State Fire Marshal Urges Public to Celebrate Safely

The State Fire Marshal announced today that with retail fireworks stands opening across the state on June 28, they urge citizens to “Celebrate Safely”.

There is much that can be done to protect children and the public from fireworks injuries and it begins by talking to your kids about fireworks and safety. Educate every member of your family about the following three B’s:

- “Be Prepared!”
- “Be Safe!”
- “Be Responsible!”

What does this mean?

Be Prepared before lighting any firework:
- Know the fireworks law in your area; is there a fireworks ban or restriction when fireworks can be discharged?
- Purchase only legal fireworks, available at licensed stands.
- Ensure the safety of pets; the loud sounds make them nervous. More pets become lost on this day than any other when panicked—going through open windows, breaking tethers, and leaping fences.
- Have a bucket of water nearby in which to place all used fireworks.
- Keep a water hose or fire extinguisher nearby to put out stray sparks.
- Clear a level area away from things that can burn.
- Know the emergency number to call for your area, your address/location, and basic first aid.
- Teach your children to “stop, drop, and roll” if their clothes catch on fire.

Be Safe when fireworks are being lit:
- Use only outdoors on a level, flat, hard surface.
- Only adults should light fireworks.
- Use eye protection; wear safety goggles.
- Light one firework at a time and move away quickly.
- Do not lean over fireworks when lighting them.
- Do not relight fireworks.
- Keep spectators at a safe distance (recommend 20 feet from fireworks).
- Keep away from anything that can burn.
- Follow the directions on the label carefully.
- Be considerate of your neighbors, family pets, and your environment.
- Obey the time restrictions for discharge.
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Be Responsible after the fireworks are done:
- Clean up all debris when finished.
- Duds can be dangerous; if a fireworks item does not light or fire, an adult should wait at least fifteen minutes, approach it carefully, and place it in a bucket of water.
- Make sure unused fireworks, matches, and lighters are out of sight and reach of children.
- Before throwing away any used fireworks, make sure they are cold. Soaking in a bucket of water for at least 10 minutes before placing the fireworks in a plastic garbage bag will ensure they won't catch anything on fire.

Are Your Fireworks Legal?
Licensed fireworks stands can only sell legal fireworks known as “consumer fireworks.” In Washington State during the 4th of July period, there are a number of fireworks stands on Indian Reservations.

These stands, for the most part, sell the same items that you find at your local fireworks stand; however, there are three types of fireworks that are sold only on tribal lands because—federally—they are legal fireworks, but they are illegal to be sold, possessed, or discharged off of tribal lands. These are:

- Firecrackers
- Bottle Rockets
- Missiles

These types of fireworks are illegal, as they cause traumatic injuries and are prone to starting fires.

Items such as M-80’s, M-100’s, Cherry Bombs, Tennis Ball Bombs, and Sparkler Bombs are illegal explosive devices on tribal lands and within the state. These types of fireworks are powerful enough to cause serious life-altering injuries or death.

Remember—it’s your responsibility to know the laws in your community. There may be legal consequences for any injuries or damages caused by the irresponsible use of fireworks.