



## CRIME PREVENTION HANDOUT

# FIREWORKS AND 4<sup>th</sup> OF JULY SAFETY TIPS

Fireworks Safety Tips are an American tradition. They can provide hours of wholesome, family entertainment, but must be used by adults carefully and safely. The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) estimates that 8,800 people were treated for fireworks-related injuries in 2002. During the past 10 years, about a third of the injuries associated with fireworks have been caused by illegal explosives or homemade fireworks. To ensure the safety of both the audience and those lighting the fireworks, The University of Texas at San Antonio Police Department recommends that you obey the following safety measures during your fireworks display.

### Fireworks Safety

#### 1. Children Should Not Handle Fireworks.

NEVER let children handle, play with or light any fireworks. Only adults should handle and light the fireworks. The fireworks are great family fun, but they burn hot and are intended to be handled only by adults.

#### 2. Do Not Use Alcohol With Fireworks.

Please do not consume alcohol while lighting any fireworks. Fireworks must be used only by individuals who act in a responsible manner and who are not under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

#### 3. Follow The Laws.

Follow your local and state laws regarding the possession and use of the fireworks, and use good common sense when using fireworks. Read all directions, cautions, labels and warnings on each individual firework item to understand the product performance and hazards associated with the use of the item.

#### 4. Use Fireworks on a Hard Surface.

Always light fireworks on a hard, flat and level surface to insure the stability of the items. Grass is generally not suitable for any aerial items. (If lighting on grass, lay down a flat wooden board for a shooting surface.)

#### 5. Use in a Clear, Open Area.

Keep the audience (and particularly children) a safe distance away from the shooting site. Always light your fireworks in a clear open area away from buildings and vehicles. (A minimum clear radius of 30 feet for fountains and other ground-based items and 100 yards for any aerial product is recommended.) You should avoid lighting the fireworks in any area where there is dry grass or brush that could catch fire. Never use fireworks indoors.

#### 6. Keep Clear of the Fireworks.

Never put your head or any part of your body over the top of any firework product. Never hold a lighted firework item in your hand. Keep as far away from the firework item as possible when lighting.

#### 7. Use Care in Lighting the Fireworks.

Always light fireworks products with a punk or an extended butane lighting device. This will enable you to keep as far from the product as possible. If needed, use a flashlight at night so the fuse can be easily seen; never use a lantern or other flame producing device near fireworks for illumination. Light the firework product and get away.

#### 8. One at a Time.

Light only one firework item at a time.

#### 9. Don't Use Malfunctioning Items.

Never attempt to re-light, alter or fix any "dud" firework. If an item fails to ignite, let it sit for at least five minutes, then immerse it in water.

#### 10. Have Water Close By.

Have an accessible fire extinguisher, water supply, hose or bucket of water nearby for emergencies.

#### 11. Windy Conditions.

Be cautious of lighting any aerial firework during strong wind conditions. The firework should be lit with the prevailing wind blowing away from the spectators. If there is a significant wind shift during the time you are lighting the firework, the shooting site should be rearranged.

#### 12. Use Care in Handling Fireworks.

Do not carry fireworks in your pocket. Always be careful in handling fireworks to prevent dropping them. Never smoke when handling fireworks.

#### 13. Never Use Fireworks as Weapons.

Never aim, point or throw fireworks at another person.

#### 14. Storage of Fireworks.

Always store fireworks in a cool, dry place; and dispose of fireworks properly.

#### 15. Use Fireworks Outdoors.

Never use fireworks indoors; only use them outdoors.

#### 16. Purchase Fireworks From Reliable Dealers.

Buy fireworks only from reliable, licensed fireworks dealers. Licensed and reliable dealers will carry only those products that meet standards enforced by the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission. Do not try to make your own fireworks.

#### 17. Safety Glasses.

Safety glasses are recommended for those individuals lighting the fireworks and those individuals in close proximity to the fireworks.

#### 18. Be Careful With Animals.

The noise and lights of the fireworks often frighten some animals, so it is very important that you are careful with pets and farm animals. You may want to consider moving them away from your display area or keeping them indoors during your display. Handle your pets and animals accordingly.

#### 19. Watch A Professional Show.

A professional fireworks show is a safer and more enjoyable way to experience fireworks. Consult you local newspaper for times and places.

### **Holiday Traffic Safety**

- Be aware of and avoid drunk drivers. Some signs include:
- Drivers who turn with a wide radius.
- Drivers at speeds 10 miles below the speed limit or speeding excessively.
- Drivers who are following too closely.
- Drivers who have a slow response to traffic signals.
- Never drink and drive. Alcohol is the single largest factor involved in motor vehicle deaths. Have a responsible designated driver when you head out for Fourth of July activities.
- Don't allow the holiday rush to affect *your* driving. A few extra minutes saved by reckless driving aren't worth the injuries you may cause to yourself and others.
- When attending firework displays and special events, remember to obey all traffic lanes and signals, and avoid cutting directly across parking lots. Never race other drivers to an open parking space.
- When leaving the festivities, pay attention while backing out of your parking space to avoid hitting other vehicles or pedestrians.

### **Outdoor Grill Safety**

- The first step to cookout safety is to have fresh food. Store meats and other perishables in an insulated cooler to prevent bacterial growth.
- Keep grills away from all flammable materials, including trees and shrubbery. Store unused starter fluid and charcoal briquettes away from the grill, preferably in a fireproof container.
- Keep your children away from the grill. Gas grills can have an interior temperature of more than 800 degrees Fahrenheit.

### **References:**

[www.safetycouncils.org/documents/AASC4July.pdf](http://www.safetycouncils.org/documents/AASC4July.pdf)

Fireworks Safety tips provided by Phantom Fireworks.

<http://www.safetycenter.navy.mil/safetips/fireworks.htm>