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**CITY OF RICHMOND**  
**DEPARTMENT OF FIRE & EMERGENCY SERVICES**  
**ORGANIZED OCTOBER 25, 1858**  
**201 E. Franklin Street**  
**RICHMOND, VIRGINIA 23219-1852**

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## **MEDIA ADVISORY**

**For Release On:**  
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### **Fireworks Safety**

The 4<sup>th</sup> of July is a holiday that includes fireworks as a central part of the celebration. The Richmond Fire Department hopes you and your family have a safe Independence Day holiday and that you enjoy fireworks safely. Despite the dangers of fireworks, few people understand the associated risks – fires, devastating burns, severe injuries, and even death. Below are statistics and tips of how to enjoy fireworks safely.

- Fireworks start an average of 18,500 fires per year, including 1,300 structure fires, 300 vehicle fires, and 16,900 outside and other fires. These fires caused an average of three deaths, 40 civilian injuries, and an average of \$43 million in direct property damage.
- In 2015, U.S. hospital emergency rooms treated an estimated 11,900 people for fireworks related injuries; 51% of those injuries were to the extremities and 41% were to the head. Children younger than 15 years of age accounted for one-quarter (26%) of the estimated 2015 injuries. These injury estimates were obtained or derived from the [Consumer Product Safety Commission's 2015 Fireworks Annual Report by Yongling Tu](#).
- The risk of fireworks injury is highest for young people ages 5-9, followed by children 10-19.
- Sparklers account for more than one-quarter of emergency room fireworks injuries as they burn hot enough to cause third-degree burns.
- After the firework display, children should never pick up fireworks that may be left over, they may still be active.
- The safest way to enjoy fireworks is to attend a public display conducted by trained licensed professionals. The City is sponsoring at Dogwood Dell- 4<sup>th</sup> of July Fireworks at Dark on Tuesday, July 4 and The Richmond Flying Squirrels are having a Fireworks Show immediately upon the conclusion of their baseball game.

As a reminder, fireworks are illegal in the Metro Richmond Area. Illegally discharging fireworks may subject the responsible party to legal action. Violation of the Fire Code is a Class 1 Misdemeanor, subject to penalties of up to \$2,500 for each offense and/or up to a year in jail. For any questions or concerns, you can call our Fire Marshal's Office directly at (804) 646-6640 Monday-Friday from 0800-1700, excluding city holidays.

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