



# City of Madison Fire Department

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## News Release

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### **Fire, Police Departments Step Up Fireworks Enforcement** *Best Advice: Don't Buy Them, Don't Use Them*

Even after Rhythm & Booms was postponed on Saturday night, it didn't prevent the skies from lighting up in neighborhoods across the City.

Illegal fireworks remain a concern in the City of Madison, prompting the Fire Department to join with City of Madison police to step up enforcement this week.

Under City of Madison ordinances only sparklers, snakes, snaps, caps and party poppers are legal within the City limits. Many communities bordering Madison have differing ordinances governing the use of fireworks, but the Roman candles, fountains and the like that are sold at nearby roadside stands are not permitted within the City.

The intention of the stepped-up enforcement is to change behaviors, reduce the possession and limit the use of prohibited fireworks in Madison. The ultimate goal is to improve community safety and quality of life.

Teams of police and fire prevention officers have been designated to patrol neighborhoods. A citation bail amount of \$172, and fines of up to \$1000 plus court costs may be levied against individuals found to be using fireworks in violation of City ordinances, even for a first offense.

As a first step, the Fire and Police Departments are urging residents to stop this trend with a simple message regarding fireworks: ***Don't buy them; don't use them.***

#### **Facts About Fireworks:**

- On Independence Day in a typical year, more U.S. fires are reported than on any other day; fireworks account for half of those fires.
- In 2005, fireworks caused an estimated **1,800** total structure fires and **700** vehicle fire
- These 2,500 fires resulted in an estimated **60** civilian injuries and **\$39 million** in direct property damage.
- In 2006, U.S. hospital emergency rooms treated an estimated **9,200** people for fireworks-related injuries.
- **One-third** of the people injured by fireworks were under the age of 15.
- The risk of fireworks injury was **two-and-a-half** times as high for children ages 10-14 as for the general population.
- Sparklers, fountains, and novelties alone accounted for **28%** of the emergency room fireworks injuries in 2006.
- The risks with fireworks are **not** limited to displays, public or private – risks exist wherever fireworks are **manufactured, transported, or stored.**

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