



Serious Injuries Result When Exploding Ceramic Gel Pots Send Flaming Gel Fuel Flying

By ELISABETH LEAMY

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The Reyer family of Long Island, NY, was preparing to celebrate life. Now they're trying to ward off death.

Nancy Reyer's 14-year-old son, Michael Hubbard, was helping set up for his aunt's wedding celebration in Riverhead on May 28 when the family says a ceramic fire pot blew up, splattering him with flaming gel fuel.

"Now my son's with third-degree burns on his face and he might not live," Nancy Reyer said, sobbing. "We're all laughing and having a good time, it was really nice and then ... my nephew didn't know that the candle was lit and he poured some of the liquid and it just exploded, and all I saw was a flash and my son went up in flames."

Michael's condition is now grave, his organs threatening to shut down as he struggles for his life at Stony Brook University Medical Center on Long Island.

"It looked like it was going to be a nice little candle that would sit on a nice display. We had no idea we were buying a bomb," Fran Reyer-Johnson, Michael's aunt, told "Good Morning America."

In Michael's case – and others -- the victims say the fire seemed to be out, so they added more fuel. That caused an explosion of flaming gel that they say stuck to their bodies like napalm and was incredibly hard to put out.

Fire departments around the country say it's a hazardous new product category.

The product that caused Michael's accident and two others in the past few weeks is the FireBurners ceramic pot with fire gel fuel, sold by Napa Home and Garden. The company told the New York Times it asked its retailer, Bed Bath & Beyond, to stop selling the product on Friday.

But at a store in Maryland, we easily found several fire pots and fuel bottles right on the shelves. The most vivid warning about the danger of adding more fuel is printed on a piece of packaging that you throw away.

Napa said in a published interview that it's only heard a handful of complaints out of tens of thousands of products sold and that it now plans to put bigger, better warnings on its products.

"To me it's gasoline in a can. It's very dangerous ... We need to take it off the market ... it's a lethal weapon," Nancy Reyer said.

We asked Napa Home and Garden and Bed Bath & Beyond for comment. Bed Bath & Beyond sent us this statement:

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"The safety of our customers and our associates is of paramount importance to us. So in an abundance of caution and pending our investigation, Bed Bath & Beyond has instructed its stores nationwide to suspend selling this product."

Napa Home and Garden reaffirmed its intention to pull the products off the market while it reevaluates its warning labels. To see Napa's complete statement [click here](#).

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