

# Press Release



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## For Immediate Release

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Wayne County Executive Robert Ficano and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) are teaming up to promote fireworks safety during the July 4 holiday season.

The county executive and ATF agents demonstrated the dangers of illegal fireworks during a demonstration on June 23, 2008 at Bell Creek Park in Redford Township. Officers from the Detroit Police Bomb Squad, Dearborn Police Bomb Squad and the Redford Township Fire Department also participated.

Last July, three persons died in fireworks-related incidents. In one case, a box of 25, three-inch mortar display shells exploded in a woman's face. She died a short time later. The accident in Melvindale occurred in front of the woman's sons and others.

On July 4, 2007, an explosion leveled a garage where two brothers were manufacturing their own "M-80" type devices for sale to friends and personal use. Both brothers died.

"M-80-type devices are not fireworks but are small bombs that can maim or kill an innocent person," said ATF Special Agent in Charge Thomas E. Brandon. "Unfortunately, last year in Michigan we had two people lose their lives who were attempting to manufacture these types of devices."

Michigan residents often don't know which fireworks are illegal and which can be sold and used. It is illegal to sell, possess, transport or use fireworks in Michigan without a permit, according to state law. Devices that are legal include flat paper caps, toy trick noisemakers, flitter sparklers, fountains and toy snakes.

“Many of our residents do not realize that any device that makes a loud bang or leaves the ground is illegal in Michigan,” Executive Ficano said. “These illegal devices are extremely dangerous and can accidentally detonate due to heat, shock or pressure.”

Some safety tips:

- Never allow children to play with or ignite fireworks
- Read and follow all warnings and instructions
- Be sure others are out of range before lighting fireworks
- Only light fireworks on a smooth, flat surface away from the house
- Never try to relight fireworks
- Keep a bucket of water nearby in case of a malfunction

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