On July 4, our country celebrates its 240th birthday. Many of us will attend Independence Day with cookouts, reunions and fireworks. **Fireworks history**

Today, the fireworks shows we watch may be controlled by high-tech computer equipment. They sometimes have music that plays along with the explosions. But fireworks have been a part of celebrations for centuries. In many ways, fireworks haven’t changed much.

Most experts agree that the Chinese probably invented fireworks more than 1,000 years ago. Colonists from England and Europe probably brought them when they settled in America.

“Illuminations,” the Colonists’ word for fireworks, were used at the celebration of the new country on July 4, 1776. **Be careful**

Fireworks are exciting and fun, but they can be used carefully. In 2014, about 10,000 people were injured by fireworks. **Make sure you know how to safely use fireworks** and have adults nearby to help. Of course, the safest way to enjoy fireworks is to let the professionals put on the show for you.

**Fireworks safety spelled out**

- **Fire** is always dangerous. Be careful with lighters, puffs and sparklers.
- **Never** use illegal fireworks.
- **Never Re-light** a “dud” firework. Wait 20 minutes and then soak it in water.
- **Eye protection** should be worn when using fireworks.

**Most Injured Body Parts**

- 36% Head and Face
- 19% Hands and Fingers
- 11% Ear
- 10% Leg
- 3% Arm

More than 50% of the injuries were serious.

**Safe Fun With Fireworks**

[Image of fireworks]

On July 4, our country celebrates its 240th birthday. Many of us will honor Independence Day with cookouts, reunions and fireworks.

**Mini Fact: Fireworks designers use chemicals to create different colors, including lime green and turquoise.**

**Try ‘n’ Find**

Words that remind us of fireworks are hidden in this puzzle. Some words are hidden backward. See if you can find these:

1. School cleaner (7)
2. Break into small pieces (7)
3. House made of ice (5)
4. What you use to dig (5)
5. Where you look up words (10)
6. People watching a show (8)
7. Place to shop (5)

**Cook’s Corner**

**Pineapple Pudding Cake**

You’ll need:

- 1 (16-ounce) box vanilla pudding mix (not instant)
- 2 cups reduced-fat milk
- 1 (12-ounce) tub fat-free whipped topping
- 1 cup shredded coconut

What to do:

2. Remove cake from oven and immediately pierce holes in top of cake with a fork. Pour canned pineapple and juice over top. Allow to cool.

Try your hand at the mystery word puzzle. Some words are hidden backward. See if you can find them:

ADULTS, BUCKET, CELEBRATION, CHINESE, DAY DIRECTIONS, DUD, EXPLOSION, EYE, FIREWORKS, INDEPENDENCE, INJURY PROTECTION, PUNK, SAFETY, SHOW, SPARKLER, WATER.

**Try ’n’ Find Answers:**

Janitor, crumble, igloo, shovel, dictionary, audience, store.

**Mini Jokes**

Greg: What is the sleepiest mountain in the world?
Gretel: Mount Ever-rest!
Sue: Why did the old man refuse to play a firework?
Sam: He was already over the hill!

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