



**PRESS RELEASE**

**For Immediate Release**  
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**4<sup>th</sup> of July Fireworks - Fire & Rescue Advises Extreme Caution  
Recommend Seeking Professional Displays**

Fourth of July is one of America's most celebrated festive holidays. This year, Americans will celebrate the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence, giving cause for many to celebrate more vigorously than usual by discharging or using fireworks 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, in 2025, there were 15 reported fireworks-related deaths and 13,000 injured who sought hospital emergency treatment, compared to 2024, with 11 reported deaths and 14,700 fireworks-related injuries.

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. The Prince William County Fire and Rescue System (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](#).

However, should you choose to purchase fireworks, the Fire Marshal's Office recommends purchasing from fireworks stands within the county all of which have been permitted to sell approved fireworks. To view the list of 2026 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 used and ignited by an adult.
- Fireworks should only be used outdoors in an open space clear of spectators, buildings, vehicles, debris, and combustible materials, or on a driveway or a sidewalk.
- Fires are caused by careless handling of fireworks in areas exposed to sparks or live fireworks and improper disposal.
- NEVER dispose of fireworks in a garage or building.
- Soak spent or "dud" fireworks and sparklers in a large bucket of water for at least 20 minutes or overnight to ensure they are thoroughly cooled and extinguished.
- Keep spectators a safe distance away from fireworks at a minimum of 25 feet.

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- Keep a bucket of water handy in case sparks start a fire.
- DO NOT place used fireworks in a combustible container.
- 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.
- 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:

“Permissible fireworks” means 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 of and cautious about 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 <https://www.nfpa.org/education-and-research/home-fire-safety/fireworks>, the National Council on Fireworks [https://www.nsc.org/community-safety/safety-topics/seasonal-safety/summer-safety/fireworks#/,](https://www.nsc.org/community-safety/safety-topics/seasonal-safety/summer-safety/fireworks#/) and the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) [Fireworks | CPSC.gov](https://www.cpsc.gov/safety/fireworks).

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