

Information Release

Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety

29 January 2004

Northern Ireland Fireworks Injuries 2003

This statistical release gives details of the number of persons injured by fireworks in the Halloween period of the year 2003. The survey covered a four-week period from Tuesday 14th October to Monday 10th November and covers those injuries treated at A&E Departments and Minor Injuries Units (see Note 1).

Key Points

- 45 persons were injured over the Halloween period of the year 2003, an increase of 7 (18%) from the 2002 figure.
- 67% of persons injured over the Halloween period attended an Accident and Emergency Department or Minor Injuries Unit between 28th October and 3rd November 2003.
- 84% of those injured were male (Table 1).
- When age of person injured was specified, 80% of those injured were aged under 20 (Table 2).
- There were no fatalities.
- The most common sites of injury were to the wrist or hand (56% of all injuries) and the face, head or neck area (18%) (Table 4).
- 31% were asked to revisit the Accident and Emergency Department at a later date, 22% of those injured required no further treatment and 20% were referred to their GP. Five persons were admitted to hospital (Table 5).

Detailed notes and definitions are shown in the attached Notes.

Total Injuries

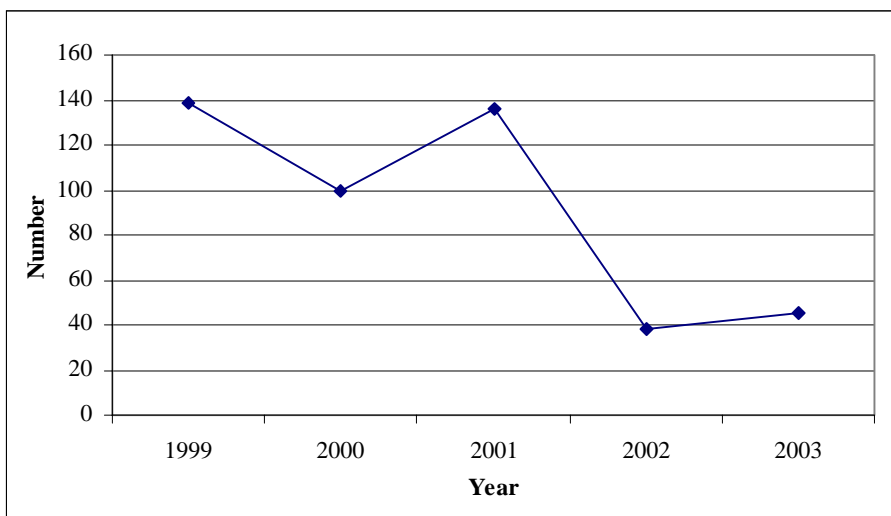
The total number of persons injured by fireworks during the 2003 reporting period was 45 (Table 1). This is an increase of 7 (18%) from the 2002 figure (38). There was a decrease in the number of females injured.

Table 1: Fireworks Injuries, 2003

Persons Injured	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	% change between 1999 - 2003
Males	98	77	115	28	38	-61.2
Females	41	23	20	10	7	-82.9
Not Known	0	0	1	0	0	-
Total	139	100	136	38	45	-67.6

This year, the downward trend in number of injuries between 2001 and 2002 was reversed (Figure 1). The number of injuries in 2003 was 68% down on the number (139) in 1999.

