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Welcoming 2012: The Chemistry of Fireworks
Thursday, December 8, 2011 – 2-3 p.m. EDT

New Year and fireworks. Pop! Bang! Whooo! Boom! We love them. These are the sounds of celebration. Although the basic recipe and techniques used in preparing the black powder (gun powder) in modern-day fireworks is the same as it was 500 years ago, advances in chemistry have allowed us to create spectacular displays we enjoy today. Join our speaker, Chris Mocella as he describes the delicate chemistry that brings loud sounds and brilliant colorful images to welcome your new year. Just don't try this at home!



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What You Will Learn

- The basic “re-dox” principles in pyrotechnic reactions
- Chemical ingredients in fireworks
- Putting fireworks together and igniting them
- Special effects: color generation and “stars”
- And much more...

Meet Your Experts



Chris Mocella began working with Dr. John Conkling as an undergraduate research associate while pursuing his Bachelor's degree in chemistry at Washington College in Chestertown, MD, with a focus on energetic materials and pyrotechnics. Chris continued working with the Summer Pyrotechnic Seminar series while attending the University of Virginia for graduate school in organometallic chemistry. He is now a tenured chemist with the U.S. Customs and Border Protection Laboratories. Most recently, Chris was co-author on the second addition of Dr. Conkling's The Chemistry of Pyrotechnics book.

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