

Southern Pines Police Department
Safety Tips
Fireworks Safety

Fireworks hurt an estimated 8,000 people a year in the United States each year. Most of those injured are children between the ages of 8-14, with the higher percentage being young males. Keep in mind that fireworks in North Carolina are illegal to possess and use. The General Statutes state it is illegal to “manufacture, purchase, sell, deal in, transport, possess, receive, advertise, use or cause to be discharged any pyrotechnics of any description whatsoever within the State of North Carolina”. The simple possession of fireworks could subject an individual to arrest, fines and potentially a jail sentence. Additionally, providing pyrotechnics to a person under the age of 16 can result in that person’s arrest. While there are some exceptions, even some types of sparklers are illegal. But the bottom line is this: anything classified as fireworks can be dangerous and must be handled with great caution.

People sometimes forget how dangerous fireworks and sparklers can be. They can reach temperatures between 1000 and 2000 degrees Fahrenheit. How hot is that? Water boils at 214 degrees for a comparison. Illegal use of fireworks is not “harmless fun”. The 8,000 injured illegal users, and their parents and family, learned that lesson the hard way. Parents, set a good example for your children by following the law. Choose safe and legal ways to celebrate events and ensure your safety, as well as the safety of your children, friends and neighbors such as taking in a legally operated and municipally sanctioned fireworks display. These shows are put on by professionals who have the training and equipment to use them safely. They also have the required permits to do so legally. Talk with your kids about staying away from fireworks use and instruct them to tell you or a responsible adult if they find any. Even at legal shows, unused shells can result from malfunctions and might be found quite a distance away from the show. These can be extremely unstable and dangerous and should not be touched. If you find something that looks like this or is suspicious, call 911 for response by trained professionals. They will call in resources to handle the incident safely. Enjoy the celebration, but do so in a manner that keeps everyone safe.

For more information or a presentation on this topic, contact the Community Services Coordinator at (910) 692-2732.