July 3, 1792, a day after the signing of the Declaration of Independence, John Adams had written to his wife Abigail, “The second day of July, 1776, will be the most memorable epoch in the history of America.

That memorable epoch John Adams spoke of became the Fourth of July and today one of the main methods of celebration is fireworks. If we fail to do our part to promote and observe safety with fireworks, we may find consumer fireworks becoming history.

Groups of individuals across the nation have joined together to warn people about the dangers of consumer fireworks.

In 2010 alone, statistics reported in a June 21, 2012 release of a Fireworks Report which explores fire and injury dangers related to consumer fireworks showed an estimated 15,500 reported fires were started by fireworks and 8,600 fireworks-related injuries were treated in U.S. hospital emergency rooms. There are more fires on a typical Fourth of July than any other day of the year. Fireworks account for more than any other cause of fires on the Fourth. The fires caused by fireworks in 2010 resulted in eight reported deaths, 60 civilian injuries, and $36 million in direct property damage.

Follow these safety tips:

• Never allow young children to play with fireworks.
• Avoid buying fireworks that are packaged in brown paper because this is often a sign that the fireworks were made for professional displays and could pose a danger to consumers.
• Always have an adult supervise fireworks activities. Sparklers burn at temperatures of about 2,000 degrees–hot enough to melt some metals.
• Never place any part of your body directly over a fireworks device when lighting the fuse.
• Never try to re-light or pick up fireworks not ignited fully.
• Never point or throw fireworks at another person.
• Keep a bucket of water or a garden hose handy.
• Light fireworks one at a time, then move back quickly.
• Never carry fireworks in a pocket or shoot them off in metal or glass containers.
• After fireworks complete their burning, douse the spent device with plenty of water.
• Make sure fireworks are legal in your area.

On behalf of the Nebraska State Fire Marshal’s Office, remember that much of the state is experiencing extremely dry weather with great potential for fires. Consider attending professional fireworks displays.