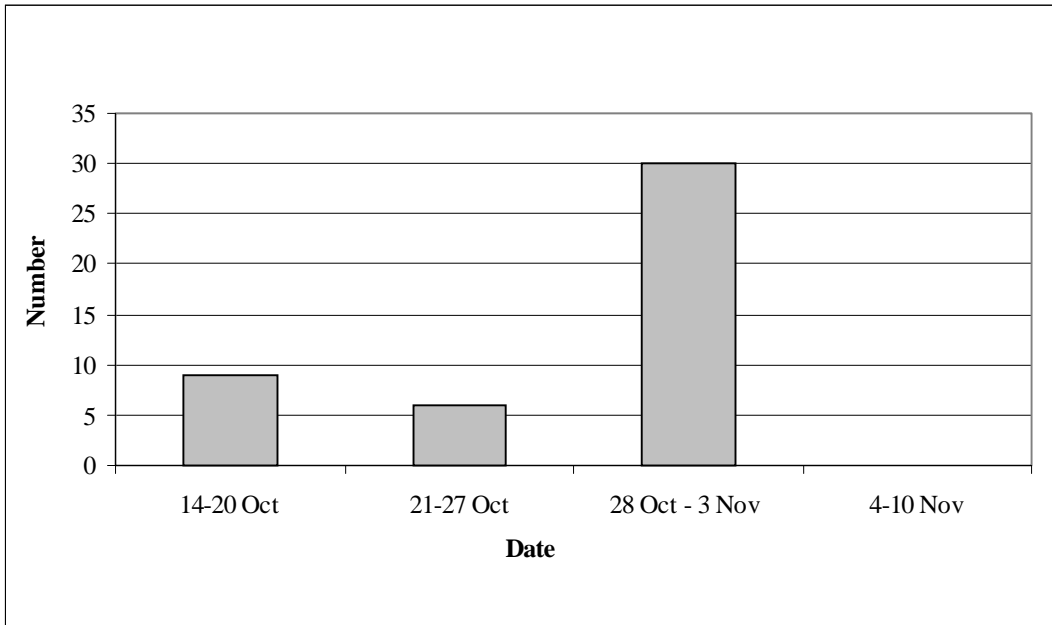
Figure 1: Fireworks Injuries, 1999–2003



Date of Injury

Of the 45 persons injured, 30 (67%) reported to an Accident or Emergency Department or Minor Injuries Unit in the period between 28th October and 3rd November inclusive (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Fireworks Injuries, by Time Period, 2003



Age

In each of the years from 1999 to 2003, the majority of those injured were aged under 20 (Table 2).

Table 2: Fireworks Injuries, by Age, 1999–2003

Age	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Under 10	23	22	30	11	6
10-19	84	58	77	17	29
20 and Over	32	16	29	10	9
Unknown	0	4	0	0	1

During the period 1999–2003, around 20% of all persons injured were children aged less than 10 years. This year, no children aged less than 5 years and only 6 children aged 5-9 years were injured by fireworks during the reporting period.

Area

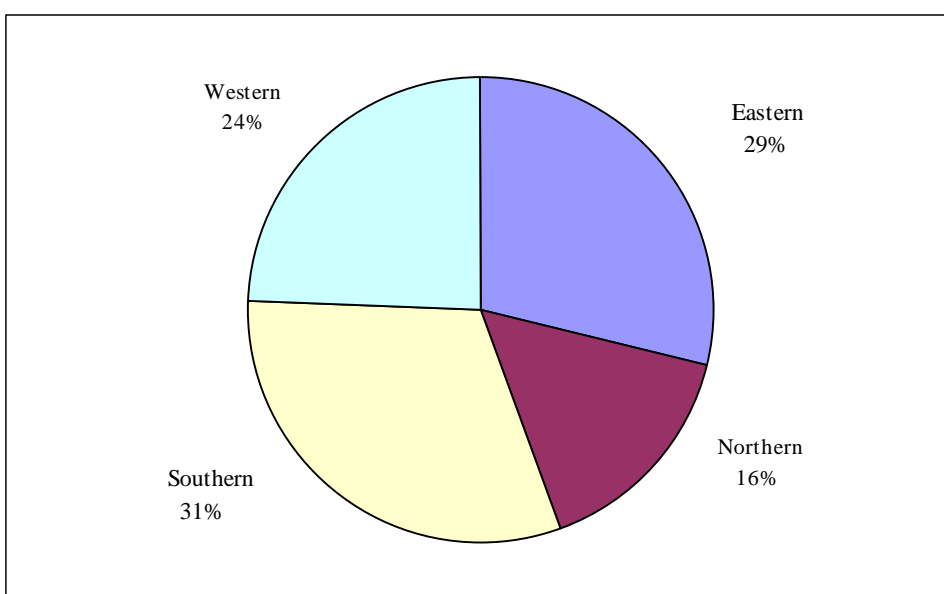
The number of those reporting to hospitals in the various Trust and Board areas is shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Fireworks Injuries, by Trust and Board Area of Reporting Hospital, 1999–2003

