



## An Important Message about Fireworks



The Officers of the Edgewater Park Police Department wish everyone a safe and happy summer.

We know the warm weather is a great time to gather with friends and family to have a fun time and enjoy the outdoors. **We ask that you please be considerate of your neighbors, pets and Veterans who may be suffering while you celebrate the summer with loud fireworks.**

A significant number of Veterans who experience combat overseas, return with PTSD. Loud, unexpected noises, such as fireworks can remind combat veterans with PTSD of GUNFIRE or EXPLOSIONS they had experienced on the battlefield.

One in five dogs goes missing after being SCARED by FIREWORKS. More dogs go missing on the Fourth of July than any other day of the year because the loud noises can scare even the bravest dog.

Besides being inconsiderate of others, setting off aerial fireworks is extremely dangerous to innocent bystanders, and we have seen numerous instances in which the fireworks have caused property damage and personal injury.

While **some handheld fireworks are legal in New Jersey, most are not.**

There are no exceptions when it comes to actual fireworks. Aside from how dangerous they are, you can face serious consequences if you get caught using them.

**The Township of Edgewater Park also has several local ordinances prohibiting the use or possession of fireworks on public or private property:**

- 1) § 455-37 – Playing or loitering in the street.
- 2) § 342-10 – Maliciously and willfully disturb another by unreasonable noise.
- 3) § 455-35 - Obstruction of street prohibited

### **New Jersey's Laws on the Sale and Possession of Fireworks**

**2A:2-3.1** Our current laws permit devices such as hand-held sparklers and ground-based sparklers, and novelty items, including party poppers and snappers. **All other**

**fireworks remain illegal, including all explosive and aerial fireworks such as firecrackers, sky-rockets, bottle rockets, Roman candles and similar devices.** The law also restricts the sale of sparklers to only those who are 16 and over.

### **Violating NJ's Fireworks Laws Is a Crime**

A person can be charged with a fourth-degree crime if he or she sells, offers or exposes for sale, or possesses with intent to sell, any fireworks, other than sparkling devices and novelties to persons 16 years of age or older.

A person can also be charged with a petty disorderly persons offense if he or she **purchases, uses, discharges, causes to be discharged, ignites, fires or otherwise sets in action, or possesses fireworks without having the required permit.**

**These charges range from a petty disorderly persons offense, which carries the potential for a 30-day jail sentence and \$500 fine, to a fourth-degree crime, which could result in 18 months in prison and a \$10,000 fine. Serious stuff, and certainly not worth messing up your life over.**

A criminal charge, whether a 4th degree or a petty disorderly persons offense, could have serious and longstanding repercussions. In short, they should be avoided at all costs. The simplest way to avoid criminal charges is to follow the law and stay away from illegal fireworks. It will keep you safer, too.

Officers will be issuing summonses to anyone found using or in possession of "Illegal Fireworks".

The summer season tends to bring out a different side of people. Whether it be the alcohol that is sometimes consumed or the atmosphere, people drop their guard and do things they normally would never do. Please do not let a prison sentence ruin your summer celebrations. Have fun but be smart.

Thank you and be safe!