



NEWS ADVISORY

July 1, 2020

For immediate release

REMINDER: FIREWORKS ARE ILLEGAL IN MISSOULA

The City of Missoula reminds the public that the use of most fireworks in the city of Missoula is illegal, and City leaders ask for cooperation from citizens to help keep Missoula safe during the Independence Day holiday.

Fireworks are prohibited in the city, on City open space lands, on all U.S. Forest Service lands, within County parks and County-managed recreation areas and at all Fish, Wildlife and Parks fishing access sites. All of the Fort Missoula area, including the Fort Missoula Regional Park, is within the city. In addition, fireworks are illegal in the annexed areas on the west end of the city.

Violations of the fireworks ordinance are \$100 plus court costs for a first offense and \$300 plus court costs for a second offense during the same calendar year as the first offense.

The Fireworks Report Line, operated by the emergency dispatchers at the City-County Office of Emergency Management's Missoula 9-1-1 Center, is working 24 hours a day through July 4. **To report violations, call 258-4850.** Officers will respond to as many complaints as possible.

The Missoula City Council amended the fireworks ordinance in fall of 2014 to allow the sale and discharge of "novelty" fireworks in the city. Those include sparklers, party poppers and other small fireworks. Visit the City website for a complete description:

<https://ci.missoula.mt.us/1763/Fireworks>

Professional public displays, which are allowed by permit from the Missoula Fire Department

chief, are done safely at pre-determined times and are short in duration. Public displays in Missoula will be held on July 3 at Ogren Park Allegiance Field at the civic stadium by the Missoula PaddleHeads <https://www.milb.com/missoula> and on July 4 at Southgate Mall. Mall management is unable to open its parking lot for fireworks viewing this year because of COVID-19 protocols, but the show will be visible from afar. Here is complete information online: <https://shopsouthgate.com/events-news/event/fourth-fest>

The City of Missoula Communications office is distributing information through advertising in the Missoulian newspaper in the print and online editions; on-air radio advertising; information on the City website; City social media; and news coverage.

The Missoula City Council and Mayor John Engen hear complaints from residents every year and ask for enforcement and protection from the Police and Fire departments to the extent of their resources. Fireworks start fires, endangering property in town and bringing the risk of wildland fires. They cause injuries and are part of hospital emergency departments' busiest day of the year. They cause many dogs to become frightened, lost and injured, creating Missoula Animal Control's busiest day of the year and extra demands on the shelter at the Humane Society of Western Montana. And they frighten and disturb people.

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