Trust/Board	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Belfast City	5	7	7	1	0
Down Lisburn	11	13	2	2	0
Mater Infirmorum	15	6	15	7	3
Royal Group	15	13	12	10	6
Ulster	17	9	14	2	4
<i>Eastern Board</i>	63	48	50	22	13
Causeway	6	3	7	1	1
United Hospitals	19	12	19	2	6
<i>Northern Board</i>	25	15	26	3	7
Armagh & Dungannon	1	5	4	1	3
Craigavon Group	14	5	14	1	8
Newry & Mourne	11	12	20	6	3
<i>Southern Board</i>	26	22	38	8	14
Altnagelvin Group	12	8	2	0	2
Sperrin Lakeland	13	7	20	5	9
<i>Western Board</i>	25	15	22	5	11
Total	139	100	136	38	45

31% of persons injured in 2003 reported to Trusts in the Southern Health and Social Services Board area (Figure 3).

Figure 3: Fireworks Injuries, by Board Area, 2003



Site of Injury

In the year 2003, 35 persons received injuries to one site on the body and 10 persons received injuries to two 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, 1999–2003

Site	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Wrist/Hand	51	41	72	13	31
Face/Head/Neck	32	33	35	14	10
Eye	32	22	22	8	5
Foot/Leg	20	12	16	4	2
Trunk	14	7	6	4	4
Arm	10	6	5	1	3
Total Sites	159	121	156	44	55

Method of Departure

In 2003, 31% were asked to revisit the Accident and Emergency Department, 22% of persons injured needed no further treatment and 20% were referred to a GP (Table 5).

Table 5: Fireworks Injuries, by Method of Departure from Accident and Emergency Department, 1999–2003

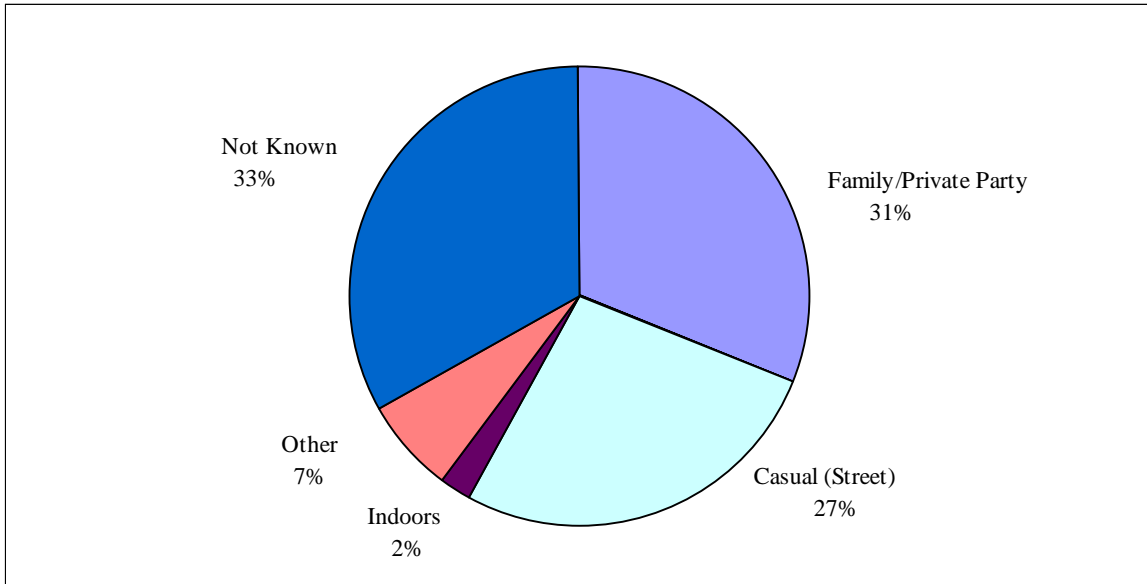
Method	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
No Further Treatment	32	33	30	16	10
Referred to GP	38	32	38	7	9
Revisit A & E	38	19	37	5	14
Referred to Outpatients	7	4	7	0	2
Admitted	5	4	6	5	5
Transfer to Another Hospital	12	2	13	1	0
Referral to Minor Injuries Unit	0	2	1	1	3
Dead on Arrival/Died	0	0	0	0	0
Other/Not Known	7	4	4	3	2
Total	139	100	136	38	45

