



## PRESS RELEASE

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### **Safely Celebrate 4th of July** **Fireworks Safety**

Fourth of July is one of America's most celebrated festive holidays during the year evident by the sights and sounds of fireworks being discharged or used throughout the day. Rarely do we consider fireworks harmful much less deadly; yet fireworks are one of the biggest fire dangers to life and property. Each year, thousands of fireworks-related injuries are treated in hospital emergency departments throughout the United States. According to the [Consumer Product Safety Commission \(CPSC\) 2021 Fireworks Annual Report](#) there's a significant upward trend in fireworks-related injuries in the U.S.; up 25% between 2006 - 2021.

Although Prince William County permits the use of some fireworks, restrictions apply and for good reasons. No matter how breathtaking fireworks are or how easy they appear to use, they are potential fire starters. Chief Tom LaBelle, of the Prince William County Fire and Rescue System, urges residents to leave fireworks to the professionals, by enjoying one of the many larger aerial fireworks demonstrations/shows in the [District](#), [Maryland](#), and [Virginia](#). Listed below are locations, in the county, of aerial displays permitted and scheduled thus far; additional locations may be added later:

- 1 Turtle Point Dr (Robert Trent Jones) – Saturday, July 1<sup>st</sup>
- 15900 Berkeley Dr (Evergreen Country Club) – Monday, July 3<sup>rd</sup>
- 4398 Spillway Ln (Dolphin Beach) – Tuesday, July 4<sup>th</sup>
- 11008 Kettle Run Rd (Burnside Farm) – Saturday, July 15<sup>th</sup>, July 22<sup>nd</sup>, July 29<sup>th</sup> (Rain Dates: Sunday, July 16<sup>th</sup>, July 23<sup>rd</sup>, July 30<sup>th</sup>)

However, should you choose to purchase fireworks, Chief LaBelle recommends purchasing from fireworks stands that have been inspected and approved by the Fire Marshal's Office. All stands in Prince William County are properly permitted to sell fireworks displayed. To view the list of 2023 permissible fireworks and approved fireworks stands in Prince William County, visit [pwcva.gov/department/fire-marshals-office/permissible-fireworks](http://pwcva.gov/department/fire-marshals-office/permissible-fireworks).

To assist residents in preparation for the Fourth of July and additional festivities held throughout the summer, the Fire Marshal's Office suggests the following fireworks safety tips:

- Fireworks should only be ignited by an adult.
- Fireworks should only be used outdoors in an open space clear of spectators, buildings,

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vehicles, debris, and flammable materials or on a driveway, sidewalk, or other fire-resistant surface. Remember, fires are caused by careless handling of fireworks in areas exposed to sparks or live fireworks.

- Keep spectators a safe distance away from permissible fireworks at a minimum of 25 feet for ground items.
- Keep a bucket of water handy in case sparks start a fire.
- Be sure children around fireworks know to stop, drop, and roll if their clothing catches on fire.
- Deposit sparklers in a metal container as they may be stepped on while hot or lost in the grass and stepped on while playing.
- **DO NOT** place used fireworks in combustible trash cans or bags.
- **NEVER** aim or throw fireworks at another person.
- **NEVER** try to re-ignite fireworks that malfunction or fail to go off.
- **DO NOT** wear loose clothing when using fireworks.
- **NEVER** experiment or make your own fireworks.
- **NEVER** carry fireworks in your pocket.
- Pets may be frightened by the noise and lights of fireworks; keep pets inside or away from the area when in use.

### Permissible Fireworks

In Prince William County, permissible fireworks for use by consumers are defined as:

Any fountains that do not emit sparks or other burning effects to a distance greater than five meters (16.4 feet); wheels that do not emit a flame radius greater than one meter (39 inches); crackling devices and flashers or strobes that do not emit sparks or other burning effects to a distance greater than two meters (78.74 inches); and sparkling devices or other fireworks devices that (i) do not explode or produce a report, (ii) do not travel horizontally or vertically under their own power, (iii) do not emit or function as a projectile, (iv) do not produce a continuous flame longer than 20 inches, (v) are not capable of being reloaded, and (vi) if designed to be ignited by a fuse, have a fuse that is protected to resist side ignition and a burning time of not less than four seconds and not more than eight seconds.

The Fire Marshal's Office would like to warn County citizens that many fireworks sold through the mail/online or purchased from companies in West Virginia, Pennsylvania, and South Carolina are dangerous and illegal. Possession of these products is prohibited, in Virginia, and buyers should be aware and cautious of what they are buying.

If you are in possession of unauthorized fireworks, please contact the Prince William County Fire Marshal's Office for disposal at 703-792-6360. **DO NOT** throw them in the garbage! The relinquishing of unauthorized fireworks will not result in any fines or summons, and no questions will be asked.

For more information on fireworks safety, visit the National Fire Protection Association [www.nfpa.org](http://www.nfpa.org), the National Council on Fireworks Safety [www.nsc.org](http://www.nsc.org), and the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) [www.cpsc.gov](http://www.cpsc.gov).

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