

FIREWORKS IN THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA



Many of the fireworks available for purchase at roadside stands in surrounding communities are illegal in the District of Columbia. Setting off certain types of fireworks is dangerous in an urban setting with the cluster of dense housing and flammable materials.

LEGAL FIREWORKS: Sparklers less than 20 inches, torches, box fire, fountains, cones, dip sticks, non-poisonous snakes, paper novelty items, colored lights, and paper caps.

PROHIBITED FIREWORKS: Firecrackers or fireworks that explode, such as cherry bombs, salutes, Roman candles, floral shells, and artillery shells. In addition, any firework found by the Fire Chief to be dangerous to the safety of any person or property are deemed illegal.

REPORT ILLEGAL FIREWORKS: To report illegal fireworks year-round, visit fems.dc.gov or call **(202) 673-2776** and leave the requested information. To report illegal fireworks July 4–6, use the DC311 App and choose the Illegal Fireworks Request or call **311** and choose option #1 for fireworks. OUC will have two dedicated call takers for fireworks calls and assign them to the fireworks units for each MPD district. If there is property damage or injury from fireworks, call 911 and follow the directions of the call taker for immediate fire and police dispatch.

PENALTIES: Any person found engaging in the use or possession of illegal fireworks in the District of Columbia could face fines and penalties **starting at \$2,000** or arrest for further prosecution.

FIREWORKS SAFETY TIPS

- Always read and follow label directions.
- Always have an adult present.
- Only ignite fireworks outdoors.
- Always have water or sand nearby to extinguish fireworks after use.
- Never experiment or attempt to make fireworks.
- Light fireworks one item at a time.
- Never relight malfunctioning or dud fireworks.
- Store fireworks out of the reach of children.
- Store fireworks in a cool, dry place.
- Never throw fireworks at another person.
- Never carry fireworks in your pocket.
- Stand at least 50 feet from burning cones and fountains.
- Do not light fireworks near combustibles, such as gasoline, newspapers, etc.
- Do not ignite fireworks that have been wet and then dried.
- Do not light fireworks at any place other than the fuse.
- Do not use illegal fireworks.
- Only use items that have the label clearly listing the manufacturer's name, address, and warnings.

HAVE QUESTIONS?

Visit the DC Fire and EMS fireworks safety page at fems.dc.gov/page/fireworks-2025.

Section 5609 (Consumer Fireworks) of the District of Columbia Fire Code (2017), an amended version of the International Fire Code of 2015, governs the handling and possession of fireworks in the District.



GOVERNMENT OF THE
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
MURIEL BOWSER, MAYOR