



NEWS RELEASE

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(Got Fireworks? Keep it Legal, Keep it Safe)

Firework stands open today and firefighters are gearing up for an increase in activity. On average, TVF&R responds to approximately 40 firework incidents each year – the majority of which happen in the two-week period around the holiday. Keep yourself and family safe from fire, injury, and/or penalties with the following tips.

Keep It Legal

Oregon law bans fireworks that explode, fly through the air, or move across the ground more than six feet. This includes popular items such as bottle rockets, roman candles, firecrackers, and M80s. Fireworks purchased over the internet, in the state of Washington, or on Native American reservations may be illegal in Oregon. To keep it legal, purchase all fireworks at a licensed Oregon firework stand.

Under Oregon law, law enforcement officers can seize illegal fireworks and you can be fined up to \$500 per violation and/or arrested. It's also important to remember that you can be held civilly liable for damages resulting from improper use of any fireworks - legal or illegal. Oregon law also makes parents liable for damage caused by their children and allows fire departments to charge for the cost of suppressing fires caused by fireworks. Moreover, the use of illegal fireworks constitutes criminal activity, and your insurance policy may not cover you if you engage in a criminal act that results in damage.

In an effort to curb illegal firework activity, TVF&R firefighters will conduct neighborhood drive-bys on the Fourth of July. In addition, Deputy Fire Marshals will be riding with law enforcement units to support their enforcement efforts.

Keep It Safe

It is a common misconception that legal fireworks are less risky.

- Only adults should light or handle fireworks.
- Supervise children at all times when fireworks are being used.
- 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 point or throw fireworks at people, pets, or buildings.
- Never pick up or try to re-light a "dud."
- Never alter fireworks or make your own. Homemade explosives can be deadly.
- Have a hose or bucket of water nearby to douse misfired and spent fireworks, and to extinguish potential fires. *One of the most common fires that TVF&R responds to involves "spent" fireworks placed in a bucket or grocery sack that rekindle and ignite personal property during the night.*

Individuals concerned about neighbors using fireworks are reminded that Fourth of July festivities result in increased activity for all public safety agencies. With limited resources, priority is given to hazardous situations. Individuals with a fire or medical emergency should call 9-1-1; other situations should be reported via the **non-emergency** 9-1-1 number. Situations without a specific address or threat to life or property will be responded to as resources allow.