



Crime Prevention Advice

Firework and Bonfire Safety

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE
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Firework and Bonfire Safety

Fireworks can be great fun on Bonfire night on 5 November, Diwali, New Year's Eve and Chinese New Year.

However, fireworks can and do cause serious injuries if mishandled, and there are laws restricting their sale and use.

Stay safe and out of trouble with the following advice:

- The law says you must not set off fireworks between 11pm and 7am, except on Bonfire Night, when the cut off is midnight, or New Year's Eve, Diwali and Chinese New Year, when the cut off is 1am
- It's illegal to set off or throw fireworks, including sparklers, in the street or other public places
- If you're under 18, you can't buy certain types of fireworks, or have any fireworks in a public place – they'll be confiscated if found
- You can be fined up to £5,000 and imprisoned for up to 6 months for selling or using fireworks illegally. You, or your parent or carer, could also get an on-the-spot fine of £90
- Only buy fireworks from a reputable retailer and check they are CE marked. Since July 2017 only CE marked fireworks should be sold

Staying safe around fireworks and bonfires

Despite annual safety warnings, firework celebrations still end in painful injuries for too many people, including young children.

Injury figures show the safest place to enjoy fireworks is at a large public display - far fewer people are injured here than at smaller family or private parties.

If you are having a firework party at home, you can make the occasion fun and safe for everyone by following the Firework Code, as well as some simple sparkler and bonfire safety tips.

Firework safety

Only adults should deal with setting up firework displays, the lighting of fireworks and the safe disposal of fireworks once they have been used. The person setting off fireworks should not drink alcohol.

Children and young people should watch and enjoy fireworks at a safe distance. Keep any pets indoors and tell your neighbours so they can ensure their pets or livestock are kept safe too.

Follow the Firework Code for a safer fireworks party:

- Plan your firework display to make it safe and enjoyable. Only one person should be in charge of fireworks
- Keep fireworks in a closed box and use them one at a time

- Read the instructions in daylight beforehand, then follow the instructions on each firework before lighting, using a torch if necessary
- Light the firework at arm's length with a taper and stand well back
- Keep naked flames, including cigarettes, away from fireworks
- Never return to a firework once it has been lit
- Don't put fireworks in pockets and never throw them
- Direct any rocket fireworks well away from spectators
- Never use paraffin or petrol on a bonfire
- Make sure that the fire is out and surroundings are made safe before leaving

Sparkler safety

Sparklers may seem harmless but they burn at fierce temperatures, producing heat equivalent to that of a welding torch. Top tips for sparkler safety:

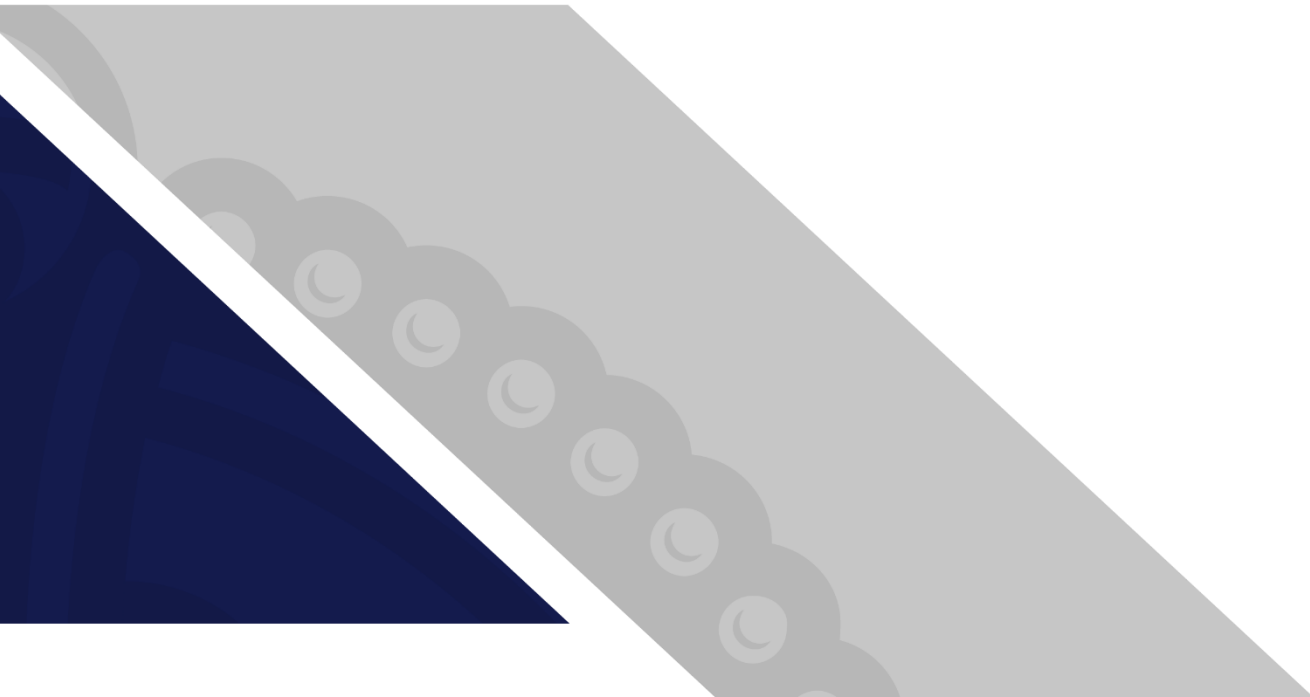
- Don't give sparklers to children under the age of five. Always supervise children using sparklers
- Always light sparklers one at time and wear gloves
- Avoid dressing children in loose or flowing clothes – they may catch light
- Hold sparklers away from the body and at arm's length while being lit and while burning
- Don't wave sparklers about close to other people or run while holding them
- Don't take sparklers to public displays, it will be too crowded to use them safely
- Plunge finished sparklers hot end down into a bucket of water as soon as they have burnt out as they can stay hot for a long time
- Never hold a baby in your arms while you are holding a sparkler

Bonfire safety

If you're organising your own bonfire, keep everyone safe by following this advice:

- One person should be responsible for the bonfire and all children should be supervised
- Choose a site away from houses, garages, wooden fences, sheds, overhead cables, trees and shrubs AND ALWAYS AWAY FROM FIREWORKS
- Build the bonfire on the day it will be lit so animals cannot hide inside it
- Build the stack so that it's stable and will not collapse outwards or to one side
- NEVER pour petrol, paraffin or methylated spirits onto a fire
- Don't put foam-filled furniture, aerosols, tins of paint or bottles on the fire
- Keep a bucket or two of water, or the garden hose or household fire extinguisher handy in case of an accident
- Avoid loose clothing and tie back long hair
- After the party, pour water on the fire, rather than leaving it to burn out

For more fire safety advice, visit www.northantsfire.org.uk



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