



*Morro Bay Police Department*  
*Morro Bay Fire Department*  
**PRESS RELEASE**  
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**TOPIC:** Fireworks Safety and the Law

**LOCATION:** City of Morro Bay

**DETAILS:**

The Fourth of July is approaching and the City of Morro Bay will be hosting citywide events celebrating Independence Day. This festive holiday draws numerous visitors to the Morro Bay community. Morro Bay public safety professionals want to remind our community and visitors about firework safety and the permitted and prohibited use of fireworks.

The City of Morro Bay Municipal Code 14.08.090 permits the use of "safe and sane" fireworks on private property within the City limits. This City code includes modifications to the California Code of Regulations Title 19, California Fire Code. The City of Morro Bay code provides the following exceptions: "the use of fireworks, approved by the State Fire Marshal as "safe and sane," shall be permitted on private property only. Public fireworks displays may be allowed, subject to the approval of a permit by the Fire Chief.

"Dangerous fireworks" and the use of are prohibited within City limits. The California Health and Safety Code, Section 12505, defines "dangerous fireworks," as including, in part, all of the following: "firecrackers, skyrocket and rockets, including all devices which employ any combustible or explosive material and which rise in the air during discharge, roman candles, including all devices which discharge balls of fire into the air, chasers, including all devices which dart or travel about the surface of the ground during discharge, sparklers more than ten inches in length or one-fourth of one inch in diameter, all fireworks designed and intended by the manufacturer to create the element of surprise upon the user. The use of these types of fireworks, dangerous fireworks, is prohibited within city limits unless approved by permit.

People who sell or use illegal fireworks are a danger to themselves, their friends and their communities. There are plenty of alternatives for celebrating the Fourth of July safely without using bottle rockets, aerial shells and other illegal pyrotechnics that can cause injuries and damage property. With all of California in a drought situation, enormous property loss can occur to residences, landscape, and wildland due to the use of illegal fireworks. In 2013, about 9,000 people in our nation were treated in hospital emergency rooms for injuries associated with fireworks with most occurring during the week of July 4<sup>th</sup>. Children and young adults under the age of 20 years old accounted for 46 percent of the estimated injuries. "Safe and sane" fireworks should be used only with extreme caution. Older children should be closely supervised, and younger children should not be allowed to play with fireworks, including sparklers.

The California Health and Safety Code, Section 12529 defines "safe and sane" fireworks as any fireworks which do not come within the definition of "dangerous fireworks." Fireworks known as safe and sane are classified by the State Fire Marshal, pursuant to Health and Safety Code 12567, and bear that designation and may be sold as safe and sane. Safe and sane fireworks may be used within City limits only on private property.

I am confident the members of the Morro Bay Police and Fire Department will be working with our community ensuring public safety during this year's July 4th celebration. We will have numerous officers patrolling our City streets and assisting with citywide celebratory events. We are hopeful everyone will comply with the provisions of the municipal code and have a safe fun-filled July 4th celebration.

