



Police Encourage Safety First This Fourth of July

Citizens Reminded of Dangers of Illegal Fireworks

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) and the Michigan State Police (MSP) are encouraging citizens to be safe with fireworks this Fourth of July. Illegal or improperly used fireworks can cause severe injuries or death.

Consumers should be aware that illegal explosive devices are not fireworks. Users risk injury, disfigurement, or death by manufacturing or using them. Illegal explosives devices commonly referred to as M-80's quarter sticks, or cherry bombs often come in plain brown, red, silver or white wrappers, with no identifying marks. Because they meet neither safety nor quality standards, they are extremely dangerous. They can be highly unstable because heat, shock or pressure can trigger accidental detonation. Additionally, the sale or purchase of these types of display explosive devices by unlicensed persons is illegal.

“ATF Special Agent in Charge Thomas Brandon said “Each year across the State of Michigan needless injuries and deaths are caused by the misuse of fireworks and improper use and handling of illegal explosives. We encourage the citizens of Michigan to enjoy the Fourth of July holiday but do it in a safe and responsible manner.”

In Michigan Citizens are reminded that state law prohibits the use of any type of firework which leaves the ground, makes a report, whistles, or spins. Legal fireworks to use include sparklers, flat paper caps, cone or cylinder fountains, snakes and toy smoke devices. ATF does not regulate the use of consumer fireworks, however it should be noted that persons manufacturing such materials generally require at least an ATF permit to acquire explosive material used in the manufacture of consumer fireworks.

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Federally banned fireworks include M-80s, M-1,000s, silver salutes and cherry bombs. Mail order kits designed to build these fireworks also are banned. The manufacture, sale and receipt of these illegal explosives devices can result in federal felony and/or misdemeanor charges.

“The Fourth of July holiday is a great time to celebrate with family and friends, but please remember to do so responsibly,” said Col. Eddie L. Washington, Jr., director of the MSP. “If you chose to do your own fireworks display, please be respectful of your neighbors, make sure to use items that are legal in Michigan and follow all safety precautions.”

To increase safety during personal use of legal fireworks:

- Read and follow all warnings and instructions.
- Never allow children to play with fireworks of any kind.
- Only use fireworks outdoors.
- Wear protective clothing, including eyewear.
- Only light devices on smooth, flat surfaces away from residential areas, dry leaves and flammable materials.
- Always keep a hose or bucket of water nearby in case of malfunction.
- Never try to relight fireworks that have not fully functioned.

If you know of large, professional-grade fireworks or any explosive devices being sold illegally, please contact the ATF at 1-888 ATF-BOMB, (1-888-283-2662) or emailing ATFTips@atf.gov.

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