



NEWS RELEASE

Date: July 2, 2010
Release Date: Immediately
Contact: Brian Barker, Public Information Officer, 503-441-9324 (pager)

Tualatin Valley Fire and Rescue Prepared for Busy Holiday Weekend

Firefighters and deputy fire marshals from Tualatin Valley Fire and Rescue are prepared for a busy three day weekend despite cool temperatures and recent rainfall.

“Fireworks, either legal or illegal, can still cause deadly fires despite the cool weather,” says TVF&R public information officer Brian Barker, “we hope the public remembers to keep it legal and keep it safe this weekend.”

The Law

This year, Tualatin Valley Fire and Rescue is partnering with local law enforcement agencies to educate the public about fireworks safety and to crack down on illegal fireworks. TVF&R firefighters will conduct neighborhood drive-bys on the Fourth of July and deputy fire marshals will ride along with law enforcement officers looking for citizens using illegal fireworks.

Oregon law bans fireworks that fly, explode, or move across the ground more than six feet. Fireworks purchased by mail order or in the state of Washington or on Native American reservations may be illegal in Oregon. This includes popular items such as bottle rockets, roman candles, firecrackers, and M80s. To keep it legal, purchase all fireworks at a licensed Oregon firework stand or retail outlet. Under Oregon law, law enforcement officers can seize illegal fireworks and you can be fined up to \$500 per violation and/or arrested. You can also be held civilly liable for damages resulting from improper use of any fireworks - legal or illegal.

On average, TVF&R responds to approximately 50 firework fires each year and almost all of them can be prevented by using legal fireworks in a safe manner. Most firework-related fires are caused by careless use of fireworks or improperly disposing of used fireworks.

What You Can Do

“Have a hose nearby in case of fire and place ‘spent’ fireworks in a bucket of water,” says TVF&R’s Brian Barker, “one of the most common fires that TVF&R responds to involves ‘spent’ fireworks placed in a bucket or grocery sack that rekindle and spread to fences, decks, and even homes.”

Individuals concerned about neighbors using fireworks are reminded that Fourth of July festivities result in increased activity for all public safety agencies (i.e., crowd control, fires, medical emergencies, traffic issues, etc.). Individuals needing to report a fire or medical emergency should call 9-1-1; individuals wishing to report a nuisance or concern about illegal fireworks should do so via the non-emergency 9-1-1 number. These situations will be logged and passed on to local enforcement, and responded to as resources allow.

###