

JUNE: Week 4 – Fireworks Safety

Overview: Celebrating our nation’s independence with fireworks has been a longstanding tradition in the United States. However, many people are seriously injured each year by their careless use. The SFMO encourages Tennesseans to have a fire-safe Fourth by leaving the fireworks to the professionals. To avoid the risk of injury and property damage associated with consumer fireworks, join other community members in attending a public display put on by trained and licensed professionals.

According to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), more than twice the number of fires is reported on Independence Day than on any other day of the year in the United States. 2 out of 5 of these fires are caused by fireworks. According to the Tennessee Fire Incident Reporting System, from 2015-2019, Tennessee fire departments responded to 405 fires caused by fireworks. Those fires caused over \$1.8 million in property damage.

Resources: The following resources are available:

- “Consumer Fireworks Safety Public Service Announcement” YouTube video
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PcFuIEwbITA>
- Fireworks safety from NFPA
 - <http://www.nfpa.org/public-education/by-topic/seasonal-fires/fireworks>
- Fireworks infographic
 - <http://www.nfpa.org/~media/images/public-education/by-topic/fireworks/fireworksinfographic.jpg>
- Fireworks safety tip sheet
 - <http://www.nfpa.org/~media/files/public-education/resources/safety-tip-sheets/fireworkssafetytips.pdf>

Media Tools: Use the following pre-written media releases and social media posts in your efforts to promote safety in hotels and motels:

- **Twitter**
 - Leave fireworks to the professionals – do not use consumer fireworks! <https://www.nfpa.org/fireworks> @TNCommerceInsur
 - Did you know: Sparklers burn at 1200 degrees Fahrenheit, hot enough to cause 3rd degree burns! <https://www.nfpa.org/fireworks> @TNCommerceInsur
 - More fires are reported July 4th than any other day & fireworks account for more than one half of them! <https://www.nfpa.org/fireworks> @TNCommerceInsur
- **Facebook**
 - Consumer fireworks include sparklers and firecrackers. Did you know that the tip of a sparkler burns at a temperature of more than 1,200 degrees Fahrenheit, which is hot enough to cause 3rd degree burns? www.nfpa.org/fireworks
 - Watch our Fireworks Safety PSA - Dan Doofus urges people not to use consumer Fireworks because they are too dangerous: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PcFuIEwbITA>
 - Patrick and Marci Foy, and their daughter, Olivia, were injured while attending a family celebration, and were among more than a dozen people hurt. Hear them tell their story: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PIAB-NuZYfl>
 - A dramatic demonstration of the dangers of consumer fireworks, hosted by the Alliance to Stop Consumer Fireworks (coordinated by the National Fire Protection Association) and the

Massachusetts State Fire Marshal's Office. This video shows the damage that fireworks could cause a person standing too close to fireworks:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N0uMUH6jta0>

Educator Tip: Make sure your department is reporting fireworks incidents properly! Reporting fireworks incidents properly to the Tennessee Fire Incident Reporting System (TFIRS) is extremely important. The more we know about a problem, the more we can do to prevent it. ***See supplemental information section for guidelines on how to document fireworks incidents in TFIRS.***

NFPA/SFMO Messaging:

Follow the Law:

Counties and most cities have their own ordinances and restrictions regarding firework use, so it's important to first check with your local police station or fire department to determine the local law before setting off fireworks in your area. A 2007 law prevents children under 16 years of age from purchasing fireworks. Those who are age 16 or 17 must present a photo ID to purchase them.

State legislation reclassified sky lanterns as special fireworks exclusively for use by individuals with a professional license (certified flame effect operator, certified outdoor display operator or certified proximate pyrotechnic operator). The general public cannot purchase or use sky lanterns. If sky lanterns are found in the possession of someone who does not have a professional license issued by the State Fire Marshal, they can be confiscated and later destroyed. In addition, a state law passed in July 2014 prohibits flying a drone (unmanned aircraft) above an outdoor ticketed event with more than 100 people, or in the vicinity of a fireworks display site, without the permission of the event operator.

Think Safety:

If consumer fireworks are legal where you live and you decide to set them off on your own, be sure to follow these important safety tips:

- Never allow children to handle or ignite fireworks.
- Read and follow all warnings and instructions.
- Wear eye protection.
- Be sure other people are out of range before lighting fireworks.
- Never throw or point fireworks at people or animals.
- Only light fireworks outdoors on a smooth, flat surface away from homes, dry leaves and flammable materials.
- Never try to re-light fireworks that have not fully functioned.
- Keep a bucket of water and a garden hose nearby in case of a malfunction or fire.
- Sparklers are not toys and cause hundreds of injuries every year. Sparklers burn hot, can reach temperatures as high as 1,200° F, and stay hot long after they've burned out. You wouldn't hand a matchbook or lighter to a child to wave around or play with, so don't give a child a sparkler.