



Greater Omaha Chapter
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Media Release

For Immediate Release

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Fireworks Safety Tips for New Year's Eve Revelers

OMAHA, Ne., December 28, 2010 -- Omaha recently changed the city's fireworks ordinance, harmonizing local law with Nebraska state law. This means that Omaha residents will be able to discharge fireworks over the New Years Holiday, starting December 28th, and running through 11pm on December 31st.

The National Safety Council, Greater Omaha Chapter is issuing these tips for the safe use of fireworks during this New Year's celebration. These tips are on our website at www.SafeNebraska.org.

Know Before You Light

- The best show is a free show! This year's free show is at the Gene Leahy Mall at 7pm December 31st. <http://www.holidaylightsfestival.org/fireworks.html> for more information.
- If you do purchase your own fireworks, always follow fireworks manufacturer's instructions for the safe use of fireworks.
- Never use home-made or commercial grade fireworks. The former are inherently unsafe, the latter are illegal to use without proper training, credentials, and permits. Their use can lead to serious injury or death.
- The Nebraska Fire Marshall has a list of approved fireworks on its website. Police will be able to check yours against the list. The list may be found at: <http://www.sfm.ne.gov/publications/fireworks.html> Note: To ensure you don't violate the law, always purchase from a Nebraska fireworks vendor!
- Don't use old fireworks! Old fireworks can become unstable. Purchase new fireworks for each celebration, and purchase just enough for your celebration.
- Never allow young children to handle fireworks, even sparklers, which burn at extremely high temperatures.
- Older children / teens should use fireworks only under close adult supervision.
- Have a first aid kit prepared and nearby.

Preparing Your Display

- Choose a clear, outdoor area away from onlookers, houses, and other flammable materials.
- Check just before your display starts to be sure the wind will not blow ashes and other pieces of spent fireworks into the crowd, onto homes, or into flammable materials.
- Light one firework at a time, and maintain a safe distance after lighting.
- Do not allow running or horseplay while fireworks are being used.
- Never ignite devices in a container.
- Don't try to re-light or handle malfunctioning fireworks; douse and soak them with water and discard them safely.
- Keep a bucket of water / hose nearby to fully extinguish fireworks that don't go off or in case of fire.
- Never ever mix alcohol and fireworks.

After Your Display

- Be a good neighbor! Clean up all fireworks debris from the roadway, grass, and other nearby areas where your fireworks may have fallen.
- Be sure to end your display on time!

Why Fireworks Safety?

In 2006, an estimated 9,200 people were treated in emergency rooms for fireworks-related injuries, 36 percent of whom were under 15 years old.

Children between the ages of 10 and 14 were at three times the risk of fireworks injuries than the general population. About a third of the injuries were from small firecrackers, 21 percent from bottle rockets and 20 percent from sparklers. In 2004, fireworks caused \$21 million in direct property damage.

The National Safety Council advises that the best way to safely enjoy this New Year's is to watch a public fireworks display conducted by professionals.

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About the National Safety Council, Greater Omaha Chapter

Founded in 1924, the National Safety Council, Greater Omaha Chapter, is a private non-profit, community based organization that promotes safety and health by providing programs, resource services and education to individuals and organizations to prevent both the personal and economic loss associated with injuries, accidents and health hazards wherever they exist. Under the leadership of the National Safety Council, Greater Omaha Chapter, the greater Omaha metro area was recently designated a Safe Community by the United Nation's World Health Organization (WHO). For more information, visit www.safenebraska.org.