



www.ci.medford.or.us

# Medford Fire-Rescue

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FIRE DEPARTMENT  
www.medfordfirerescue.org

## Media Release- June 28, 2010 Fireworks Safety

Fireworks can be entertaining, but can also be dangerous. The most recent data reported by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) reveals in 2008 there were 22,500 reported fireworks caused fires in the U.S. These included 1,400 structure fires, 500 vehicle fires, and 20,600 outside fires. These fires resulted in \$42 million in direct property damage.

In 2008 there were 7,000 injuries and one civilian fatality in the U.S. related to firework incidents. The characteristics of the fireworks related injuries included the following:

- ◆ 53% of 2008 emergency room fireworks-related injuries were to the extremities and 37% were to the head.
- ◆ 57% of the 2008 fireworks injuries were burns, while 20% were contusions and lacerations.
- ◆ Two of five (40%) people injured by fireworks were under the age of 15.
- ◆ The risk of fireworks injury was highest for teens ages 15-19 and children 5-9, both with at least 2-1/2 times the risk for the general population.
- ◆ Sparklers, fountains, and novelties alone accounted for 32% of the emergency room fireworks injuries in 2007.



Sparkler 1800-3000° F

In Medford only Oregon legal consumer fireworks are allowed to be used, except in the following **prohibited** areas:

- Hazardous Wildfire Areas
- Bear Creek Greenway
- Any City park
- Any Public School



*Note: The hazardous wildfire areas in Medford are in the hillsides. Click on the following link to determine if you live in the hazardous wildfire area:*

<http://www.ci.medford.or.us/Files/Hazardous%20Wildfire%20Area%20Map%20Eastside.pdf>

The Medford Fire Department urges you to use extreme caution when considering the use of fireworks. The following are safety tips to consider:

- **Never allow young children to play with fireworks**
  - Sparklers account for 1/3 of injuries to children less than 5 years of age
- **Always provide close adult supervision to older children**
  - One out of every three people injured are children under the age of 15
- **Only ignite fireworks in clear areas away from combustible vegetation and structures**
  - Fire can quickly spread through flammable or combustible materials
- **Never have any portion of your body over a firework when lighting**
  - Wear protective eyewear and avoid wearing loose clothing
- **Never attempt to reignite a malfunctioning firework**
  - Soak the firework and dispose
- **Never point fireworks towards people, pets, cars, or buildings and never throw fireworks**
  - This can easily lead to injury and cause fires
- **Never light fireworks in a container, especially a glass or metal container**
  - This could explode and spread shrapnel



Thrown ground bloom - 2007

- **Never experiment with homemade fireworks or attempt to alter fireworks**
  - These could be unpredictable

- **Always observe local and State laws**
  - What is an Oregon **legal** consumer firework?
    - A class 1.4G firework that does not explode, does not fly into the air, and does not travel from its ignition point more than 12 inches vertically or 6 feet horizontally. Examples of Oregon legal consumer fireworks may include fireworks as base fountains, ground blooms, cone fountains, etc.



Bottle Rocket Roof Fire - 2007

- What is **illegal** in Oregon?
  - Illegal fireworks include such items as mortars, bottle rockets, aerial spinners, sky rockets, missile rockets, roman candles, firecrackers, etc. Cherry bombs, silver salutes (M-100's), ash cans (M-80's), etc. are Oregon illegal explosive devices. Anyone violating Oregon fireworks statutes could face confiscation of the devices and a civil penalty of up to \$500 per violation.

For examples of Oregon legal and illegal fireworks and for additional safety information, visit our website at: <http://www.ci.medford.or.us/Page.asp?NavID=623>

➤ **Always keep a bucket of water or hose nearby**

- Can be used to quickly extinguish a fire before it spreads
- Spent fireworks should be soaked in a bucket of water before disposing

➤ **Consider attending a professional public display event instead**

- The Chamber of Commerce Red, White, and Boom event (At the U.S. Cellular Community Park/Harry & David Field, 2929 S. Pacific Hwy.) is the largest firework show in Southern Oregon and is free of charge. For more information visit: [http://medfordjacksonorcoc.weblinkconnect.com/cwt/external/wcpages/chamber/red\\_white\\_boom.aspx](http://medfordjacksonorcoc.weblinkconnect.com/cwt/external/wcpages/chamber/red_white_boom.aspx)

➤ **Remember your pets during the 4th of July events**

- Never take your pet to a firework display
- Never leave your pet in the car
- Move your pets indoors to a sheltered area. Turn on a radio to a normal volume
- Never leave your pet unattended outdoors, even in a fenced yard
- Make sure your pet is wearing an identification tag
- If you know your pet is distressed by loud noises, consult your veterinarian

It is the desire of the Medford Fire Department to educate the public about fireworks safety and fireworks laws, with the goal of preventing firework related injuries and destructive fires.

**Sources:**

<http://www.nfpa.org/assets/files/pdf/os.fireworks.pdf>

[http://www.oregon.gov/OSP/SFM/Licensing\\_Fireworks\\_Home.shtml](http://www.oregon.gov/OSP/SFM/Licensing_Fireworks_Home.shtml)

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