



County of Caroline
Department of Fire-Rescue & Emergency Management

PRESS RELEASE

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Caroline County Fire and Rescue urges fireworks safety this July 4th

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: June 30, 2010

As we all prepare to fire up our grills and spend another 4th of July with our families, neighbors, and friends it is just as important to be safe as it is to have fun and spend a well deserved day off remembering what our country's Independence Day means to you.

Fireworks are the traditional way to end a 4th of July celebration. There is nothing better than relaxing after the sun goes down and watching a thousand bright colors light up the night sky. We all have to be responsible when using these products; not only are they beautiful but they are just as equally dangerous and can even be deadly.

In 2008, 7,000 fireworks-related injuries were treated in U.S. hospital emergency rooms. Five out of six (84%) of these emergency room fireworks injuries involved fireworks that Federal regulations permit consumers to use. The highest Injury rates were for teens aged 15 to 19 and children aged 5 to 9. Additionally in 2008, an estimated 22,500 reported fires were started by fireworks. These fires resulted in one civilian death and \$42 million in direct property damage.

Listed below are just a few safety tips that will help you and your family have a safe and memorable July 4th celebration:

1. Use fireworks outside only
2. Know and obey all local laws. If certain fireworks are not legal where you live, don't use them. Caroline County does not allow fireworks that shoot projectiles into the air, such as roman candles or bottle rockets without an approved County fireworks display permit.
3. Always have water handy, whether it is a hose or a bucket. Avoid dry vegetation in the display area. Never display fireworks in high wind conditions.
4. Only use fireworks as intended. Don't try to alter or combine them in any way.
5. Never relight a "dud" firework. Wait 20 minutes and then soak it in a bucket of water.
6. Use common sense. Spectators should keep a safe distance from the shooter and the shooter should wear eye protection.
7. Alcohol and fireworks never mix. Have a "designated shooter"
8. Only persons over the age of 12 should be allowed to handle sparklers of any type.
9. Do not ever use homemade fireworks or illegal explosives: **THEY CAN KILL YOU!**
Report illegal explosives to the fire department or sheriff's office.

For more information on fireworks safety, please contact the Department of Fire and Rescue Administration office at 804-633-9831.

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