



COMMUNICATIONS DIVISION
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CITY OF MUSCATINE PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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IF YOU CHOOSE TO USE FIREWORKS – DO SO SAFELY

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

MUSCATINE, Iowa – The celebration of Independence Day 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 National Safety Council advises everyone to enjoy fireworks at public displays conducted by professionals, and not to use any fireworks at home. They may be legal but they are not safe.



In the City of Muscatine, it is permitted to discharge consumer fireworks 9 a.m. to 10 p.m. on July 3 and July 4, but only



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on real property that is owned by the individual discharging the fireworks or on property that the individual has permission from the property owner to discharge fireworks.

Consumer fireworks are small fireworks devices that are sold for the general public to use and are designed to produce visible or audible effects by combustion. They are usually weaker in explosive power than fireworks used in professional displays.

A retailer or community group may sell consumer fireworks at a permanent building only between June 1 and July 8, and between December 10 and January 3 each year, all dates inclusive; and in a temporary structure (i.e., tent) only between June 13 and July 8 each year, both dates inclusive. Each retailer or community group must apply through the Iowa Department of Inspections, Appeals & Licensing, and undergo a site inspection from the local fire marshal before proceeding to sell consumer fireworks.

Every year, thousands of people are injured badly enough to require medical treatment after fireworks-related incidents, with many of the injuries to children and young adults. While the majority of these incidents are due to amateurs attempting to use professional-grade, homemade, or other illegal fireworks or explosives, less powerful devices like small firecrackers and sparklers can also cause significant injuries.

"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.



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Public safety is the top concern for local and state officials in the sale and use of consumer fireworks. While the sale of consumer fireworks is governed by the State of Iowa, the use of consumer fireworks inside the city limits of Muscatine is governed by the City Code of Muscatine. (See [FIREWORKS SALES, DISCHARGING, AND DISPLAY](#))

"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."

Be sure to call the non-emergency number (563-263-9922) and use the 9-1-1 service only in emergency situations.

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

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



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"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.

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

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 "Submit Citizen Request" (powered by SeeClickFix) to report the illegal use of consumer fireworks. You can download the app for smart phones from the AppStore or Google Play.

Using Submit Citizen Request (formerly 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 ...](#)





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- 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.
- 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.

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