

Information Release

Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety

16 January 2003

Northern Ireland Fireworks Injuries 2002

This statistical release gives details of the number of persons injured by fireworks in the Halloween period of the year 2002. The survey covered a four-week period from Tuesday 9th October to Saturday 15th November and covers those injuries treated at A&E Departments and Minor Injuries Units (see Note 1).

Key Points

- 38 persons were injured over the Halloween period of the year 2002, a decrease of 98 (72%) from the 2001 figure.
- 68% of persons injured over the Halloween period attended an Accident and Emergency Department or Minor Injuries Unit between 30 October and 3 November 2002.
- Almost 74% of those injured were male (Table 1).
- Almost 74% of those injured were aged under 20 (Table 2).
- There were no fatalities.
- The most common sites of injury were to the face, head or neck area (32% of all injuries) and the wrist or hand (30%) (Table 4).
- 42% of those injured required no further treatment, 18% were referred to their GP and almost 13% were asked to revisit the Accident and Emergency Department at a later date. Six persons were admitted to hospital or transferred to another hospital (Table 5).

Detailed notes and definitions are shown in the attached Notes.

Total Injuries

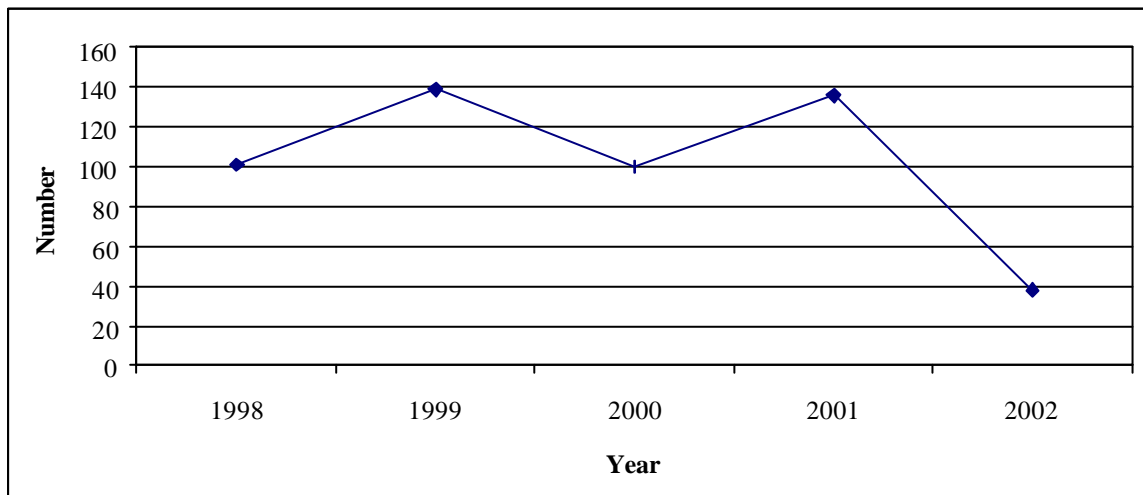
The total number of persons injured by fireworks during the 2002 reporting period was 38 (Table 1). This is a decrease of 98 (72%) from the 2001 figure (136). There was a decrease in both the number of males and females injured.

Table 1: Fireworks Injuries, 2002

Persons Injured	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	% Change between 1998 - 2002
Males	82	98	77	115	28	-65.9
Females	19	41	23	20	10	-47.4
Not Known	0	0	0	1	0	-
Total	101	139	100	136	38	-62.4

This year, the slight upward trend in number of injuries between 2000 and 2001 was reversed (Figure 1). The number of injuries in 2002 was just over 62% down on the number (101) in 1998 and the lowest ever recorded number of injuries.