This year, five persons were admitted to the hospital to which they reported. There were no deaths from injuries.

Place of Occurrence

Place of occurrence of injury was recorded for 30 of the 45 persons injured. 31% of injuries occurred at family or private parties, 27% of injuries were casual incidents in public places (e.g. in the street), and 2% occurred indoors. No injuries were recorded at either large public displays or semi-public parties (Figure 4).

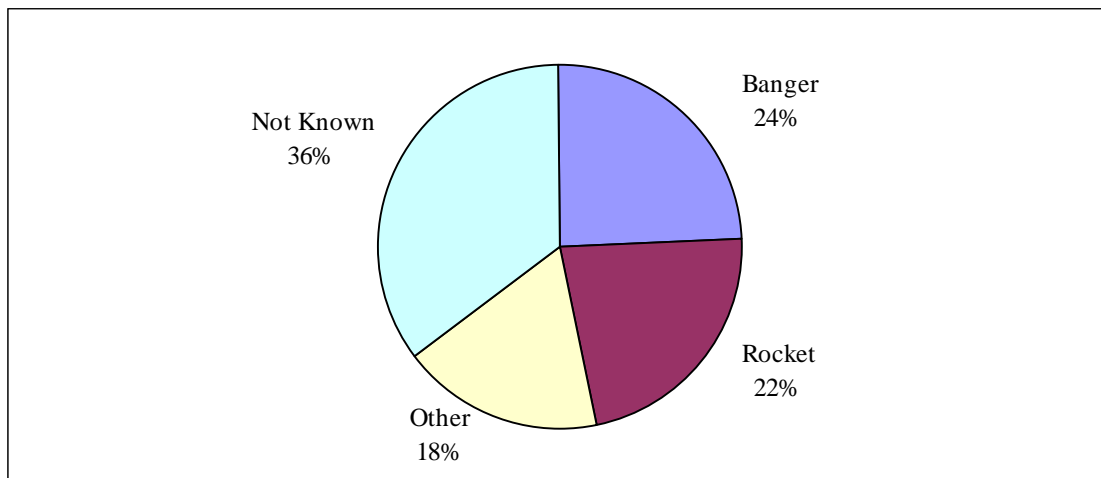
Figure 4: Fireworks Injuries, by Place of Occurrence, 2003



Type of Firework

The type of firework involved was recorded for 29 of the 45 persons injured. Bangers were the most common causes of injury (24%), followed by Rockets (22%) (Figure 5).

Figure 5: Fireworks Injuries, by Type of Firework, 2003



Notes

1. This information is collected via a special manual exercise carried out by Accident and Emergency 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 2003 covered a four-week period from Tuesday 14th October to Monday 10th 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 3SQ

Tel. 028 9052 2800

Internet address: <http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/stats&research/order.html#fireworks>