

# CAL FIRE NEWS RELEASE

## California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection



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### **CAL FIRE Warns of Dangers as Holiday Weekend Approaches**

*Fireworks Safety Urged for this Fourth of July*

**Sacramento** – With the Fourth of July holiday quickly approaching, CAL FIRE is reminding everyone to do their part to prevent fires and injuries caused by fireworks. Two out of five fires on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July are caused by fireworks, more than any other cause of fires. The majority of these incidents are related to either the use of illegal fireworks or state-approved fireworks that are used incorrectly.

"Understanding the dangers associated with the use of illegal fireworks, or misuse of legal fireworks, is critical to keep everyone safe during the holiday," said Chief Ken Pimlott, CAL FIRE director. "Any person who starts a fire from fireworks – even accidentally – can be held liable for the costs of fighting the fire and any resulting property damage."

There are also legal ramifications when it comes to certain types of fireworks. Possession of illegal fireworks such as sky rockets, bottle rockets, roman candles, aerial shells, firecrackers and other types that explode, go into the air, or move on the ground in an uncontrollable manner can lead to a possible fine of up to \$50,000 as well as prison time or jail for up to one year. Even "Safe and Sane" Fireworks taken into a city or county where they are banned is illegal. The State Fire Marshal approved "Safe and Sane" fireworks are allowed for use in many communities; however, they are not approved state-wide. Before purchasing these types of fireworks, be sure to check your local ordinances and follow the instructions to avoid accidents and injuries.

"Please celebrate the holiday safely," said State Fire Marshal Dennis Mathisen. "If you choose to use fireworks, make sure they are the Safe and Sane, and not the illegal variety. Remember, if it flies in the air or explodes, it is illegal."

Here are a few tips to help you be safe this 4th of July:

- If fireworks are not legal where you live, do not use them.
- Buy only State Fire Marshal-approved (Safe and Sane) fireworks.
- Have a bucket of water and a hose handy in case of a fire.
- Always read directions and have an adult present.
- Use fireworks outdoors only.
- Parents are liable for any damage or injuries caused by their children using fireworks.
- Use common sense and keep a safe distance.
- Never attempt to re-light or "fix" fireworks.
- Sparklers can reach temperatures over 1,000°F, don't give them to children.

CAL FIRE has already responded to more than 2,135 wildland fires this year (January-June 2017). Residents are urged to visit [www.ReadyforWildfire.org](http://www.ReadyforWildfire.org) for tips on how to prepare their homes and family for wildfire.

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#### **MEDIA NOTES:**

For graphics, visit: <http://www.readyforwildfire.org/Fireworks-Safety/>

Fireworks Public Service Announcement: <https://calfire.box.com/s/okv0ztkxs1jjxf5aewig1d4q8l0dowu7>