

FIREWORKS:

WHAT'S LEGAL, WHAT'S NOT LEGAL IN FRANKLIN COUNTY?

About one-third of all fireworks injuries are caused by **illegal** fireworks. While many Franklin County citizens will celebrate Independence Day at a permitted, commercial fireworks display, many people prefer to purchase their own for home celebrations. But the Franklin County Fire Marshal's Office reminds residents that many consumer fireworks are not legal in Virginia.

- **Legal:** The types of consumer fireworks permissible for use in Virginia are generally classified as **sparklers, fountains, and novelty fireworks items that do not have a report (explode) or are not intended to leave the ground and fly through the air.**
- **Not Legal:** Fireworks items such as **firecrackers, roman candles, rockets (including bottle rockets), mortars, etc.**

Virginia law requires the purchaser of any consumer fireworks to be at least 16 years old. In the instance of a public exhibition of fireworks, such as a festival, carnival, etc, a permit from the Franklin County Fire Marshal's Office is required. The fireworks must be presented by a trained operator and a representative from the Fire Marshal's Office may inspect the pyrotechnics and viewing area to ensure safety.

Violation of fireworks laws is classified as a misdemeanor, which may be punishable by a fine of up to \$500 and/or imprisonment for up to six months, depending upon the level of violation. The fireworks laws cover transport, display, storage, sale, possession and use of fireworks.

Citizens are asked to attend one of the many public fireworks displays in the area. These events are presented by professionally trained pyrotechnic personnel. Enjoy the event from a safe distance. Be responsible for your actions, especially if you have children who can learn from your example.

If you choose to use legal fireworks, the Fire Marshal's Office suggests these safety tips:

Obtain a fireworks permit from the Franklin County Fire Marshal's office no less than one (1) month prior to the event.

The possession, transport, storage, and/or display of any commercial fireworks in Franklin County will require a permit (Virginia approved consumer fireworks are exempt).

Store all fireworks in a secure, dry, cool place out of the reach of children and away from open flame and any other source of ignition.

Keep children and bystanders a safe distance away from firing and fallout area

Always read and follow label directions.

Only adults should handle and/or ignite any fireworks.

Use outdoors only on concrete or asphalt.

Always have water handy (a garden hose and a bucket).

Never experiment or make your own fireworks.

Light only one firework at a time.

Dispose of fireworks properly by soaking them in water and then disposing of them in your trash can.

Never hold fireworks while lighting.

Never throw or point fireworks at other people.

Never carry fireworks in your pocket.