

## **NEWS RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE** \_\_\_\_\_

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### **FOURTH OF JULY FIREWORKS SAFETY REMINDER**

SUFFOLK, VA (June 27, 2019) The Suffolk Fire Marshal's Office wants you to play it safe and follow the law when celebrating Independence Day. They note that the use or sale of fireworks in the City of Suffolk is prohibited by City Code.

The Code states, "It shall be a violation of this Code for any person to store, to offer for sale, expose for sale, sell at retail, or use or explode any fireworks, except as provided in the rules and regulations issued by the fire official for the granting of permits for supervised public displays of fireworks by the jurisdiction, fair associations, amusement parks and other organizations. Fireworks means and includes any combustible or explosive composition, or any substance or combination of substances, or article prepared for the purpose of producing a visible or an audible effect by combustion, explosion, deflagration or detonation, and shall include blank cartridges, toy pistols, toy cannons, toy canes or toy guns in which explosives are used, the type of balloons which require fire underneath to propel the balloons, firecrackers, torpedoes, skyrockets, Roman candles, dago bombs, sparklers or other devices of like construction and any device containing any explosive or flammable compound, or any tablets or other devices containing any explosive substance; except that the term "fireworks" shall not include auto

flares, paper caps containing not in excess of an average of 0.25 grain (16.2 mg) of explosive content per cap, and toy pistols, toy canes, toy guns or other devices for use of such caps, the sale and use of which shall be permitted at all times.

Each July 4<sup>th</sup>, thousands of people, most often children and teens, are injured while using consumer fireworks. Despite the dangers of fireworks, few people understand the associated risks: devastating burns, other injuries, fires, and even death.

The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) notes that 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. Their statistics further note that in 2017, U. S. hospital emergency rooms treated an estimated 12,900 people for fireworks related injuries, with children younger than 15 years of age accounting for more than one-third of the injuries.

The City of Suffolk Fire & Rescue Department and the NFPA encourage people to enjoy public displays of fireworks, as the safest way to prevent fireworks-related injuries is to leave fireworks displays to trained experts. Preparing for a day of family barbeques and holiday excitement is no fun if it includes a trip to the emergency room due to improper handling of fireworks.

The following is a link to a Public Safety Message provided by the Hampton Roads Fire Chiefs, Fire Marshals, and Public Educators:  
<https://williamsburgva.sharefile.com/d-sab297c6d6ca42e5b>

Leave it to the professionals – enjoy the Stars & Stripes Spectacular on Thursday, July 4<sup>th</sup> as the skies of Suffolk light up with a fireworks show over the beautiful Nansemond River at Constant's Wharf Park & Marina. The park will

open at 5:30 p.m. with entertainment, children's activities, merchandise vendors and a variety of food choices. A large area with bounce houses and games will be available for children 12 and under for a \$5.00 entry fee. Johnny White and the Elite Band will take the stage at 6:00 p.m. with a repertoire of songs in a variety of styles. The fireworks show will begin at 9:00 p.m. for the entire family to enjoy.

For more information on fire safety, please contact the Suffolk Fire Marshal's Office at 757-514-4540.

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