

# Information Release

**13 January 2009**

## **Northern Ireland Fireworks Injuries 2008**

This statistical release gives details of the number of persons injured by fireworks in the Halloween period of the year 2008. The survey covered a four-week period from Friday 17<sup>th</sup> October to Friday 14<sup>th</sup> November and covers those injuries treated at A&E Departments and Minor Injuries Units (see Note 1).

### **Key Points**

- 32 persons were injured over the Halloween period of the year 2008, a decrease of 65 (67%) from the 2007 figure (Table 1).
- 47% of persons injured over the Halloween period attended an Accident and Emergency Department or Minor Injuries Unit between 31<sup>st</sup> October and 6<sup>th</sup> November 2008 (Figure 2).
- 81% of those injured were male (Table 1).
- 66% of those injured were aged under 18 (Table 2).
- There were no fatalities.
- The most common sites of injury were to the wrist or hand (53% of all injuries) and the eye (22% of all injuries) (Table 4).
- 34% required no further treatment, 19% were referred to Outpatients, 16% were referred to GP and 16% were asked to revisit A&E. (Table 5).

**Detailed notes and definitions are shown in the attached Notes.**

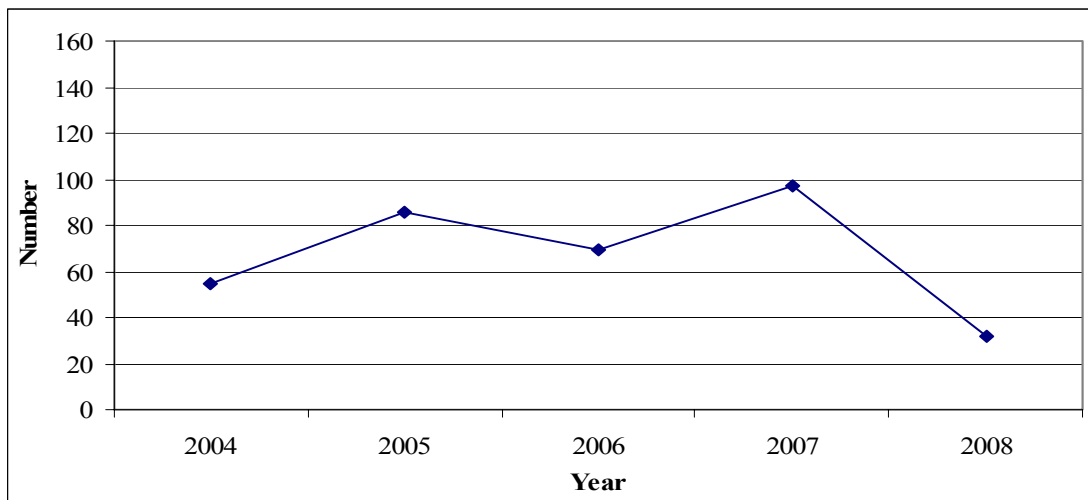
## Total Injuries

There had been an upward trend in number of injuries between 2004 and 2007 (Table 1 & Figure 1). The number of injuries in the 2008 reporting period (32) was 67% down on the number of injuries in the 2007 reporting period (97) and 107 (77%) down on the peak number (139) in the 1999 reporting period.

**Table 1: Fireworks Injuries, 2008**

| Persons Injured | 2004      | 2005      | 2006      | 2007      | 2008      | % change     |
|-----------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|--------------|
|                 |           |           |           |           |           | 2004 - 2008  |
| Males           | 47        | 77        | 67        | 84        | 26        | -44.7        |
| Females         | 8         | 9         | 2         | 13        | 6         | -25          |
| <b>Total</b>    | <b>55</b> | <b>86</b> | <b>69</b> | <b>97</b> | <b>32</b> | <b>-41.8</b> |

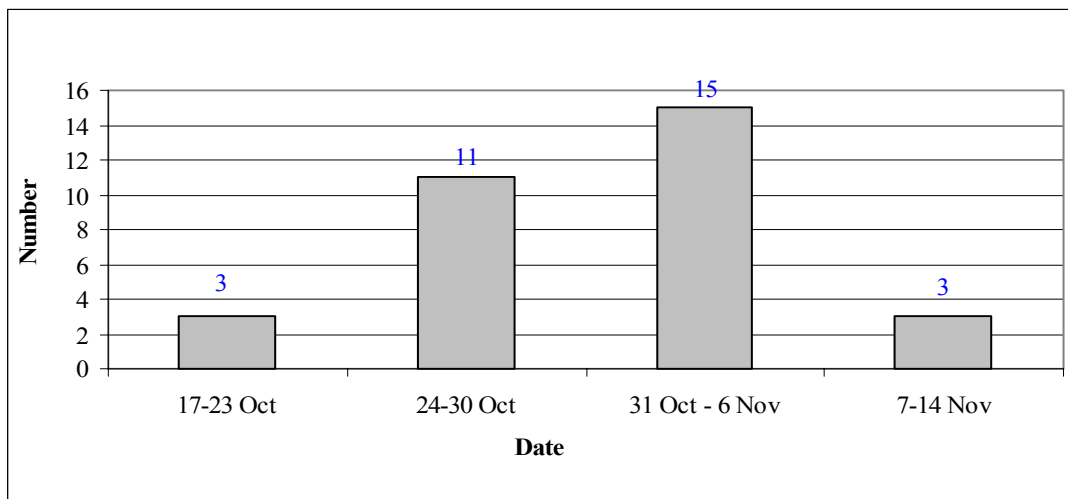
**Figure 1: Fireworks Injuries, 2004–2008**



