



TOY LIKE LIGHTERS

PLAYING WITH FIRE

A Juvenile Fire-setter Intervention



Parents – A tough job at best!

- Don't play with the Dalmatian.
- Don't pick up the ladybug.
- Leave the rubber ducky alone.



Novelty or Toy-like Lighters – Children Playing with Fire

“Toy Lighters ...a lighter that has entertaining audio or visual effects, or that depicts or resembles in physical form or function a commonly recognized character or figure, commonly recognized as appealing to or intended for use by children 10 years of age or younger.”



Playing with Novelty or Toy-like lighters as described is responsible for numerous injuries with related deaths to children and adults across our nation.



The Difficulty with Novelty Lighters

- Children and toys go together like workman and their tools.
- Children are attracted to novelty or toy-like lighters unable to discern the difference because of the close appearance, sounds, and manual actions that are similar to toys.
- Several lighters are nearly identical to popular and common toys.
- Children mistaking lighters for toys has proven to be life-altering, disfiguring and deadly.



Fire Making in Small Deadly Toy Containers

- From Cigarettes to Golf Clubs
- Wrenches to Cell Phones to Guns
- Ducks to Pigs, Cats and Dogs.
- Extinguishers to Dalmatians.

The business of novelty fire-making without concern for life or property.



Video-alt-tab



Toy lighters have proven deadly.

- On September 25, 2007, a 15 month old Peyton Edwards and 2-year-old Breydon Edwards of Russellville, Arkansas, died after setting fire to their apartment with a motorcycle shaped lighter.



Children Disfigured and Killed

- Children using toy-like lighters have set fire to homes, play houses, closets, workshops, retail stores, vehicles and gas stations.
- These fires have all been started in the carefree act of play.
- Children have been disfigured, seriously injured or died in light-hearted acts of play.



Family Shopping can be Dangerous

- Shane St.Pierre was in the grocery store with his mother in Livermore, Maine, June 2007 shopping.

The 6-year-old picked up a miniature baseball bat and flicked the switch.



A flame shot out, singeing his eyebrow and burning part of his face.



Maine the first to ban novelty lighters

- In March of 2008, Governor John Baldacci signed legislation that makes Maine the first state to outlaw the sale of cigarette lighters that are attractive to children.



"It's not often I get to sign a bill that's the nation's first," said Baldacci, whose desk was covered with an array of novelty lighters including a race car, a sandal, a cow, and two bright red items that ironically were in the shapes of a fire hydrant and fire extinguisher.



Care Givers Fooled

- Children are not the only ones fooled by novelty lighters. Parents, Grandparents, Aunts/Uncles have given children toys, that have turned out to be an "open flame" lighter device.
- According to police reports, a woman in South Carolina lighting a cigarette - shot herself in the hand, using a gun that appeared to be a "gun shaped" cigarette lighter. 🗣️



Accustom to dangerous materials on Display?

- The daughter of a Wisconsin Fire Marshal picked up what appeared to be a tape measure at a home improvement store. When she clicked the button a flame shot out. Fortunately, the child was not hurt. The store owner stopped selling the novelty lighters because of this incident.



A National Movement!

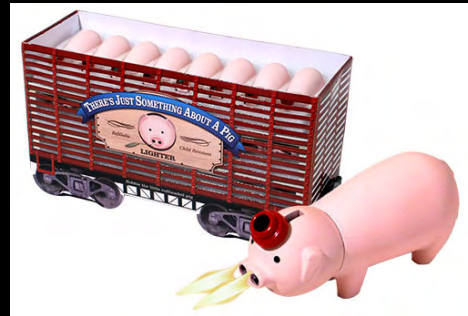
But Live and Let Die – the Nay-Sayers abound!

- The National Association of State Fire Marshals, is supporting an effort to ban novelty lighters across the country.
- The National Lighter Association, a national trade group, supports laws to ban novelty lighters.
- However, a California-based distributor of the lighters, John Gibson, said: “in many cases the novelty lighters are safer than regular ones and that complaints stem from overzealous fire marshals.”



So... Fire Marshal's Pick on Piggy

- According to Mr. Gibson, "lighters are generally safe, toy lighters are safer than regular lighters."
- Pigs for Kids or Tools for Tots seems to be what he's selling.
- Perhaps we should look at some documented facts...