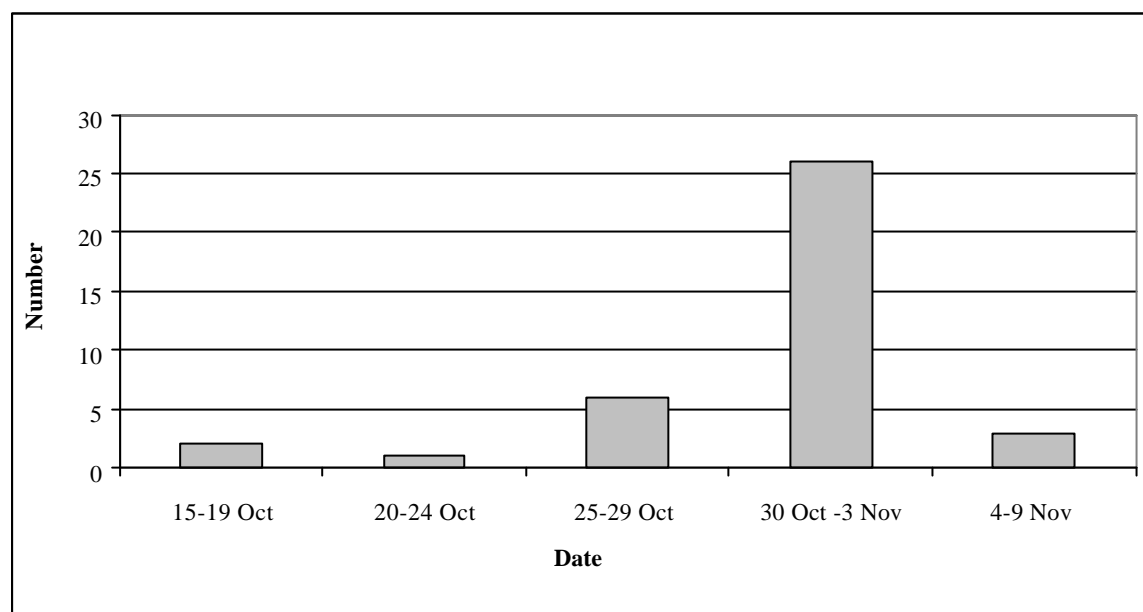
Figure 1: Fireworks Injuries, 1998–2002



Date of Injury

Of the 38 persons injured, 26 (68%) reported to an Accident or Emergency Department or Minor Injuries Unit in the period between 30 October and 3 November inclusive (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Fireworks Injuries, by Time Period, 2002



Age

In each of the years from 1998 to 2002, the majority of those injured were aged under 20 (Table 2).

Table 2: Fireworks Injuries, by Age, 1998–2002

Age	1998	1999	2000 ¹	2001	2002
Under 10	18	23	22	30	11
10-19	55	84	58	77	17
20 and Over	28	32	16	29	10
Total Injured	101	139	96	136	38

¹ Four persons had no age recorded in 2000

During the period 1998–2002, around 20% of all persons injured were children aged less than 10 years. This year, no children aged less than 5 years and only 11 children aged 5-9 years were injured by fireworks during the reporting period.

Area

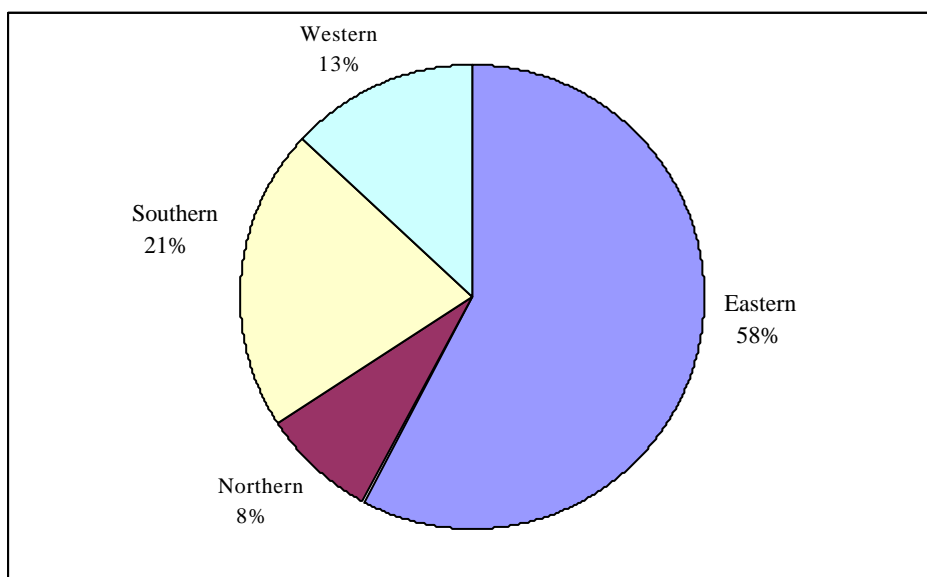
The number of those reporting to hospitals in the various Trust and Board areas is shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Fireworks Injuries, by Trust and Board Area of Reporting Hospital, 1998–2002

