

State Fire Issues Safety Alert On Use Of 'Fuel Gel' Products And 'Fire Pots'



Albany - The New York State Office of Fire Prevention and Control issued a Fire Safety Alert to advise fire service officials, code enforcement officials, and the public of the hazards associated with the use of "fuel gel" products and burning devices.

Deputy State Fire Administrator John F. Mueller said, "There have been recent incidents of severe burn injuries to residents in the state as a result of the improper use of fuel gel products and devices. These incidents involved the use of 'fuel gel' burning 'fire pots.' These pots are designed to be used as decorations in place of candles or other torches."

Fuel gel is an alcohol-based ignitable liquid with added ingredients which thicken the liquid to a consistency of syrup or a "gel" like appearance. Fuel gel is also available with an insect repellent additive, such as citronella.

The fuel is intended to be poured into a metal cup which is then inserted into a ceramic "fire pot." The fuel gel is then ignited and burns openly as a torch without a wick.

The alcohol base of the fuel gel by nature makes the product very volatile and comes with prominent safety warnings on the label. The thick consistency of the gel makes it stick to most surfaces including human skin and clothing.

Failure to closely follow all of the safety warnings can have and has had disastrous results including serious burn injuries and fire damage.

The Deputy State Fire Administrator urges all New Yorkers to use extreme caution when using any fuel gel burning device or product, and offers the following safety tips:

- Read the instructions carefully before utilizing the product or device
- Do not over fill the unit with fuel
- Do not add fuel to any lit flame or fire
- Use a sniffer to extinguish the flame - Do not attempt to blow out the fire
- In case of an emergency, Do not attempt to extinguish the fire with water
- Do not allow children to add or ignite the fuel at any time
- In well-lit areas, the flames produced by burning fuel gel may be hard to detect – keep devices away from all combustibles or anything that may catch on fire. A minimum of a three-foot radius is suggested
- Keep devices away from children and pets
- Place devices in a safe location to prevent accidental contact or exposure to skin or clothing
- Never leave a burning device unattended

