

# July 2015

## FIREWORKS Safety Reminder

The Excelsior Fire District Firefighters want you and your family to be safe on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July and any time you choose to use legal fireworks. It is important for citizens to understand fireworks laws and be well informed of the safety precautions that are imperative to practice when using legal (consumer) fireworks.

Do not make the assumption that fireworks sold over the counter at the local store or from a tent in a parking lot are safe. All fireworks are dangerous, regardless of size, since fireworks are explosives. The danger increases when they fall into the hands of someone who is careless and complacent about safety. Do you want to risk starting a structure, vehicle, or wildland fire, or injure, permanently scar or kill someone because you did not take fireworks safety seriously?

Firecrackers of any size, bottle rockets, roman candles, and parachutes are just some fireworks that are *not legal* in Minnesota. Examples of legal fireworks include sparklers, cones, and tubes that emit sparks, novelty items like snakes, and party poppers. You must be 18 with a photo identification to purchase fireworks. Fireworks **MAY NOT** be used on public property such as the Commons, city owned docks, beaches, parks, trails, bridges, parking lots, schools, roads, alleys, and other government owned properties, etc.

Here is something for parents to keep in mind; there are legal fireworks that are shaped and made to look like children's toys and have names that can easily be interpreted as a toy or food item by children. Common names of fireworks are: cherry bombs, jumping jacks, lady fingers, fountains, and whistles.

Instructions on most fireworks are poor to vague at best. Read the packages before you purchase the fireworks. If you have questions about safety, the type of fireworks, the distance the fireworks go into the air and out to the side, and how long they burn ask the retailer.

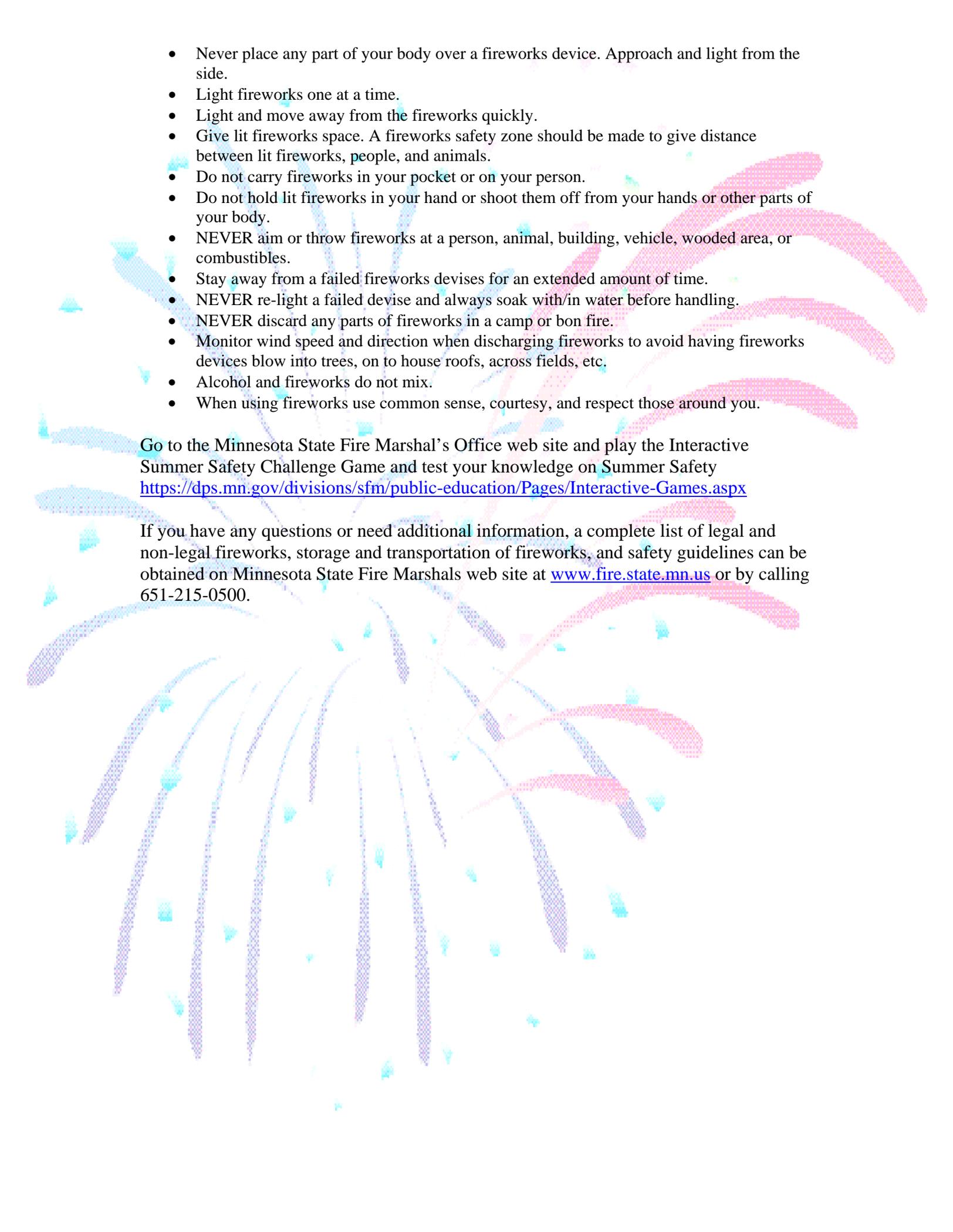
**FIREWORKS ARE NOT TOYS**, they are explosives on a stick, packed in pretty packages, put in cute little bundles, and made into super cool shapes with a wick.