Trust/Board	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Belfast City	5	5	7	7	1
Down Lisburn	3	11	13	2	2
Mater Infirmorum	8	15	6	15	7
Royal Group	13	15	13	12	10
Ulster	12	17	9	14	2
Eastern Board	41	63	48	50	22
Causeway	4	6	3	7	1
United Hospitals	17	19	12	19	2
Northern Board	21	25	15	26	3
Armagh & Dungannon	3	1	5	4	1
Craigavon Group	5	14	5	14	1
Newry & Mourne	9	11	12	20	6
Southern Board	17	26	22	38	8
Altnagelvin Group	13	12	8	2	0
Sperrin Lakeland	9	13	7	20	5
Western Board	22	25	15	22	5
Total	101	139	100	136	38

58% of persons injured in 2002 reported to Trusts in the Eastern Health and Social Services Board area (Figure 3).

Figure 3: Fireworks Injuries, by Board Area, 2002



Site of Injury

In the year 2002, 33 persons received injuries to one site on the body, 4 persons received injuries to two sites and only one person received injuries to three sites. The most common sites of injury were the wrist and hand and to the face, head and neck (Table 4).

Table 4: Fireworks Injuries, by Site of Injury, 1998–2002

Site	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Wrist/Hand	45	51	41	72	13
Face/Head/Neck	27	32	33	35	14
Eye	29	32	22	22	8
Foot/Leg	8	20	12	16	4
Trunk	7	14	7	6	4
Arm	8	10	6	5	1
Not known	0	0	9	1	0
Total Sites	124	159	130	157	44

Method of Departure

In 2002, 42% of persons injured needed no further treatment, 18% were referred to a GP and 13% were asked to revisit the Accident and Emergency Department (Table 5).

Table 5: Fireworks Injuries, by Method of Departure from Accident and Emergency Department, 1998–2002

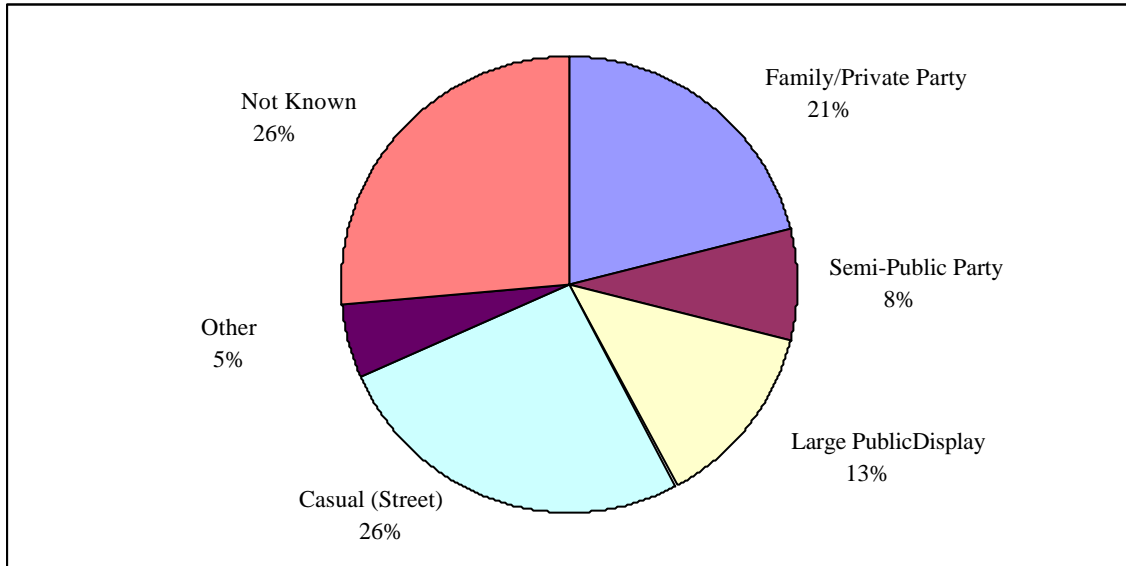
Method	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
No Further Treatment	41	32	33	30	16
Referred to GP	16	38	32	38	7
Revisit A & E	26	38	19	37	5
Referred to Outpatients	6	7	4	7	0
Admitted	5	5	4	6	5
Transfer to Another Hospital	5	12	2	13	1
Referral to Minor Injuries Unit	0	0	2	1	1
Dead on Arrival/Died	0	0	0	0	0
Other/Not Known	2	7	4	4	3
Total	101	139	100	136	38

