

Fireworks



This information sheet contains information for:

1) Firework Safety

2) Using fireworks

3) Selling / buying / possessing fireworks

4) Contacts for further information and leaflets for the general public, teachers, traders, and safety campaigners

1) Firework safety

- a) Fireworks are now increasingly used across the UK to mark public and private celebrations including New Year, concerts and festivals as well as the traditional bonfire night bonanza.
- b) Only buy fireworks which meet the proper safety standard BS7114. This ensures that the fireworks have been properly tested and manufactured.
- c) Read the instructions on every firework before lighting; light them at arms length using a taper then stand well back.
- d) Keep fireworks in a closed box so that sparks cannot set them off.
- e) Don't go near a firework after it has been lit, even if it hasn't gone off it could still explode.
- f) Do not put fireworks in your pockets or throw them
- g) Supervise children around fireworks.
- h) Light sparklers one at a time and wear gloves. Do not give them to children under 5 years old.
- i) If you have bonfires do not throw discarded fireworks onto it. There may still be some explosive material in them.

2) Using Fireworks

- a) Don't cause a nuisance to others by being irresponsible when you're using fireworks. Give a thought to people with children who may be scared or woken up by loud bangs and remember that animals are often frightened by fireworks going off.
- b) There are some regulations governing the use of fireworks which are summarised below:
 - i) It is illegal to use fireworks after 11pm and before 7am except for official Council operated displays and on the following four specific nights
 - (1) New Year Eve – till 1am the following day
 - (2) 5 November – until midnight
 - (3) Chinese New Year - till 1 am the following day
 - (4) Diwali – till 1am the following day

3) Selling / buying / possessing fireworks

- a) Companies and retail outlets which sell fireworks throughout the year have to be licensed, contact Trading Standards on 01732 525291. It is illegal to sell fireworks to anyone under 18 years of age.
- b) Retail outlets can sell fireworks without a licence during the following periods:
 - i) 5 November – 3 weeks before and 5 days after
 - ii) New Year Eve – December 26th to 1st January
 - iii) Chinese New Year - 4 days before including the day of Chinese New Year
 - iv) Diwali – 4 days before including Diwali

A registration to sell fireworks is still required from Trading Standards, even if only selling for the specified periods, and there are charges associated with this. Please see

<http://www.tradingstandards.gov.uk/kent/Explosives.htm>

- c) It is illegal to
 - i) Possess adult fireworks (that is any fireworks except party poppers and sparklers etc.) in a public place by anyone under the age of 18
 - ii) Possess category 4 fireworks (professional display fireworks) by anyone other than a fireworks professional
- d) The new regulations are enforced by the Police; contravention of the regulations is a criminal offence. The Police deal with:
 - i) Fireworks put in letter boxes or causing criminal damage
 - ii) Throwing fireworks in streets, or at individuals

- iii) Fireworks set off within 25 metres of a main road
- iv) Fireworks used outside the times (outlined above) defined in the Firework Regulations 2004

4) Contacts for further information and leaflets for the general public, teachers, traders, and safety campaigners:

- a) **The Department of Trade and Industry (DTI)** produce information and leaflets for the following categories:

General Public (adults and children) including the following information leaflets:

- i) Keep kids safe
- ii) Protect your animals
- iii) Firework Displays

Teachers

Traders (suppliers, retailers and display organisers)

Safety Campaigners and Public bodies (enforcers)

Games (training for children)

The Contact details are:

Department of Trade and Industry, Response Centre, 1 Victoria Street,
London SW1H 0ET

Telephone 020 7215 5000 or (Mincom) 020 7215 6740

Fax: 020 7215 0105

Email: dti.enquiries@dti.gsi.gov.uk

Website <http://www.dti.gov.uk/fireworks/index.htm>

- b) **The Health and Safety Executive together with the local council (Trading Standards Officers, KCC)** enforce firework legislation to protect consumers and the general public. The HSE provide information and guidance for:

Organizing a firework display

Investigating an incident at a firework display

Selling and storing fireworks

The Contact details are:

Health & Safety Executive 7NW Rose Court, 2 Southwark Bridge,
London, SE1 9HS

Tel: 020 7717 6262 Fax: 020 7717 6690

e-mail: explosives.policy@hse.gsi.gov.uk

Website <http://www.hse.gov.uk/explosives/fireworks/index.htm>

- c) **Trading Standards** deal with fireworks to sell or store

The contact details are:

Kent County Council, Trading Standards, 1st Floor, Invicta House,
County Hall, Maidstone ME14 1XX
Telephone 01622 221012 Fax 01622 221013
Email: trading.standards@kent.gov.uk
Website www.tradingstandards.gov.uk/kent/