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Maine Man Fatally Struck by Mini Cannon Projectile During Fireworks Gathering

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A 41-year-old man in Oxford County, Maine, was killed over the weekend after being struck by a projectile fired from a “mini cannon” during a neighborhood fireworks display,

according to local authorities. The incident occurred Saturday night during a gathering at a home in the town of Oxford.

The victim, identified as Joseph Hennessey of South Paris, collapsed after being hit and was later pronounced dead at a nearby hospital. The Oxford County Sheriff's Office responded to the scene, and the case remains under investigation by the Maine State Police.

According to a report from *WMTW*, neighbor Kevin Boutin described hearing a loud explosion moments before emergency responders arrived. "I heard a pretty big bang, which I thought was probably a cannon because I've heard them and I've seen them at different places that I've been at," Boutin said. "Then the fireworks stopped and then all of a sudden, the ambulance was here and the fire trucks."

The state medical examiner's office confirmed Hennessey died from injuries caused by a projectile from a homemade or novelty mini cannon.

While traditional consumer fireworks are common in July celebrations, the use of mini cannons or similar devices poses additional dangers not typically associated with standard fireworks.

This incident is part of a troubling trend in recent years involving fatal accidents linked to fireworks. Earlier this summer, an 8-year-old girl was struck and killed during a Fourth of July event, and in 2023, a South Carolina man died after placing a lit firework on his head.

Authorities have not released further details on who operated the cannon or whether any charges may be filed in connection with the incident. The investigation is ongoing as officials review the circumstances surrounding the gathering and the use of the device.

Safety around fireworks, particularly unconventional devices, continues to be a concern for law enforcement and first responders during the summer months, when the majority of related injuries and deaths occur.