## Date of Injury

Of the 32 persons injured, 15 (47%) reported to an Accident or Emergency Department or Minor Injuries Unit in the period between 31<sup>st</sup> October and 6<sup>th</sup> November 2008 inclusive (Figure 2).

**Figure 2: Fireworks Injuries, by Time Period, 2008**



## Age

In the reporting periods for each of the years from 2004 to 2008, the majority of those injured were aged under 18 (Table 2).

**Table 2: Fireworks Injuries, by Age, 2004–2008**

| Age                  | 2004      | 2005      | 2006      | 2007      | 2008      |
|----------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| 0-5                  | 5         | 4         | 1         | 8         | 2         |
| 6-10                 | 9         | 13        | 10        | 19        | 5         |
| 11-15                | 23        | 33        | 30        | 38        | 12        |
| 16-17                | 2         | 8         | 7         | 10        | 2         |
| 18 and Over          | 15        | 28        | 21        | 22        | 11        |
| Unknown              | 1         | 0         | 0         | 0         | 0         |
| <b>Total Injured</b> | <b>55</b> | <b>86</b> | <b>69</b> | <b>97</b> | <b>32</b> |

This year 22% of all persons injured were children aged 10 years and less.

## Area

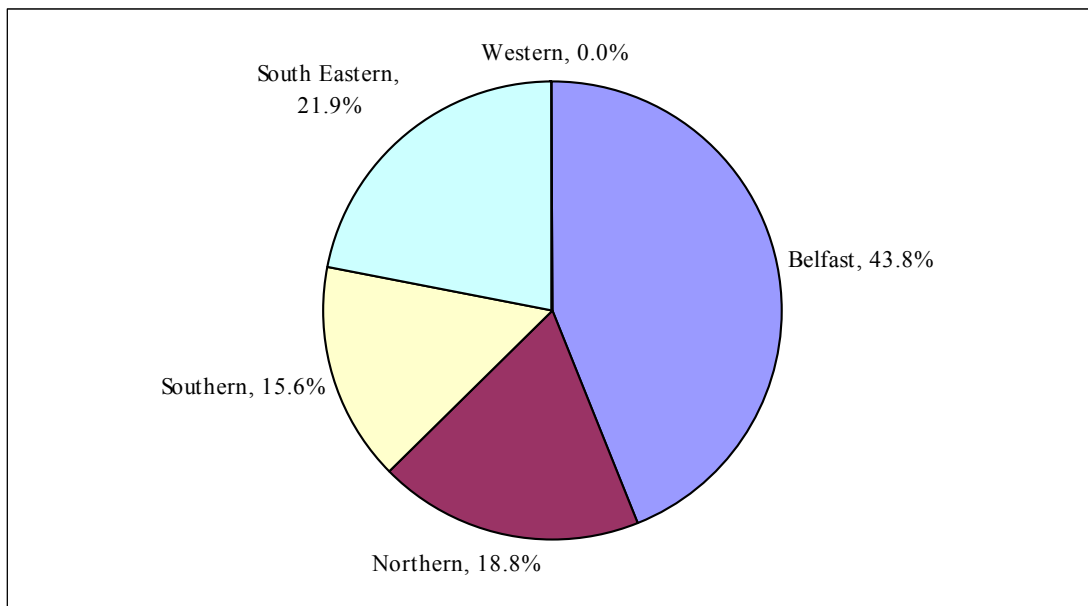
The number of those reporting to hospitals by Trust area is shown in Table 3.

**Table 3: Fireworks Injuries, by Trust of Reporting Hospital, 2004–2008**

| Trust                                      | 2004      | 2005      | 2006      | 2007      | 2008      |
|--|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Belfast Health and Social Care Trust       | 12        | 22        | 14        | 15        | 14        |
| Northern Health and Social Care Trust      | 11        | 12        | 14        | 12        | 6         |
| South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust | 7         | 20        | 11        | 19        | 7         |
| Southern Health and Social Care Trust      | 18        | 24        | 17        | 36        | 5         |
| Western Health and Social Care Trust       | 7         | 8         | 13        | 15        | 0         |
| <b>Total</b>                               | <b>55</b> | <b>86</b> | <b>69</b> | <b>97</b> | <b>32</b> |

44% of persons injured in 2008 reported to Hospitals in the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust (Figure 3).

