



Ocean City Fire Department

PRESS RELEASE

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Make Safety First on July Fourth

The Ocean City Fire Department would like to remind the visitors and citizens of the danger involved with consumer fireworks as the July 4th holiday approaches. The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) reports that in 2011, fireworks caused an estimated 17,800 reported fires, including 1,200 structure fires, 400 vehicle fires and 16,300 outside and other fires. These fires resulted in an estimated 40 civilian injuries and \$32 million in direct property damage.

“On Independence Day in a typical year, fireworks account for two out of five of all reported fires, which is more than any other cause of fire,” said Ocean City Fire Marshal David Hartley. “In addition to causing damage, fireworks can cause injuries and we want people to be safe during their holiday stay in Ocean City. The safety and wellbeing of all residents and visitors of the Town of Ocean City is the primary goal of the Ocean City Fire Department.”

Although the State of Maryland has approved the use of ground-based sparkling devices such as cylindrical and cone fountains, these are not legal to use or possess in Ocean City. All other fireworks that may be sold in neighboring states are not legal for use by the general public anywhere in Maryland.

Within the Town of Ocean City, products such as handheld Gold labeled sparklers, “Snap-N-Pops”, “Black Cobra Snakes”, and “Party Poppers” are allowed to be used and possessed without a license. However, injuries and property damage may still occur from these types of products, so parental supervision is always encouraged.

Maryland law prohibits the shipping or transportation of fireworks into the state if the fireworks are to be possessed, used, sold, or distributed by citizens of Maryland. Illegal fireworks found are subject to seizure by law enforcement authorities, and persons found in possession of illegal fireworks with the intent to use them run the risk of both criminal charges and the confiscation of the fireworks. Fines for possession of illegal fireworks may be as much as \$250, and those found selling or distributing illegal fireworks may be fined as much as \$1000.

Anyone with questions pertaining to fireworks should contact the Ocean City Fire Department, Office of the Fire Marshal at 410-289-8780.

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Fire Chief

Chuck Barton
Deputy Chief

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