

**WHATCOM COUNTY**  
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**WHATCOM COUNTY FIRE MARSHAL'S OFFICE**  
**PRESS RELEASE**

**CELEBRATE SAFELY DURING 4<sup>TH</sup> OF JULY HOLIDAY**

The Whatcom County Fire Marshal's Office wants to remind all County residents to celebrate safely during the 4<sup>th</sup> of July holiday. If you are planning on using your own fireworks, use only legal consumer fireworks and only during permitted times.

Remember, check with your local fire jurisdiction on fireworks regulations if you live within a city limits because many cities have enacted restrictions.

**Beginning this year, new days and times for fireworks discharge are in place. Please note the following new times that are allowed:**

- **July 3<sup>rd</sup>: 6:00 PM until 11:00 PM**
- **July 4<sup>th</sup>: 6:00 PM until 12:00 midnight**
- **July 5<sup>th</sup>: 6:00 PM until 11:00 PM**

**So which fireworks are legal?** Fireworks purchased at stands in unincorporated Whatcom County are inspected and approved by the Fire Marshal's Office and are State licensed. If you purchased them from a reservation stand keep in mind the following items are prohibited off of the reservation:

- Fire Crackers
- Bottle Rockets
- Missile type rockets with fins
- Fireworks with sticks or fins
- Mortar shells larger than 1 3/4" in diameter

Additionally explosive devices such as M-80's, M-100's, Tennis ball bombs, and pipe bombs are **illegal everywhere** and are considered an explosive device. Possession or use of these items can result in criminal charges.

**How about sky lanterns?** Sky lanterns are NOT a firework, but are regulated by the State and County fire code. Beginning July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016 sky lanterns are allowed to be lit as long as they are tethered (i.e. kite string, twine, etc.) and controlled at all times. They must remain tethered until they are extinguished and then should be retrieved for proper disposal. Lighting a sky lantern untethered can be charged criminally through the Fire Code and as Reckless Burning if any fire is started due to their use.

Any possession or use of illegal fireworks can result in both civil and criminal penalties. Any modification of a firework is considered an improvised explosive device and is a felony. **Any fire started from fireworks or explosives is Reckless Burning which can result in civil and criminal penalties.**

Visit the Whatcom County Fire Marshal's Office website for more information:  
<http://www.whatcomcounty.us/669/Fireworks>

DATE: June 27, 2016  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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