



COMMUNITY RISK REDUCTION DIVISION  
OFFICE OF THE FIRE MARSHAL

Date:

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

The West Hartford Fire Department is committed to fire prevention and community safety. Reaching out to the people we serve is important because the information we offer may result in a fire being prevented.

Please leave fireworks displays to licensed professionals using regulated products while following fire safety regulations. House fires, grass fires, injuries, and even death can be attributed to the misuse and handling of fireworks – especially those that are not governed. In using sparklers for personal use, it is critical that you follow the manufacturer's instructions and always remember that even sparklers can cause serious injuries and significant damage to property. These precautions must also be followed closely to avoid a catastrophe.

- Keep 30 feet away from structures and people when using showering sparklers.
- Never allow children to handle sparklers.
- Only light a device one time and only light them outside.
- Remember that the metal sticks on sparklers get red hot and can cause severe burns.
- Keep a bucket of water close by to dunk sparklers in immediately after they've been used.

Many complaints have been received by the West Hartford Fire Department through the Fire Marshal's Office and the Police Department regarding fireworks. Collectively, we want our neighbors to know and understand that, in the state of Connecticut, all fireworks are illegal. Section 29-357 (a) of the Connecticut General Statutes prohibits the sale, possession with intent to sell, and use or exploding any fireworks in the State of Connecticut and section 128-3 of the West Hartford Code of Ordinances prohibits the use fireworks on property owned by the Town's park and recreation department. A violation of state laws and local ordinances may result in criminal charges and with prosecution, may include fines and jail time.

Sparklers and fountains, both of which are non-explosive and non-aerial devices, are the exception and legally may only be sold to and used by someone over 16 years old. Novelty items that emit flame or become airborne are not only illegal, but that are very dangerous and have caused serious injuries.

Also keep in mind that fireworks startle young children, pets, and neighbors. Ensure everyone's safety and extend common courtesy by not using fireworks at all. The safest way to enjoy this year's Independence Day celebration is to view a display conducted at a state approved site by Connecticut licensed pyro technicians.

Thank you for joining us in our effort to keep the community safe through fire prevention.

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