

Mason County Sheriff Calls for Responsible Fireworks Use

Local News

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SHELTON, Wash. - With the approach of the Independence Day Holiday, the Mason County Sheriff's Office in cooperation with the State Fire Marshal offers some tips and information on the responsible use of Fireworks. According to the State Fire Marshal's Office in 2008 there were 785 fireworks-related emergency incidents in Washington resulting in \$208,018 million in property loss. Of the 785 incidents in 2008, 412 occurred between July 3 and July 5. A majority of injuries are from illegal fireworks and children between the ages of 8 and 14 sustain the most injuries.

Accordingly we make the following recommendations: **1. CHILDREN SHOULD NOT HANDLE FIREWORKS.**

Never let children handle, play with, or light any fireworks. Only adults should handle and light the fireworks. The fireworks are great family fun, but they burn very hot and are intended to be handled only by adults. **2. DO NOT USE ALCOHOL WITH FIREWORKS.**

Please do not consume any alcohol while lighting or handling fireworks. Fireworks must be used only by individuals who act in a responsible manner and who are not under the influence of alcohol or drugs. If you are impaired in any way when you use fireworks, you increase the possibilities of misuse and injury to yourself and others. **3. FOLLOW THE LAWS; USE COMMON SENSE**

Follow your local and state laws regarding the possession and use of fireworks, and use good common sense when using fireworks. Read all directions, cautions, labels, and warnings on each individual firework item to understand the product performance and hazards associated with it. If your state has shooters' sites, use them. Use only those fireworks permitted under the laws of the state and local jurisdiction in which you are using the fireworks. **4. USE FIREWORKS ON A HARD SURFACE IN A CLEAR OPEN AREA**

Always light fireworks on a hard, flat, and level surface to insure the stability of the items. Grass is generally not suitable for any item intended to be used in an upright position. (If lighting fireworks on grass, lay down a flat wooden board for a shooting surface.) Always keep the audience (and particularly children) a safe distance away from the shooting site. Always light your fireworks in a clear open area away from buildings, vehicles, and shrubbery. A minimum clear radius of 30 feet for fountains and other ground based items and 100 yards for any aerial product is recommended. You should avoid lighting the fireworks in any area where there is dry grass or brush that could catch fire or near any flammable items. Never use fireworks indoors. Never shoot fireworks in metal or glass containers. **5. KEEP CLEAR OF THE FIREWORKS.**

Never put your head or any part of your body over the top of any fireworks product. Never look into a tube to check on the firework item. Never hold a lighted firework item in your hand. Keep as far from the firework item as possible when lighting. **6. USE CARE IN LIGHTING THE FIREWORKS.**

Always light fireworks products with punk, a Phantom Pyro Torch, a flare or an extended butane lighting device. This will enable you to keep as far from the firework item as possible. If needed, use a flashlight at night so the fuse can be easily seen; never use a lantern or other flame producing device near fireworks for illumination. Light the fireworks product and get away quickly. Respect the fireworks, because if used improperly, they can be dangerous. **7. ONE AT A TIME.**

Light only one firework item at a time. **8. DON'T USE MALFUNCTIONING OR "DUD" ITEMS.**

Never attempt to re light, alter, or fix any "dud" firework item. If a firework item fails to ignite, let it stand for at least five minutes, then immerse it in water. Dispose of the item properly. You can always return the item to your Phantom dealer for replacement. **9. HAVE WATER CLOSE BY.**

Have an accessible fire extinguisher, water supply, hose, or bucket of water nearby for emergencies.

During any fireworks shoot, there should always be one individual assigned as the fireman, whose sole job is to be alert and at the ready with a water source. **10. WINDY CONDITIONS.**

Be cautious of lighting any fireworks during strong wind conditions. Fireworks should be lit with the prevailing wind blowing away from the spectators. If there is a significant wind shift during the time you are lighting the fireworks, rearrange the shooting site to accommodate the wind shift or stop shooting until the windy conditions subside. **11. USE CARE IN HANDLING FIREWORKS.**

Do not carry fireworks in your pocket or on your person. It is preferable to keep the products in a closed container before ignition. Always be careful in handling fireworks to prevent dropping them. Never smoke when handling fireworks. **12. NEVER USE THE FIREWORKS AS WEAPONS.**

Never aim, point, or throw any fireworks at another person or at any property. **13. STORAGE OF FIREWORKS.**

Always store fireworks in a cool, dry place and dispose of fireworks properly. **14. USE FIREWORKS OUTDOORS.**

Never use fireworks indoors; only use them outdoors under safe conditions. **15. PURCHASE FIREWORKS FROM RELIABLE DEALERS.**

Buy fireworks only from reliable, licensed fireworks dealers. Licensed and reliable dealers will only carry those products that meet standards set and enforced by the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission. Do not use illegal explosives; do not alter any firework device; do not make your own fireworks. **16. BE CAREFUL WITH ANIMALS.**

The noise and lights of fireworks often frighten some animals, so it is very important that you are careful with pets and farm animals. You may want to consider moving the animals away or keeping them inside during your display. Please be considerate of your pets and animals when using fireworks. **Regulations Dates and times fireworks can be discharged in areas with no ban or restrictions:**

June 28th Between 12:00 Noon and 11:00 P.M. June 29th through July 3rd Between 9:00 A.M. and 11:00 P.M. July 4th Between 9:00 A.M. and 12:00 Midnight. July 5th Between 9:00 A.M. and 11:00 P.M. Dec. 31st Between 6:00 P.M. and 1:00 A.M. **Use only state legal fireworks purchased at a state licensed stand. Check for restrictions or bans in the area you will be discharging your fireworks.**

Legal and Illegal Fireworks:

Legal	Legal	Legal
only on Tribal Lands	Illegal Explosive Devices	
Novelty & Smoke Items	Firecrackers and Chasers	M-80's or larger
Sparklers and Spinners	Bottle Rockets	Cherry Bombs
Multi Aerials	Missiles and Rockets	Tennis Ball Bombs
Helicopters		
Cones and Fountains		
Wheels		
Roman Candles		

Reloadable Mortars 1 3/4" or smaller The Independence Day holiday weekend is always very eventful. The Mason County Sheriff's Office may experience up to 200 calls for service per day this weekend. The number of people in Mason County can double on holiday weekends from visitors enjoying our magnificent forests and lakes. This creates dramatic increases on law enforcement resources. When calls for service spike our deputies are trained to prioritize those calls and handle the most serious incidents first. For example assaults, injury traffic collisions, and felony crimes in progress are handled before excessive noise in a neighborhood or vandalism to mailboxes with no suspects. Fireworks complaints involving noise only will be considered low priority. Fireworks

incidents involving immediate threats to life or property will be considered high priority. The Sheriff's Office has experienced a significant reduction in personnel in the past year, so response times for low priority calls will at times be longer than usual. Sheriff Casey Salisbury said "I am committed to provide the best law enforcement services possible given the resources we have at our disposal. We thank you for your patience if it does take us a little longer to get to your call."