



Department
of Commerce

Mike DeWine, Governor
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NEWS RELEASE



For Immediate Release

June 30, 2021

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State Fire Marshal, Ohio Fire Chiefs' Association Encourage Safety First This Fourth of July

Consumer-grade fireworks still illegal in Ohio

(COLUMBUS, Ohio) — State and local fire officials are encouraging Ohioans to put safety first this Fourth of July and be mindful of current laws prohibiting unlicensed fireworks displays.

The Ohio Department of Commerce's Division of State Fire Marshal and the Ohio Fire Chiefs' Association have again come together to help Ohioans protect what matters most to them this Fourth of July – their loved ones and their property.

“Discharging consumer-grade fireworks is still illegal in Ohio and, until that changes, we encourage people to only attend licensed shows in their communities,” said Ken Klouda, chief of the State Fire Marshal's Fire Prevention Bureau. “Everyone deserves to celebrate the July 4th holiday, but we want people to do it safely and legally.”

Under Ohio's current fireworks laws, popular devices such as Roman candles, bottle rockets and firecrackers can be legally purchased in Ohio but must be transported out of state within 48 hours. Only licensed exhibitors are permitted to discharge these devices in the state.

Most first-time violations of Ohio's fireworks laws are first-degree misdemeanors, punishable by up to a \$1,000 fine and six months in jail. Violations include failing to transport fireworks out of state within the 48-hour time period and discharging those fireworks.

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“The reality of it is we just want to make sure you’re safe,” said Chief Mark Kidd, 2nd vice president of the Ohio Fire Chiefs’ Association. “Your local police and firefighters are going to treat you with respect, but they’re also going to make sure you’re not doing something outside the law within the state of Ohio.”

The State Fire Marshal’s office, as well as many local fire departments, have already seen a rise in complaints regarding unlicensed fireworks displays – putting families in danger and tying up the resources of law enforcement.

According to the Consumer Product Safety Commission’s [2020 Fireworks Annual Report](#), roughly 10,300 fireworks-related injuries were treated in U.S. emergency rooms between June 21-July 21, 2020.

Trick and novelty fireworks – those that smoke, sparkle, snap and snake – are the only types of fireworks that can be legally discharged by consumers.

But while those sparklers may seem like harmless toys, they’re not without their risks.

“If the ground is dry and there are combustibles around, those sparklers can start another fire that might be a lot more than what you bargained for,” said Kidd. “Also, those things are hot – they burn between 1,100-1,200 degrees, ballpark. Imagine what that feels like to a 3-year-old who doesn’t know any better and grabs ahold of that live sparkler.”

Ohioans are encouraged to follow these important safety tips when using trick or novelty fireworks such as sparklers:

- Only handle and discharge trick and novelty devices under adult supervision.
- Educate yourself on the hazards of each type of device being used.
- Read and follow the label directions on the packaging of a trick and novelty device.
- Light only one sparkler at a time and hold it away from your body, as well as others.
- Sparklers should only be used by someone 12 years of age or older.
- Sparkler wires should immediately be placed in a bucket of water to avoid injury, because they remain hot for a few minutes after burnout.
- Consider substituting sparklers for a safer alternative, such as glow sticks.

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More information on Ohio's fireworks laws, including the process for becoming a licensed fireworks exhibitor, can be found on the Department of Commerce's [website](#).

Video interviews with Chief Ken Klouda about Ohio's current fireworks laws can be found [here](#).

Video interviews with Chief Mark Kidd about Ohio's current fireworks laws can be found [here](#).

For any questions about the information above, contact Brian Bohnert at 614-752-7179 or brian.bohnert@com.state.oh.us.

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*The **Division of State Fire Marshal** is part of the Ohio Department of Commerce. The department is Ohio's chief regulatory agency, focused on promoting prosperity and protecting what matters most to Ohioans. We ensure businesses follow the laws that help them create jobs and keep Ohioans safe. To learn more about what we do, visit our website at com.ohio.gov.*

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