The following story was related by a 41 year old Cincinnati mother who served for 7-years as American Red Cross Urban Disaster Volunteer.



One of most horrifying fires I've ever been to was started by a child playing with a lighter underneath his brother's bed. The boys, who were 8 and 2, were playing under the bed where it was dark, so the older boy lit a lighter so they could see better. The bed caught on fire, and the older boy backed up from underneath the bed and ran. He was scared - he'd started a fire! He knew he'd get in trouble... so he didn't tell. When his brother's screams got their 8-month-pregnant mother's attention, the bed was fully engulfed in flames. Without regard to her own safety, the mother rushed into the room, dove under the bed, and pulled his burning body out of the fire. She herself was on fire too. I met this family in the burn unit at two different hospitals. The 2 year old was at Children's Hospital, and the mother at neighboring University Hospital. The 2 year old somehow survived; the mother, and the unborn baby, eventually died.



Overzealous Fire Marshals have noticed these facts as well!

All the children in these examples were either, disfigured, injured someone else, or died in the fire they started with a novelty/toy-like lighter.

- A 2-year old flicks a motorcycle lighter
- A 6-year old flicks a bat lighter
- A 5-year old flicks a gun-shaped lighter
- A 6-year old flicks a cell-phone lighter
- A 3-year old flicks a Christmas tree lighter



Oh ya, Safer... Right!



The Facts are Alarming!

- According to the [National Fire Protection Association \(NFPA\)](#):
- Intentionally set fires continue to be the major cause of "\$" loss and the leading cause of fire deaths in the USA today. And an estimated 339 million in direct damage loss.
- NFPA estimates 323,900 intentionally set fires were by juveniles in 2002.
- 13,900 *child-playing* structure fires reported with associated, 210 civilian deaths and 1,250 related fire injuries.



Facts are Alarming... cont.

- The median age for non-fatal fire injuries is in the late teens.
- The median age for children who start reported fires by playing is 5-years old.
- The median age for children who die in reported fires is 4-years old.



Side-bar Fact: Children as young as 2 & 3 years of age can flick a "Child-Safe-Toy-like Lighter" in the capacity of play without effort or difficulty.





What can I do?

- State and local communities are taking action by calling for and *banning the sale of toy-like and novelty lighters and limiting their distribution* through legislative process.
- Neighborhood members have the ability to educate the public & government officials to the related dangers of Novelty & Toy-like Lighters.
- People through State & Local government interaction can legislate - to protect.



You can take action, by calling for and banning the sale of novelty and toy-like lighters and limit their distribution.



What can you do?

Do Your Homework!

- You and State & Local Government officials have the ability to educate, fire-up, and excite the public regarding the related dangers of Toy-like & Novelty Lighters in the community.
- Let your grocery/convenience stores, gas stations, mini-marts know of the dangers of placing toys & novelty lighters where children can see, reach and access them.



What can you do?

Become active in the Legislative Process!

The Utah State Fire Marshal has taken the lead in this most important effort.



- Parents in coalition with the State Fire Marshal may contact representatives and legislators and inform them of this important life altering issue, to protect children from the easy acquisition of counterfeit-toy/novelty lighters. <http://www.le.state.ut.us/Documents/find.htm>

- Share this Information at, city council meetings, public forums, PTA, schools, clubs and churches.



What can be done? – Parents

- Parents are encouraged to inspect any toys their children find in check-out lines or other areas where lighters may be sold.
- There is an urgent need to survey home and places where children and those you care for, play and stay.
- Make sure that all matches and lighters are always carefully secured.
- Insure that toy-like and novelty lighters are removed from premises.



What Has Been Done?



- The pictured toy and novelty lighters have already been banned nationally in the UK.



Thank You for Your Interest
and
Concern for Safety & Care of Children!

As members of our Utah family, you care deeply for the safety of children who in their innocence are unable to make the distinction between tool and toy, collectible and plaything, novelty and danger. It falls to the concerned grown-up to watch, protect and shield the child from the knowing or negligent access to novelty & toy lighters. Child access to these life-altering and deadly lighters - disguised as toys – can cause or draw the innocent to injury, disfigurement or death. The Utah State Fire Marshal strongly encourages you to call or email your legislative representative and inform them of this issue.



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