**Figure 3: Fireworks Injuries, by Trust, 2008**



## Site of Injury

In the year 2008 reporting period, thirty persons received injuries to one site on the body, no persons received injuries to two sites, and two persons received injuries to three sites. The most common sites of injury were the wrist and hand and to the eye (Table 4).

**Table 4: Fireworks Injuries, by Site of Injury, 2004–2008**

| Site               | 2004      | 2005       | 2006      | 2007       | 2008      |
|--------------------|-----------|------------|-----------|------------|-----------|
| Wrist/Hand         | 35        | 42         | 45        | 48         | 19        |
| Face/Head/Neck     | 15        | 21         | 14        | 29         | 5         |
| Eye                | 8         | 13         | 12        | 15         | 8         |
| Foot/Leg           | 7         | 6          | 1         | 3          | 4         |
| Trunk              | 2         | 7          | 2         | 10         | 0         |
| Arm                | 2         | 11         | 5         | 6          | 0         |
| <b>Total Sites</b> | <b>69</b> | <b>100</b> | <b>79</b> | <b>111</b> | <b>36</b> |

## Method of Departure

In the 2008 reporting period, 34% required no further treatment, 19% were referred to Outpatients, 16% were asked to revisit the A&E department and 16% of persons injured were referred to a GP (Table 5).

**Table 5: Fireworks Injuries, by Method of Departure from Accident and Emergency Department, 2004–2008**

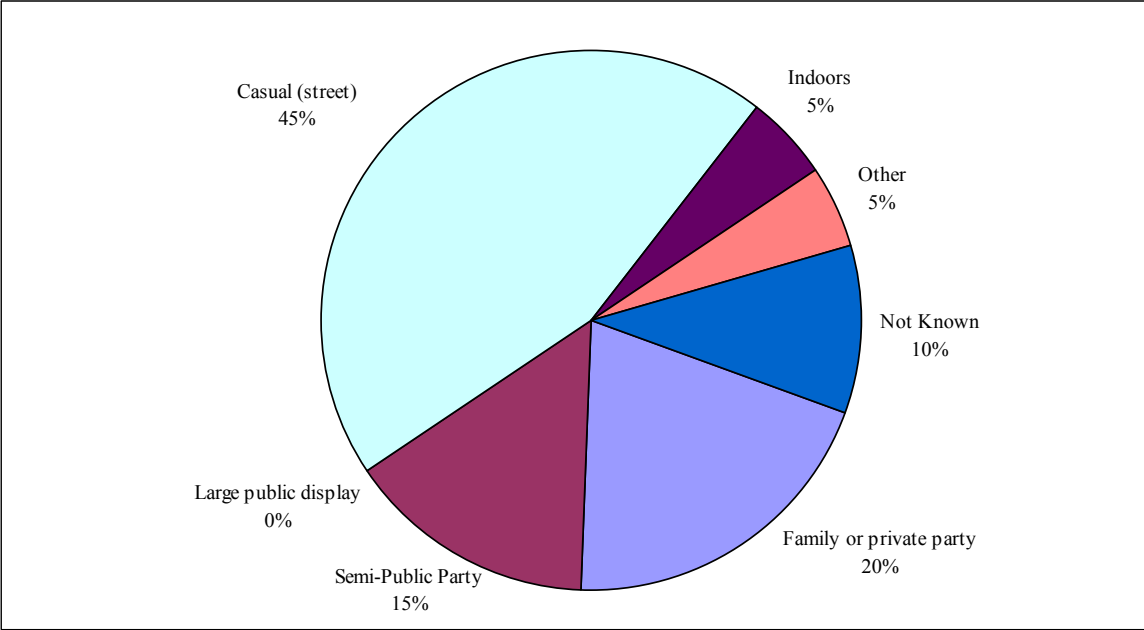
| Method                          | 2004      | 2005      | 2006      | 2007      | 2008      |
|---------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| No Further Treatment            | 13        | 18        | 11        | 19        | 11        |
| Referred to GP                  | 8         | 33        | 16        | 19        | 5         |
| Referred to Outpatients         | 1         | 5         | 7         | 2         | 6         |
| Revisit A & E                   | 20        | 17        | 25        | 26        | 5         |
| Transfer to Another Hospital    | 3         | 3         | 3         | 8         | 3         |
| Referral to Minor Injuries Unit | 0         | 2         | 1         | 7         | 0         |
| Admitted                        | 4         | 6         | 4         | 5         | 0         |
| Dead on Arrival/Died            | 0         | 0         | 0         | 0         | 0         |
| Other/Not Known                 | 6         | 2         | 2         | 11        | 2         |
| <b>Total</b>                    | <b>55</b> | <b>86</b> | <b>69</b> | <b>97</b> | <b>32</b> |

In the reporting period this year, no persons were admitted to the hospital to which they reported, and two were transferred to another hospital. There were no deaths from injuries.

