

WHAT'S *New*

IN THE METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT

A weekly update for residents, visitors, and workers in the District of Columbia



Friday, June 27, 2014

ENSURING A SAFE 4TH OF JULY CELEBRATION MEANS KNOWING THE LAW ON FIREWORKS IN DC

July 4th is traditionally a time for parades, backyard barbecues and the spectacular fireworks display on the National Mall. Unfortunately, the Independence Day holiday is also a time when serious injuries associated with illegal fireworks are all too common. Nationwide, nearly 10,000 people a year are treated in hospital emergency rooms for fireworks-related injuries; more than 40 percent of the victims are ages 14 and younger. So again this year, the MPD is joining with other public safety organizations in advising the public to know the law on fireworks in DC. District law prohibits all firecrackers, as well as any fireworks that explode (including cherry bombs, salutes, Roman candles, floral shells, and artillery shells) and any fireworks that launch after being lit (such as bottle rockets, parachutes, buzz-bombs, pinwheels, helicopters, and jumping jacks). Fireworks that have a side fuse or that contain mercury, arsenic or other dangerous materials are also prohibited. Among the fireworks that are allowed in the District are small sparklers, fountains, torches and other novelty items.



» For detailed information on fireworks laws in DC, as well as useful links to fireworks safety tips, click on:
<http://mpdc.dc.gov/fireworks>

Characteristics of *Illegal* Fireworks

An illegal firework as defined in Article 27 of the DC Official Code may have any of the following traits:

- It moves;
- It explodes;
- It emits a spark or flame greater than 12 feet;
- It has a side-mounted fuse or a fuse inserted at any point along the length of the product's surface;
- It contains mercury, arsenic, magnesium, phosphorus, or any other highly-oxidizing agent;
- The Fire Marshal considers it to be dangerous to the safety of any person or property.

REMINDER TO YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES: CURFEW IN EFFECT YEAR-ROUND; SUMMER HOURS BEGIN JULY 1

The MPD offers this reminder to young people and their families concerning DC's teen curfew: From September 1 through June 30, DC's curfew for young people under the age of 17 starts at 11 pm, Sunday through Thursday nights, and at 12:01 am on weekends. Beginning Sunday, July 1, and continuing through August 31, DC's curfew starts at 12:01 am, and continues until 6 am seven days a week. This is an hour later than the weeknight curfew during school months. Under DC law, persons under the age of 17 cannot remain in or on a street, park or other outdoor public place, in a vehicle or on the premises of any establishment within the District during curfew hours, unless they are involved in certain exempted activities. These include work, school, religious, civic or organized recreational activities, as well as the exercise of First Amendment rights. DC's curfew law applies to all young people who are in the District during curfew hours, regardless of whether they live inside or outside the city. During the first six months of 2014, the MPD has processed approximately 1,300 curfew violators.

BEAT THE HEAT, BUT LEAVE THE FIRE HYDRANTS ALONE

As summer heats up, DC Fire and EMS and DC Water remind District residents not to open fire hydrants-this is a dangerous practice. The water is highly pressurized and the force of it coming out of the hydrant can cause injury.

Turning on hydrants without the proper tools can damage the hydrant, its nozzle, and even the underground pipes in the water distribution system. Additionally, there is a significant danger especially to children, who can be knocked over from the force of the water or endangered from traffic when their water play is in the street.

Further, the high volume of water on roadways can wreak havoc with traffic. Open hydrants can also cause a drop in water pressure, affecting homes and businesses on the street, and impeding firefighting.

In addition to the potential for injury, opening hydrants can seriously affect the ability of the DC Fire Department to fight fires. If you have a heat emergency call 911, otherwise keep cool by staying in shade or air-conditioning and drinking plenty of fluids, preferably water.

When temperatures or the heat index reach 95, residents are encouraged to seek refuge at a District swimming pool, cooling center, recreation facility or other air-conditioned building.

» For complete details on DC's curfew law, including sample exemptions and alternative resources for young people, go to:
<http://mpdc.dc.gov/curfew>

» Tampering with a District hydrant is a crime. To report unauthorized use of fire hydrants, please call DC Water's 24-hour Emergency Center at (202) 612-3400.

» Information about cooling centers and swimming pools, including their locations, can be found by calling 311 or visiting:
<http://www.dc.gov>

» The DC Department of Health offers healthy heat tips at:
<http://doh.dc.gov>

» Read the Centers for Disease Control's (CDC's) safety guide for dealing with extreme heat at:
http://www.bt.cdc.gov/disasters/extremeheat/heat_guide.asp

NEWS & NOTES

Also Noteworthy

Join the MPD Reserve Corps. The MPD Reserve Corps, a volunteer policing program is seeking new members. Applications are now being accepted at <http://dcpolicejobs.dc.gov>.

Preventing terrorism is everybody's business. If you SEE something, SAY something. Call the MPD at (202) 727-9099 to report suspicious activity that has already occurred. Call 911 to report in-progress threats or emergencies. Learn how you can help fight terrorism at <http://mpdc.dc.gov/operationTIPP>.

Tell Us How We're Doing. MPD is now part of Grade DC. We invite you to share your thoughts on our service – positive or negative – through MPD's email groups, our social media, or by visiting the Grade DC website. Get more information at <http://grade.dc.gov>.

Information, ideas, or comments about this service?

Send an e-mail to **KAYLIN CASTELLI**, Manager of Internet Communications, at kaylin.castelli@dc.gov

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