

2014 Fireworks FAQ

What types of fireworks can be legally discharged in Ohio?

Trick and novelty fireworks include items such as sparklers, snaps, glow snakes and smoke bombs. In general, these can be sold in Ohio and used in the state. But check with your local community which may have its own rules preventing these from being sold or used.

Are any fireworks completely safe?

Firecrackers and sparklers cause the most injuries. Severe burns, injuries to the hands, eyes and face, and even blindness or hearing loss can happen anytime something is burned. For example, legal sparklers burn at up to 1800°, hot enough to melt gold. Severe burns happen every year. In addition, puncture-type injuries to an eye are common. The safest way to enjoy fireworks is to attend a show by a licensed exhibitor.

What types of fireworks are illegal to discharge in Ohio without a license and permit?

1.3G Fireworks

Display or exhibitor fireworks include aerial shells that are fired from mortars. They can only be sold by a licensed manufacturer, wholesaler, or, under limited circumstances, out-of-state shippers. They can only be sold to a licensed manufacturer, wholesaler or exhibitor. 1.3G fireworks can only be discharged by a professional, licensed exhibitor. These fireworks can only be discharged by a licensed exhibitor in accordance with Ohio laws regarding exhibitions, including a properly issued exhibition permit issued by the local fire and police departments.

1.4G Fireworks

Commonly referred to as consumer fireworks, these include firecrackers, bottle rockets, roman candles and fountains. A license is needed to sell these, but anyone over the age of 18 may purchase these items, but must sign a form certifying they will take the fireworks outside the state of Ohio within 48 hours. It's illegal to set them off in Ohio.

How many fireworks stores are in Ohio?

There are 86 licensed wholesalers in Ohio. There are also 12 licensed manufacturers that may manufacture and sell fireworks. There is currently a moratorium preventing the issuance of any new sales licenses.

What is a purchaser form?

If you buy fireworks in Ohio, you have to sign a purchaser form certifying you will take the fireworks out of state within 48 hours. Purchasers are responsible for illegal use of the fireworks, including any damages. Making a false statement on the form is a first-degree misdemeanor. The purchaser's copy of the form must accompany the fireworks, be attached to an invoice itemizing the quantity of fireworks purchased, the amount of the sale, and made available upon request by a law enforcement officer or fire authority.

Are there penalties for failing to follow Ohio's fireworks laws?

Yes. Most first time violations are first-degree misdemeanors, punishable by up to a \$1,000 fine and six months in jail. Illegal fireworks can be confiscated by law enforcement authorities. Violations include falsifying the purchaser form, failing to complete the form, failing to transport fireworks out of state within the specified time period, and discharging fireworks.

How many injuries result from fireworks use?

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) reports fireworks were involved in an estimated 11,400 injuries treated in U.S. hospital emergency departments during calendar year 2013. Children under the age of 15 accounted for 40% of the injuries.

How does the State Fire Marshal promote fireworks safety in Ohio?

The Department of Commerce actively reviews and works to increase fireworks safety, both in showrooms and for public exhibitions. The Department focuses on the regulation and education of the fireworks industry and those involved in the exhibition of fireworks. The Division of State Fire Marshal operates a Fireworks Incident Team (FIT) to respond to the scene of any fireworks accident to investigate and assist local authorities. Investigations by FIT have led to both administrative and criminal action being taken against exhibitors who fail to follow the regulations.

What is the process for fireworks exhibitions?

A permit from local authorities is required for all exhibitions. The permit specifies the date, time, location and various other parameters of how the exhibition will be executed. Authorities inspect the exhibition site before, during and after the exhibition using a State Fire Marshal issued checklist. Only licensed fireworks exhibitors can perform fireworks exhibitions. During the shoot, only registered employees and the certified fire safety official are allowed within the discharge site. Only licensed fireworks exhibitors can perform fireworks exhibitions. Exhibitors must undergo six hours of training on fireworks laws and safety every three years, and must, in turn, relay that training to all employees annually.