

Gallup Fire Department: Safety stressed for Fourth of July

Written by By Bernie Dotson Sun Correspondent
Friday, 01 July 2016 06:41



LOCAL FIREWORKS SHOW OFFERS SAFE ALTERNATIVE

With the Fourth of July just around the corner, Gallup Fire Marshal Jesus Morales took the time this week to offer some safety measures for folks to adhere to both inside and outside the home. Morales, a career city fire department employee, said approved vendors began to sell fireworks on June 20 and will cease selling them July 6.

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“The fire department is urging the public to use extreme caution when using fireworks in the city on July Fourth,” Morales said.

Morales said a permit is required to use fireworks within the city limits. He noted that permits cost \$15 and can be purchased from the city clerk’s office at Gallup City Hall on Aztec Ave. If someone is caught lighting fireworks without a permit, a fine of \$250 can be imposed, Morales said.

“Fireworks are not toys, and children should not play with them,” Morales cautioned. “Fireworks can cause serious injuries to people and pets and damage to property. Any kind of fireworks can be dangerous if not used properly.”

Morales offered the following safety tips:

Fireworks should be used on a flat and firm surface, such as the ground or a driveway.

Stay away from bushes, grass, and trees – or anything else that might catch fire.

Stay away from vehicles.

Have a bucket of water and garden hose available for use in case of fire.

There should be a responsible adult present when fireworks are being used.

After a firework has been used, it should be picked up with a shovel, dropped into a bucket of water and left to soak for several hours before being thrown in the trash.

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“Duds” or fireworks that did not go off after being lit should be picked up with a shovel and dropped in some water. “Don’t try and re-light a dud,” Morales said.

If a fire starts due to fireworks, use a bucket of water or garden hose to extinguish the fire so it won’t spread. “Fireworks should never be used in a building,” Morales said.

Morales gave some home safety tips:

Clean outdoor yards of unnecessary weeds and plant growth. “Cut grass and keep watered. Green plants are less likely to burn,” Morales said.

Clean combustible material and other dead growth and dispose of it.

Keep a garden hose connected and ready to use in case a fire breaks out in a yard. A bucket of water comes in handy even if it doesn’t end up getting used.

Keep pets inside, particularly during the evening of the Fourth of July.

Keep vehicles that are parked at home locked, with windows shut. “Park in a garage or under a canopy if possible,” Morales said.

But of course, there’s always a good, old-fashioned public fireworks display — the safest way to enjoy this national holiday.

This year, the July Fourth Stars and Stripes Celebration, sponsored by iHeart Media, kicks off at noon at the Gallup Sports Complex, 925 Park Ave., with the National Anthem and the Pledge of Allegiance, followed by Fourth of July cake and watermelon, and live music. There will be game and craft booths, as well as food vendors and a Gourd Dance, hosted by the Black Creek Gourd

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Society from noon to 7 pm.

Then of course, when the sun has set (around 9 pm), it's finally time for the fireworks. Have a happy and safe Fourth of July!

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