This year, five persons were admitted to the hospital to which they reported, and only one was transferred to another hospital. There were no deaths from injuries.

Place of Occurrence

Place of occurrence of injury was recorded for 36 of the 38 persons injured. 26% of injuries were casual incidents in public places (e.g. in the street), 21% occurred at family or private parties and 13% occurred at large public displays. (Figure 4).

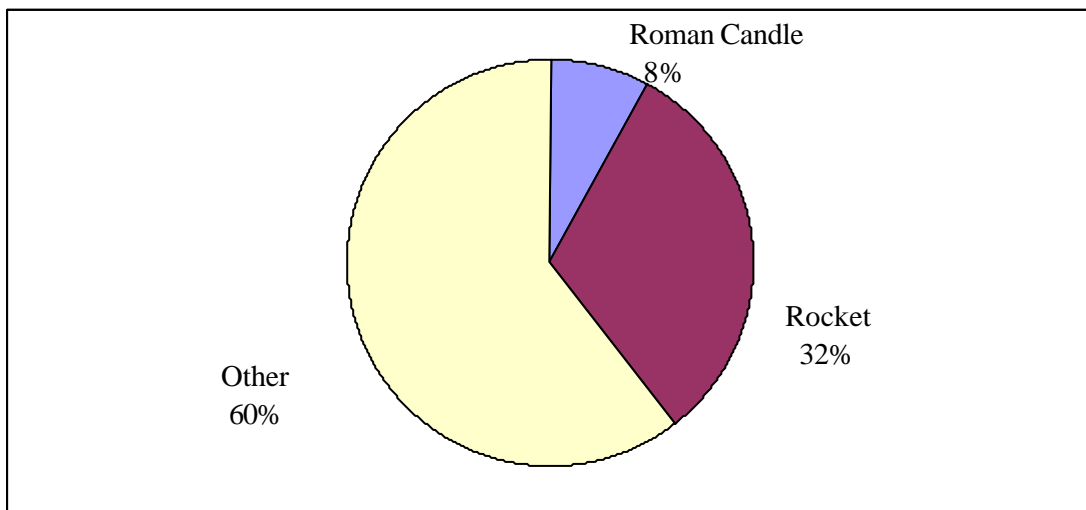
Figure 4: Fireworks Injuries, by Place of Occurrence, 2002



Type of Firework

The type of firework involved was recorded for all instances of injury. Rockets were the most common causes of injury (32%), followed by Roman Candles (8%) (Figure 5).

Figure 5: Fireworks Injuries, by Type of Firework, 2002



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 2002 covered a four-week period from Tuesday 9th October to Saturday 15th 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.
7. Similar information is collected by surveys in England, Scotland and Wales.

Additional Information

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

Office Information Manager
Regional Information Branch
Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety
Annexe 2
Castle Buildings
Stormont
BT4 3UD
Tel. 028 9052 2800
Internet address: <http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/hpss/statistics>