

# Novelty Lighter Facts

- **Child-playing fires cause thousands of injuries and hundreds of deaths each year.** The National Fire Protection Association has estimated that in 2002 alone, almost 14,000 child-playing structure fires resulted in 210 deaths, 1,250 injuries, and \$339 million in direct damage. Most of these fires were started with matches or lighters.
- **Novelty lighters—fully functioning cigarette lighters—are indistinguishable, even by many adults, from toys.** Novelty lighters come in many shapes appealing to children, including animals, cameras, cars and trucks, popular cartoon characters, food items and more. They sometimes feature flashing lights and sound effects. These characteristics make cigarette lighters, inherently dangerous products, particularly appealing to children.
- **Novelty lighters have been associated with property damage, injuries, and even deaths.** In 2007, a 2-year-old set his house in Arkansas on fire by playing with a lighter shaped like a motorcycle. He and his 15-month-old brother died in the blaze. In 2000, a 2-year-old in Oregon started a house fire by playing with a lighter resembling a toy dolphin. He was rescued by a firefighter, but suffered permanent brain damage, while his 6-year-old brother died.
- **Nationally recognized fire protection and children’s safety groups support legislation to ban novelty lighters, as does the lighter industry.** The National Association of Fire Marshals, the Congressional Fire Services Institute, the Lighter Association, Safe Kids USA and others have publicly supported novelty lighter bans. Maine and Tennessee have already enacted laws prohibiting the sale of novelty lighters.

**Cigarette lighters are inherently dangerous and must be kept out of the hands of children. They should not be designed in shapes that will encourage children to reach for and play with them.**



*For more information, please contact:*  
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