

Don't Let This Product Torch Your 4th of July Plans

Last year, in the days leading up to the 4th of July, several people across the country were poisoned by torch fuel. The Nebraska Regional Poison Center would like to once again remind parents about this product and the dangers associated with it. The fluid that goes into the outdoor tiki- style torches contains a hydrocarbon, which is similar to lamp oil and gasoline. The liquid is a concern when it gets into the lungs, which often happens when people choke after swallowing it. The symptoms of hydrocarbon poisoning may include difficulty breathing, persistent cough, fever, chest pain and lethargy.

The product is sold in containers that are transparent with colorful labels. Torch fuel has been mistaken for apple juice by children and adults. A young child is not likely to understand the difference between torch fuel and juice.

According to the 2010 Annual Report of the American Association of Poison Control Centers, 1,350 children under the age of five were exposed to dangerous lamp oils in 2010. This category includes fuel used in tiki-style torches. Store all of these products and all dangerous chemicals in their original containers out of the reach of children and away from food, preferably in a locked cabinet. Always read labels carefully before using.



Call the Poison Center if you have any questions. The Poison Center is a free service to the community. Call 1-800-222-1222 to talk to a Registered Nurse immediately about all of your poisoning questions.