### Place of Occurrence

Place of occurrence of injury was recorded for 20 of the 32 persons injured. 45% of injuries were casual incidents in public places (e.g. in the street) and 20% of injuries occurred at family or private parties (Figure 4).

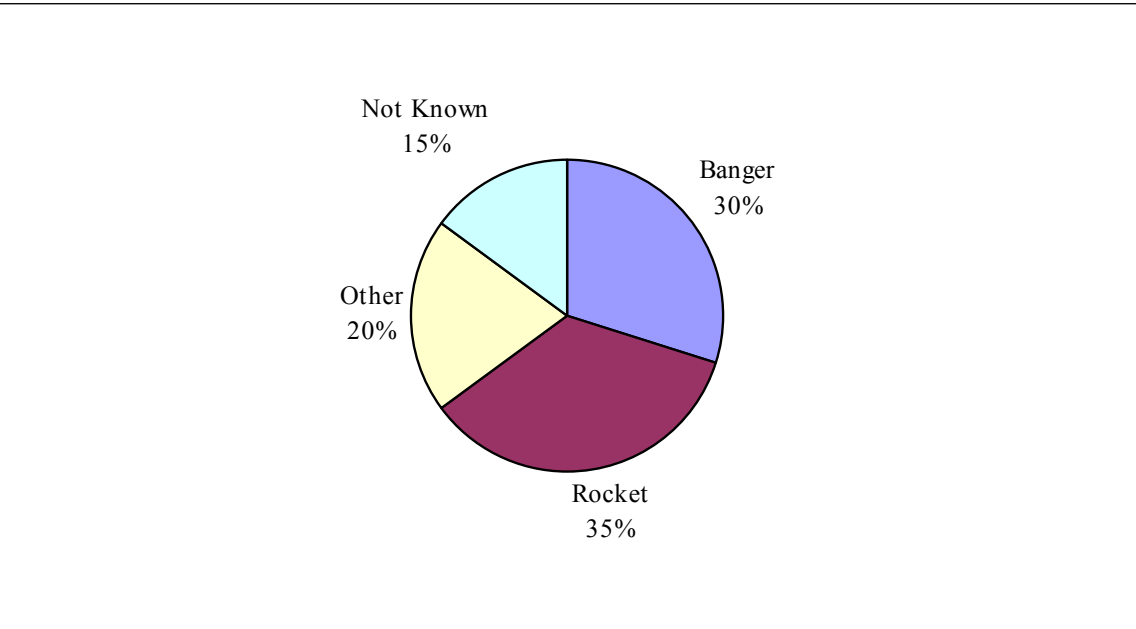
**Figure 4: Fireworks Injuries, by Place of Occurrence, 2008**



### Type of Firework

The type of firework involved was recorded for 20 of the 32 instances of injury. Where the type of firework was recorded, Rockets were the most common causes of injury (35%), followed by Banger (30%) (Figure 5).

**Figure 5: Fireworks Injuries, by Type of Firework, 2008**



## Notes

1. This information is collected via a special manual exercise carried out by A&E staff. It is conducted around a fixed four- or five-week period in order to minimise the data collection burden on staff and to ensure comparability from year to year. It does not therefore include injuries from fireworks outside the survey period and will not include injuries which were not sufficiently serious to warrant attendance at an A&E Department or Minor Injuries Unit.
2. The source of the information is the annual Fireworks Injuries return FWK 1.
3. All persons reporting to hospital Accident and Emergency Departments and Minor Injuries Units for the first time with an injury caused directly by fireworks are included in the return.
4. Follow-up attendances at Accident and Emergency Departments and attendances at Minor Injuries Units on referral from Accident and Emergency Departments are not included.
5. The return for the year 2008 covered a four-week period from Friday 17<sup>th</sup> October to Friday 14<sup>th</sup> November inclusive. Information for previous years reported in this release covers four- or five-week periods around Halloween.
6. Recording of information on place where injury occurred and type of firework involved was not mandatory.

## Additional Information

Further information on fireworks injuries in Northern Ireland is available from:

Office Information Manager  
Hospital Information Branch  
Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety  
Annexe 2  
Castle Buildings  
Stormont  
BT4 3SQ

Tel: 028 9052 2800

Internet address: [http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/index/stats\\_research/firework\\_statistics.htm](http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/index/stats_research/firework_statistics.htm)