



## **NEWS RELEASE**

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### **TVF&R Reminds You to “Keep it Legal, Keep it Safe” This Holiday**

Firework stands open this week and TVF&R wants to remind the public to “Keep it Legal, and Keep it Safe” this 4<sup>th</sup> of July weekend. 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.

Just last year, a family suffered \$10,000 in damage to their home after believing they had safely stored spent fireworks in bark-dust beside the home.

#### **Keep It Legal**

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.

In an effort to curb illegal firework activity, TVF&R firefighters will conduct neighborhood drive-bys on the Fourth of July. 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.

#### **Keep It Safe**

Even legal fireworks cause fires and injuries. Follow the tips below to help ensure your safety.

- Only adults should light or handle fireworks. Supervise children at all times.
- Store fireworks, matches, and lighters out of the reach of children.
- Use fireworks outdoors on a paved surface, away from buildings, vehicles, and vegetation.
- Never pick up or try to re-light a "dud."
- Never alter fireworks or make your own.
- Have a hose nearby in case of fire and place “spent” fireworks in a bucket of water. ***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.***

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