
CAL FIRE NEWS RELEASE

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection



CONTACT: Daniel Berlant
Information Officer
(916) 651-FIRE (3473)

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CAL FIRE Urges Firework Safety This Fourth of July

Sacramento –California is now in the middle of its third year of a drought and recent warm temperatures increase fire danger even more. In preparation for the holiday weekend, CAL FIRE is working closely with local law enforcement and firefighting agencies to seize illegal fireworks and prosecute those found in possession of them. Under California law, illegal fireworks include sky rockets, bottle rockets, roman candles, aerial shells, firecrackers and other miscellaneous types that explode, go up in the air, or move about the ground in an uncontrollable fashion.

In 2007, Governor Schwarzenegger signed SB 839 (Calderon), which took effect Jan. 1, 2008 establishing harsher penalties for those who buy and sell illegal fireworks. Those convicted could be fined up to \$50,000 and/or sent to prison or jail for up to one year. “Illegal fireworks pose a major danger to Californian’s safety,” said Acting State Fire Marshal Tonya Hoover. “We will not tolerate the use or sale of illegal fireworks here in California.”

In over 270 communities in the state, safe and sane fireworks are permitted. State fire officials want to remind those who choose to purchase legal fireworks this year, to make sure they purchase only those with the “Safe and Sane” State Fire Marshal seal.

Fireworks Guidelines

Residents and visitors should practice caution and safety with the following:

- Check that fireworks are allowed in the area of use
- Make sure the firework has the State Fire Marshal “safe and sane” seal
- Purchase only from legitimate organizations authorized to sell
- Have a bucket of water, sand or garden hose available at firing site
- Read all instructions before use
- Dispose of used fireworks in water
- Never alter, modify or enhance fireworks
- Make sure fireworks have proper clearance from flammable materials including dry grass and brush

Remember that fireworks are not toys; they should always be used in a safe manner. CAL FIRE wants everyone to have a safe 4th of July holiday.

For more information about safe fireworks use, visit the CAL FIRE Web site at www.fire.ca.gov.

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