



Fireworks safety information offered

Legal Fireworks

1. The name of the manufacturer and the words “**Class C Common Fireworks**” are required by the U.S. Department of Transportation and must be clearly visible on every fireworks item or package, for very small devices. If these do not appear, the item may have been made illegally and could be very unsafe.
2. The law requires that all fireworks must show the name of the item, and easy-to-read cautionary labeling and instructions for proper use. Look for them on the label.
3. Fireworks must be of sturdy construction. Items with bases must have the bases securely attached, and the fireworks must resist tipping over.
4. Fuses must be securely attached.

Danger Signals

1. A firework that is leaking powder, or appears to be quite old, or shows any signs of mishandling may fire unpredictably and should be avoided.
2. A loose fuse may prevent the item from igniting as it should.
3. Avoid any fireworks device that appears to have been wet and then dried. Water affects the sensitive chemicals inside. In addition, moisture can cause the composition to penetrate the paper casing or cause the fuse to deteriorate.
4. Illegally-made fireworks are not made with the safeguards found in legal fireworks, and can be very dangerous. Among the illegal fireworks are M-80s, M-100s, and silver salutes.
5. Any firework that does not have a clearly printed manufacturer's name and address and cautionary labeling is very likely to be illegal.

Illegal Fireworks

Cherry bombs, Silver Salutes and M-80s have been banned by Federal Law since 1966 because of the large amounts of explosive composition they contain.

- **Cherry Bomb:** Red in color, approximately one inch in diameter
- **Silver Salute:** Silver in color, up to two inches in length
- **M-80:** Red in color, approximately 1-1/2 inches in length

There are legal smoke items that resemble these banned fireworks in size and shape. The smoke fireworks will not be red or silver in color, however, and they will be clearly labeled “smoke.”

The Bernalillo County Commission did not implement a fireworks ban this year, because the drought conditions did not warrant it. Although we have received recent rains, don't think that the fireworks you use won't start a fire. Fires caused by fireworks are often in fields, vacant lots, or wildland areas. As such the materials most commonly ignited by fireworks is grass, scrubs, and trees.

Permissible fireworks may be used in the County on barren or paved areas. Permissible fireworks are hand-held sparklers, cones and fountains. **Stick Rockets**, Aerial and ground audible devices are not permissible anywhere within Bernalillo County.

Fireworks may shall not be sold or used on state forest land, wildlands, or a Bosque.

If an individual is caught with **non-permissible** fireworks, a citation will be issued and they will have to appear in court. They could be fined up to \$1000 and sentenced to less than one year in jail. If it is

determined that an individual's use of fireworks was the cause of a fire that damaged property, they may be held liable for those damages.

Bernalillo County Fire Department Urges Caution with Fireworks;

Bernalillo County Fire Department warns that while Fireworks can add a special touch to the Forth of July holiday, they can also present a deadly fire hazard.

"Fireworks fires occur all to frequently in Bernalillo County, says Chief Garcia. However, most fires can be prevented by taking a few simple precautions."

Chief Garcia recommends using only were they are legal, and use the following guidelines-

- **Never allow children to play with or ignite fireworks**
- **Make sure to use only approved fireworks.**
- **Read and follow all warnings and instructions.**
- **Be sure other people are out of range before lighting fireworks.**
- **Only light fireworks on smooth, flat surface away from the house, dry leaves, and flammable material.**
- **Never try to relight fireworks that have not fully functioned.**
- **Keep a bucket of water handy in case of a malfunction or fire.**

Have a safe and happy Forth of July, from the men and women of the Bernalillo County Fire Department.