

Be Smart... Leave Fireworks to the Professionals



July 4th is a Busy Time for Firefighters

The Fourth of July is a busy time for firefighters. They are supervising professional fireworks shows and responding to all types of fires and medical emergencies. There may be fewer fireworks shows this year due to social distancing, but fire departments will still be very busy. In fact, the week of July 4th is one of the busiest times of the year for fires. Firefighters, police officers, and medical professionals ask you to help us during this pandemic, and leave the fireworks to the professionals.

All Fireworks Are Illegal in Massachusetts

The possession and use of all fireworks by private citizens is illegal in Massachusetts. This includes Class C fireworks which are sometimes falsely called "safe and sane fireworks." Class C fireworks include sparklers, party poppers, snappers, firecrackers, spinners, cherry bombs and more. Sparklers burn at 1800°F.

It is illegal to transport fireworks into Massachusetts, even if they were purchased legally elsewhere. Illegal fireworks can be confiscated on the spot.

Do Not Purchase Fireworks through Mail-Order or Online Catalogs

Do not purchase fireworks by mail. Government cannot prohibit the advertising and sale of fireworks by mail, but police do confiscate illegal shipments of fireworks. Many consumers attempting to circumvent the law have lost both their money and their fireworks.

Set a Good Example for Children

Children imitate adults. If you use fireworks, children will copy you, not realizing how very dangerous fireworks are. Forty-one percent, (41%), of fireworks-related burn injuries reported by hospitals to the Office of the State Fire Marshal in the last 10 years (2011-2020) were to children under age 18. Twenty-six percent, (26%), were children under age 10.

(over)



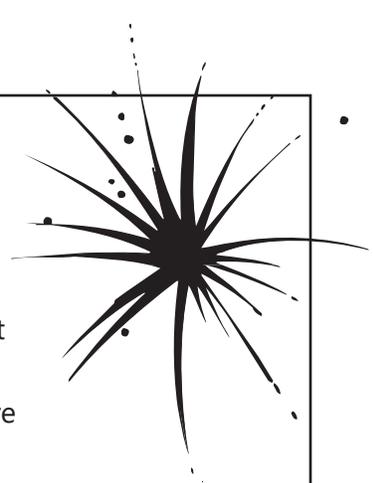
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Fires Caused by Fireworks

In the past decade (2011-2020), there have been 937 major fire and explosion incidents involving illegal fireworks reported to the Massachusetts Fire Incident Reporting System (MFIRS). The incidents caused 12 civilian injuries, 42 fire service injuries, and an estimated dollar loss of \$2.1 million, which is high considering most fireworks fires are outdoor brush fires.

- On May 27, 2020, the exterior stairs of a 2-family home in New Bedford were ignited by illegal fireworks. Damages from this fire were estimated to be \$3,000.
- On June 14, 2020, the Worcester Fire Department responded to a fire in a 3-decker started by illegal fireworks. A firework set off in the street landed on the roof and ignited it. Eleven people were displaced. Smoke alarms failed to operate and damages were estimated at \$145,739.
- On June 16, 2020, fireworks ignited a fire on the first-floor porch of a 2-family Springfield home. Damages from the fire were estimated at \$10,000.
- On July 16, 2020, the Boston Fire Department responded to a car fire. Someone lit fireworks on top of a Mercedes Benz. Damages were estimated at \$8,000.
- On August 10, 2020, the Orange Fire Department and several surrounding communities responded to a brush fire on Tully Mountain in Orange. It took several days to put the fire out in the rugged terrain and hot and humid weather. Remnants of fireworks and a campfire were found at the seat of the fire.
- On October 10, 2020, someone set off fireworks in the rear hallway of a 6-unit apartment building in Boston. A fire started and twenty people were displaced. Damages were estimated at \$3,250.



Burns and Injuries Caused by Fireworks

In the past decade (2010-2019), 37 people were treated at Massachusetts emergency rooms for severe burns injuries from fireworks (burns covering 5% or more of the body) according to the Massachusetts Burn Injury Reporting System (M-BIRS). Fifty-four percent of the victims were under age 25. These victims are scarred for life.

- On July 18, 2020, a 13-year old boy visiting Randolph, MA suffered burns to 10% of his body surface area from illegal fireworks.
- On July 4, 2019, a 29-year old Charlton man received burns to 9% of his body and puncture wounds to his back from a fireworks explosion. State Police confiscated a large cache of illegal fireworks from his home.
- On July 5, 2019, a 16-year old male from Dartmouth received 1st- & 2nd-degree burns on the lower portions of his body from a fireworks explosion.
- On July 9, 2019, a 4-year old Boston girl grabbed a burning sparkler that someone else was holding and received burns to her left hand.
- On July 7, 2020, a child was injured when fireworks went off in his hand near Carson Beach in South Boston.
- On July 20, 2020, a 43-year old Turners Falls man suffered a serious leg injury from illegal **fires**.