

DC Fire and Emergency Medical Services

Office of the Fire Marshal

Firework Safety

DC Fire & EMS Department wants you to have a safe and fun filled 4th of July Celebration, by celebrating safely and responsibly. More fires are reported on Independence Day than on any other day of the year, half those fires are related to fireworks.

The District of Columbia has strict laws governing the sale of fireworks. When buying your fireworks purchase them from an approved firework stand or vendor.

Illegal fireworks continue to be a serious problem. Over the past 10 years, 30-33% of injuries associated with fireworks have typically been caused by illegal fireworks, misuse, or homemade explosives.



Characteristics of illegal fireworks

- Any fireworks that move.
- Any fireworks that explode.
- Any fireworks that emit a spark or flame greater than 12 inches.
- Any fireworks that have a side mounted fuse or a fuse inserted at any point along the length of the product's surface.
- Any fireworks that the Fire Marshal considers to be dangerous to the safety of any person or property.



DC Fire and EMS

Examples of illegal fireworks

- Firecrackers
- Cherry bombs
- Roman candles
- Salutes
- Floral shells
- Bottle rockets
- Sparklers greater than 20 inches long.

Examples of legal fireworks

- Sparklers less than 20 inches, torches.
- Box fires, fountains, and cones.
- Non-poisonous snakes, paper novelty items.
- Colored lights and paper caps.

Have a safe holiday

- Always read and follow label directions and don't mishandle fireworks.
- Have an adult present.
- Use outdoors only.
- Always have water handy (a garden hose and a bucket).
- Dispose of fireworks properly by soaking them in water and then disposing of them in your trash can.
- Never experiment or make your own fireworks.
- Light only one firework at a time never re-lights a "dud" firework.
- Never give fireworks to small children.
- Never throw or point fireworks at other people.
- Never carry fireworks in your pocket.
- When lighting fireworks, use a candle lighter or a long match. The more distance you can put between you and the device, the better.

#DCFireSAFE