

Washington State Patrol Media Advisory

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Office of the State Fire Marshal

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For Immediate Release

July 2, 2009

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Keep Your School Safe From Fires on July 4

State Fire Marshal Michael G. Matlick announced today that in 2008, during July 4th celebrations, there were 11 fireworks-related school fires. From 2006 through 2008 there were 36 fireworks-related school fires that totaled more than \$8 million in losses.

Schools have open play areas and sports fields that attract the attention of people looking for a place to light fireworks. During the summer months, vegetation on school properties can dry out and catch fire easily.

Preventing fires is everyone's responsibility. Check the rules where you will be discharging your fireworks. To prevent fires on school properties:

1. Neighborhoods should:
 - Establish a neighborhood watch program, **and report suspicious activities.**
2. School Districts should:
 - Maintain the property by removing dry vegetation and refuse that can catch on fire.
 - Establish and post rules regarding the use of consumer fireworks on school properties on and around July 4th. Ensure the neighborhood and community are aware of these rules.

School buildings are a valuable community resource. If you see someone discharging fireworks on a school property, report it immediately to the local authority.

Remember, personal fireworks require personal responsibility. For more information about fireworks safety, public fireworks displays and the fireworks laws for your area, check the Celebrate Safely website at <http://www.wsp.wa.gov/fire/fireworks.htm>.

The Office of the State Fire Marshal is a Bureau of the Washington State Patrol, providing fire and life safety services to the citizens of Washington State including inspections of state licensed facilities, plan review of school construction projects, licensing of fire sprinkler contractors and pyrotechnic operators, training Washington State's firefighters, and collecting emergency response data.

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PREVENT FIRES
IT'S YOUR JOB!