

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release/Broadcast

Monday, June 29, 2009

Subject: July 4, 2009: “Celebrate Our Freedom Safely”

Summary:

The sale and use of “Safe and Sane” fireworks are legal (with some restrictions) within the City of Petaluma. This year there will be eighteen (18) non-profit groups that will operate permitted booths within the City limits. Petaluma’s “Firework Ordinance” only allows four days of sales (July 1st through the July 4th) and one of day of use/discharge (July 4th).

Restricted use areas include Petaluma’s south and west boundary known as the High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (HFHSZ). Over 2,000 letters were sent to parcel owners and occupants informing them that **no fireworks are allowed in this high fire hazard area**. Detailed HFHSZ maps have also been posted at all firework sales booths.

Alternative locations for discharging state-approved fireworks have been designated for residents in the following locations:

- ❖ McNear Park
- ❖ Prince Park
- ❖ Lucchesi Park – Restricted to northwest parking lot and grass area
No fireworks on or near soccer field
- ❖ Wiseman Park (St. Augustine Circle) – Restricted to ballfields
- ❖ City Hall – Restricted to westside lawn and parking lot

This year, Petaluma’s public firework display will held on July 4th at the Petaluma Fairgrounds. The gates will open at 7:30 pm and the firework display is expected to begin shortly after dusk. **Be advised, no private fireworks, barbeques, or alcohol will be allowed on Fairgrounds property.**

Legal fireworks used safely are a wonderful way for a family to celebrate the holiday. However, parents must pay close attention when children are present during the display of fireworks. Several injuries are reported each year due to children being allowed to ignite fireworks without proper adult supervision. It is against the law for any person less than eighteen years of age to purchase, possess, or discharge “Safe and Sane” fireworks unless under the supervision of an adult.

NO ILLEGAL FIREWORKS ALLOWED-\$1,000 CITATIONS will be issued for possession and/or use of illegal fireworks. Combined Police/Fire Enforcement teams will be patrolling Petaluma in unmarked cars and issuing citations to anyone possessing or using illegal fireworks.

No fireworks are allowed in the High Fire Hazard Severity Zone or the Fairgrounds property and \$250-\$1,000 citations will also be issued for improper use of “Safe and Sane Fireworks”.

It is extremely important to know the difference between a legal firework and a dangerous explosive device. Items such as M-80s, M-100s, Cherry Bombs, and Firecrackers are not fireworks; they are federally banned explosives. They can cause serious injury or even death. Bottle Rockets are another form of illegal explosives. Every year hundreds of people see their dreams go up in smoke as a result of illegal bottle rockets. Stay away from anything that is not clearly labeled with the name of the item, the manufacturer’s name, instructions for proper use, and the State Fire Marshal’s seal.

Remember, if it goes up in the air, darts across the ground or explodes, it is *dangerous & illegal*. To report the sale or use of illegal fireworks, please contact the Petaluma Police/Fire Department at 762-2727. If you would like additional information regarding fireworks safety and education, please contact the Fire Marshal’s Office at 778-4389.

Prepared By: **Lieutenant Tim Lyons**
 Petaluma Police Department
 (707) 778-4451

Interim Fire Marshal Cary Fergus
Petaluma Fire Department
(707) 778-4389