Statistics Reveal Fires Caused by the Improper Use of Fireworks

Local News

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State Fire Marshal Michael G. Matlick announced today that in 2008 there were 518 fires caused by fireworks over the Independence Day holiday. Persons using fireworks must remember that there are legal consequences to damages caused by the irresponsible use of fireworks. Consequences range from being charged with malicious mischief to assault or a gross misdemeanor for possession of illegal explosive devices such as fireworks that have been tampered with or altered. A gross misdemeanor can bring a fine of up to $5,000 and/or one year in prison. Possession of illegal explosive devices, such as M-80's, M-100's and larger, altered fireworks, and public display mortars, is a federal offence.Summer weather conditions make grasses and other vegetation dry and susceptible to fire. A person found responsible for a wildland fire started by a firework device can be required to pay restitution for the fire suppression costs. Fire suppression costs of a wildland fire can be in the hundreds of thousands of dollars.

Residents should talk with family members and guests about the fireworks laws for their area. To learn more about fireworks ordinances in cities and counties and other information regarding fireworks, check the fireworks safety web site at http://www.wsp.wa.gov/fire/fireworks.htm. Independence Day is a time to celebrate our freedoms. Personal fireworks require personal responsibility. Remember the three B's of fireworks safety: Be Prepared-Have water nearby and put pets indoors, Be Safe-Only adults should light fireworks, and Be Responsible-clean up fireworks debris. The Office of the State Fire Marshal is committed to promoting injury prevention and fire safety during the celebrations of Independence Day and New Years when fireworks are often used. Our mission is to implement a comprehensive and effective educational and enforcement program for fireworks injury prevention and fire safety. The list of public fireworks displays now includes the address of a web site with additional information about the display. Resources & Related Links

Below are other informational links to fireworks safety and injury prevention resources:American Pyrotechnics Association Consumer Product Safety Commission Fireworks Laws - WAC 212-17 Municipal Research and Services Center National Council on Fireworks Safety National Fire Protection Association NFPA Risk Watch - Fireworks Safety Pyrotechnics Guild International Fireworks Safety Campaign Kit

Thank you for joining our effort to promote injury prevention and fire safety during 4th of July

celebrations. Listed below are resources and links to give you easy access to any information you may need regarding consumer fireworks and safety.Campaign Kit Introduction
Community Planning Guide
Description of Legal Fireworks
Instructor Guide
Fireworks Ordinances by County & City
Fireworks Safety Video
Fireworks Statistical Report
2009 Fireworks Media Event
Order Campaign Kit, CD, or Video
Post Your Local Fireworks Event
Poster of Legal and Illegal Fireworks
Public Fireworks Events by City
Proximate Display Training
Pyrotechnic Training Classes