

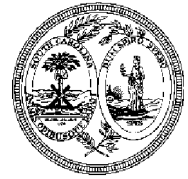


South Carolina Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation

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**For Immediate Release:**

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**State Fire Marshal Offers Fireworks Safety Tips**

With the Fourth of July holiday a week away, the South Carolina State Fire Marshal's office is urging citizens to stay safe if participating in any fireworks activities this Independence Day holiday.

"You cannot take safety for granted when it comes to fireworks," State Fire Marshal Bert Polk said. "We want everyone to have fun, but safety precautions must come first."

South Carolina state law prohibits fireworks from being sold to anyone younger than 16 years old. For those choosing to use consumer fireworks, the State Fire Marshal suggests these safety tips:

- Observe local laws. If unsure whether it is legal to use fireworks, check with local officials.
- Monitor local weather conditions. Dry weather can make it easier for fireworks to start a fire.
- Buy from permitted fireworks retailers.
- Store fireworks in a cool, dry place.
- Always have an adult present when shooting fireworks.
- Use common sense. Always read and follow the directions on each firework.
- Only use fireworks outdoors, away from homes, dry grass, and trees.
- Ensure people and pets are out of range before lighting fireworks.
- Light one firework at a time and keep a safe distance.
- Put used fireworks in a bucket of water; keep a garden hose on hand.

**Never:**

- Point or throw fireworks at another person.
- Re-ignite malfunctioning fireworks.
- Experiment or attempt to make your own fireworks.
- Give fireworks to small children.
- Carry fireworks in your pocket.
- Shoot fireworks from metal or glass containers.
- Place any part of your body directly over a fireworks device when lighting the fuse. Back up to a safe distance immediately after lighting fireworks.

"There are hundreds of permitted professional fireworks displays available to South Carolinians to enjoy the Fourth of July holiday," Polk said. "Residents can consult their local fire officials for firework displays in their area."