In 2013, there were eight deaths and an estimated 11,400 consumers who sustained injuries related to fireworks. In 2013, sparklers and rockets accounted for more than 40 percent of all estimated injuries.

**FIREWORKS ARE NOT TOYS, THEY ARE EXPLOSIVES**

### TIPS TO STAY SAFE

- Purchased fireworks from a licensed dealer.
- Read and understand fireworks directions. Read caution labels before igniting.
- If there are no clear directions on the fireworks you have purchase use common sense and follow these tips.
- Do not use fireworks that you suspect have been tampered with, come in damaged packages, or look homemade.
- Never allow young children to play with or ignite fireworks, including sparklers. Sparklers burn at temperatures at or above 2,000 degrees

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- Never place any part of your body over a fireworks device. Approach and light from the side.
  - Light fireworks one at a time.
  - Light and move away from the fireworks quickly.
  - Give lit fireworks space. A fireworks safety zone should be made to give distance between lit fireworks, people, and animals.
  - Do not carry fireworks in your pocket or on your person.
  - Do not hold lit fireworks in your hand or shoot them off from your hands or other parts of your body.
  - NEVER aim or throw fireworks at a person, animal, building, vehicle, wooded area, or combustibles.
  - Stay away from a failed fireworks device for an extended amount of time.
  - NEVER re-light a failed device and always soak with/in water before handling.
  - NEVER discard any parts of fireworks in a camp or bon fire.
  - Monitor wind speed and direction when discharging fireworks to avoid having fireworks devices blow into trees, on to house roofs, across fields, etc.
  - Alcohol and fireworks do not mix.
  - When using fireworks use common sense, courtesy, and respect those around you.

Go to the Minnesota State Fire Marshal's Office web site and play the Interactive Summer Safety Challenge Game and test your knowledge on Summer Safety <https://dps.mn.gov/divisions/sfm/public-education/Pages/Interactive-Games.aspx>

If you have any questions or need additional information, a complete list of legal and non-legal fireworks, storage and transportation of fireworks, and safety guidelines can be obtained on Minnesota State Fire Marshals web site at [www.fire.state.mn.us](http://www.fire.state.mn.us) or by calling 651-215-0500.