Fourth of July Fireworks Safety

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: June 19th, 2013

CONTACT: Dirk Johnson, Fire Marshal Great Falls Fire Rescue , 727-8070

FOURTH OF JULY FIREWORKS SAFETY

GREAT FALLS, Montana
Fireworks are bright, sparkly, fun and many citizens enjoy putting on their own shows at home. But playing with fireworks can be very dangerous and should only be used with extreme caution. Great Falls Fire Rescue urges all who are participating in their own fireworks displays to be careful because every year our community experiences injuries and fires due to fireworks.

To make this point, a special study conducted by Consumer Protection Safety Council (CPSC) that found about 65 percent of all fireworks injuries in 2011 were sustained during the 30 days surrounding the Independence Day holiday. More than half of these injuries were the result of unexpected ignition of the device or consumers not using fireworks as intended. Fireworks injuries most often resulted in burns to the hands and head including the eyes, face, and ears. According to the study, sparklers, firecrackers, and aerial devices were associated with the most incidents.

Great Falls Fire Marshal Dirk Johnson wants everyone to enjoy the Fourth of July. He notes that “Ensuring Fireworks are used as intended, supervised by an adult and done safely will keep the fun in fireworks. One error in judgement with fireworks may not only ruin the holiday it may create physical problems that will last a lifetime.”

The Fire Marshal reminds the community of City of Great Falls ordinance 2965 which in short states, “all family or consumer fireworks except stick rockets and roman candles are allowed to be discharged in the City between 8 a.m. and midnight, July 2, 3, 4th.

The fireworks ordinance futher states:

- Children under the age of seven must have a supervising adult within 10 feet and control the application of flame or other means to discharge the firework.
- It is illegal to leave debris from discharged fireworks on public places or property not owned by the individual discharging the fireworks.
- Fireworks may not be discharged in any city park, or on any public sidewalk, street, public right-of-way, publicly-owned parking lot or alley."
- Additionally this ordinance carries stiff penalties for any violaions.

The following are some safety tips everyone should follow when lighting fireworks:

- Never allow young children to play with or ignite fireworks.
- Parents may not realize that young children suffer injuries from sparklers. Sparklers will burn at temperatures of about 2,000 degrees.
- Always have an adult closely supervise fireworks activities if older children are allowed to handle devices.
- Avoid buying fireworks that are packaged in brown paper because this is often a sign that the fireworks were made for professional displays and that they could pose a danger to consumers.
- Never place any part of your body directly over a fireworks device when lighting the fuse.
- Back up to a safe distance immediately after lighting fireworks.
- Keep a bucket of water or a garden hose on hand in case of fire or other mishap.
- Use a solid flat surface when lighting fireworks
- Never try to relight or handle malfunctioning fireworks. Soak them with water and throw them away.
- Never point or throw fireworks at another person.
- Light fireworks one at a time, then move back quickly.
- Never carry fireworks in a pocket or shoot them off in metal or glass containers.
- After fireworks complete their burning, douse the spent device with plenty of water from a bucket or hose before discarding it to prevent a trash fire.

Great Falls Fire Rescue wants our citizens and vistors celebration of the founding of the country to be festive and fun. In the case of fireworks an ounce of caution is exponentially greater than a pound of cure.

Supporting Documents

Press Release -- Fourth of July Fireworks Safety (434 KB) (PDF)

Source URL (retrieved on *11/25/2014 - 5:31pm*): http://www.greatfallsmt.net/fire/fourth-july-fireworks-safety