equal representation from industry and non-industry members. Our non-industry members include representatives from the insurance industry, consumers, state fire services, and technical advisors. Federal regulators also join our meetings as non-voting members. The Standards Committee members devote a lot of time in the development and maintenance of the consumer fireworks standards and are responsible for the rigorous set of requirements AFSL uses to test consumer fireworks. AFSL welcomes any suggestions from our members that might help to reduce the risk of potential injury associated with the use of consumer fireworks or information that might lead to a decrease in the number of illegal explosive devices, disguised as consumer fireworks, that are available to consumers.

AFSL Adopts Proactive Certification Strategy

By: Mike Walsh, Program Manager, SICPA

As an organization, improving the quality and safety of fireworks distributed and used in the U.S. is AFSL's main mission. AFSL knows the best line of defense is investing in a proactive certification strategy for its members' benefit.

According to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, 11,500 people were treated in emergency rooms for fireworks injuries in 2021, a number that has climbed by 25 percent since 2006. And nearly one-third of selected and tested fireworks products were found to contain noncompliant components, including the presence of prohibited chemicals, fuse violations and pyrotechnic materials overload. U.S. regulatory authorities need to be able to confidently verify AFSL certified fireworks while quickly identifying the riskier uncertified products. Of important benefit to AFSL customers, this will allow your products to move seamlessly into the U.S. market for sale.

Since 2014, AFSL has partnered with SICPA, a trusted provider of regulatory compliance solutions, to use security labels that can be verified by the naked eye and with a simple device. Leading into 2023, AFSL has upgraded the label to the latest advancements from SICPA with QUAZAR®, a highly resilient anti-counterfeiting solution that is both visually engaging and easy-to-authenticate. The best-in-class physical and digital security authentication technology features go further to protect certified products and prevent fraud.



With a heritage in protecting the majority of the world's banknotes and billions of regulated products from counterfeiting and fraud, SICPA values the expanding partnership with AFSL to provide authentication technology in support of its members and their products.

By the Numbers

By Jay Howell

66%

lower than the September 2021 peak, is what Drewry Supply Chain Advisors reports is their key benchmark container price for shipping a 40-foot container. Drewry's latest World Container Index is at \$3,483 per 40-foot container, down from the \$10,377 peak but higher than the pre-pandemic rate (2019 average) of \$1,420. A drop in consumer demand for consumer goods, largely due to inflation and retailers' high levels of inventory, is translating into lower demand for container shipping.

8.1 MILLION

cases of fireworks have been tested by Bureau Veritas and AFSL from January through September 2022. This volume is just about the same as we experienced last year when we reported testing 8.2 million cases in the first nine months of the year. However, we are expecting to finish the year significantly lower than we did last year.

274

more Americans sought emergency department treatment for fireworks-related injuries each year, from 2006 through 2021, according to CPSC's latest fireworks report. This upward trend was highlighted in CPSC's *2021 Fireworks Annual Report* issued June 2022. CPSC estimated between 8,300 and 14,700 fireworks-related injuries were treated in U.S. hospital emergency departments in 2021. However, when considering changes in the number of fireworks being sold in the U.S., the CPSC estimated rate of emergency department-treated injuries fell from 4.7 per 100,000 people in 2020 to 3.5 per 100,00 people in 2021.

94.4%

of the cases tested from January through September 2022 have been determined to be compliant to AFSL standards. This is down from the September 2021 YTD compliance rate of 95.3%.

So "mummy" injuries!

Fires, lacerations and falls sound like scenes from a scary movie but for nearly 5,000 people last year, these Halloween hazards resulted in real injuries.

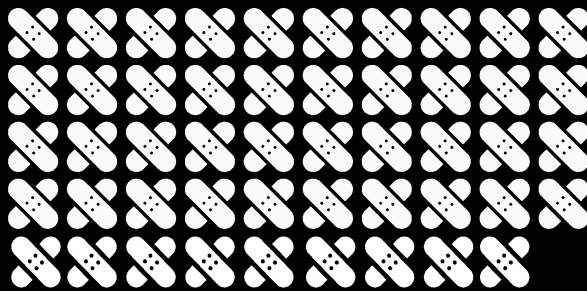
Fit for Safety.

Falls were a leading cause of injury. Adjust costumes to fit well.

54% of injuries were from
PUMPKIN CARVING

choose carving
utensils carefully

That's 4,900 in just 2 MONTHS!



 = 100 Injuries

THE KEY POINTS:



Leave pumpkin carving to adults. Kid helpers can grab a spoon and scoop out the inside, or use a marker to trace the template.



Prevent candle fires by substituting battery-operated lights and glow sticks for open flame candles.



Decorate carefully. To prevent falls, remove obstacles from lawns, steps and porches when expecting trick-or-treaters.