



# PRESS RELEASE

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## **ZERO TOLERANCE – POLICE CITE FIREWORK VIOLATORS**

*Using fireworks illegally will cost you; Public safety is foremost concern*

**MUSCATINE, Iowa** – The celebration of our nation's independence is synonymous with gatherings of family and friends, Picnics, parades, and patriotic concerts are some of the usual activities associated with this summer holiday, but so is the use of consumer fireworks.



“The most important message to people is that if they choose to discharge fireworks, do so in a safe manner,” Mike Hartman, Muscatine Assistant Fire Chief and Fire Marshal, said.

Muscatine Police Department officials also urge everyone to be safe this holiday, and to be considerate of neighbors and pets when using consumer fireworks as part of their Independence Day celebration.

Public safety is the foremost concern for local and state officials in the governance of the sale and use of consumer fireworks. While the sale of consumer fireworks is governed by the State



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of Iowa, the use of consumer fireworks inside the city limits of Muscatine is governed by the City Code of Muscatine. And Muscatine City Code specifically states that the use of consumer fireworks is ONLY allowed between the hours of 9 a.m. and 10 p.m. on July 3rd and July 4th.

Muscatine Police will be taking an aggressive approach to violations of the City fireworks ordinance.

“We urge citizens to call MUSCOM to report any illegal use of fireworks,” Police Chief Tony Kies said. “We will investigate all reports and issue citations.”

Muscatine Police have previously issued warnings to individuals who have violated City ordinance concerning the use of consumer fireworks, but warnings proved to be not very productive with all the complaints that the Police Department receives. For the past several years, Police switched to a zero-tolerance campaign and started issuing citations to people lighting fireworks outside of the stated legal times.

That includes citing homeowners when someone on their property is discharging fireworks outside of the legal time frame.

“We want people to be respectful when lighting fireworks, and to make sure you are only lighting them off within the time frame allowed by City ordinance,” Kies said. “If we all work together and follow the rules, we can all have an enjoyable Fourth of July.”

Using fireworks outside the designated dates and times listed below is considered to be a violation and can result in fines of no less than \$250 per violation. Anyone discharging fireworks or allowing the discharge of fireworks on their property assumes responsibility for that discharge and the consequences, if warranted.

Local officials share deep concern for the individuals who discharge fireworks, those who are in the vicinity when fireworks are discharged, those who may be affected by the noise created by



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the explosions, and for the homes, businesses, or other structures that may be unintentionally ignited by fireworks.

“The best way to stay safe is to let the professionals handle the fireworks by attending a public display,” Jerry Ewers, Muscatine Fire Chief, said. “But if you choose to discharge consumer fireworks, please do it safely and responsibly.”

Watch this [Firework Safety](#) video produced by Firefighter Craig Chelf of the Muscatine Fire Department.

## **Report any fires in buildings, vehicles, or greenspaces by calling 911 immediately!**

Residents are also able to call the Police Department non-emergency number (563-263-9922) or use the City of Muscatine app “Muscatine Connect” to report the illegal use of consumer fireworks. You can download the app for smart phones from the AppStore or Google Play.

Using Muscatine Connect allows residents to keep the community safe while avoiding tension within the neighborhood with anonymous reporting, and keeps the 911 system available for emergencies.

## **Highlights from the City Code ...**

- Current Muscatine City Code sets the time for the legal discharge of consumer fireworks during the Independence Day holiday between 9 a.m. and 10 p.m. on July 3 and July 4 on real property that they own or on property where consent has been given by the property owner.
- Persons 17 years or younger are not permitted to discharge fireworks except under the supervision of an adult who is within sight and sound of the minor(s) as they discharge fireworks.



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- It is a violation of City Code for any parent, guardian, or other adult having custody of a minor to allow the minor to discharge fireworks without direct supervision by the parent, guardian, or other adult having custody.
- Any person discharging a fireworks device or any person permitting the discharge of a fireworks device on their property assumes the responsibility for and the potential consequences from the discharging of fireworks.
- It is a violation of City Code to discharge fireworks in a reckless manner or a manner that is likely to cause death, injury, fire, or property damage, and to discharge fireworks while showing visible signs of, or determined to be, intoxicated or under the influence of a drug or narcotic.
- It is against City Code to alter, remove, or discharge components of a fireworks device from its intended method of discharging.
- Snakes, sparklers, or caps can be discharged in a public place unless specifically prohibited by the owner of the public space, and as long as all trash, wrappers, and wires are properly disposed of.
- Sky lantern open flame devices are not permitted unless the device is tethered by a retrievable rope that provides the individual control over the sky lantern.

And for household pets. (Check out the July 4 safety tips from the American Veterinary Medical Association by clicking [HERE](#)).

**Enjoy a safe holiday season.**

More information can be found on the City of Muscatine [Firework Safety](#) page.



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