

By Kerry Hoey

Using Illegal Fireworks? It'll cost you!

Huntington Beach is once again preparing for its Fourth of July Celebration which will start early with a parade and end with a dazzling fireworks display. Fireworks are enjoyable and exciting to watch, but each year illegal fireworks injure thousands of people, many of them children, and cause thousands of fires.

Because the Huntington Beach Fire and Police Departments want to ensure the safety of all its residents during the holiday, they remind you that it is illegal to manufacture, possess, store, sell, and use fireworks in the City of Huntington Beach.

This includes so-called "safe and sane" fireworks and those purchased outside of the city or on the Internet. This year, the civil citation fines have been increased to \$500 for the first offense and \$1000 for additional offenses.

"There are no safe fireworks," says HB Fire Chief Duane Olson. "Fireworks are dangerous and illegal in the City of Huntington Beach. If you are caught using or possessing fireworks, of any kind, you will be fined \$500 the first time and \$1,000 for additional offenses. It is not worth the risk and the safety of your family and friends."

Fireworks are especially dangerous to children—even those that are considered relatively safe, like sparklers. Sparklers can burn at temperatures of 2,000 degrees—hot enough to melt some metals—resulting in the majority of injuries to children under the age of five.

Anyone witnessing illegal fireworks or those in possession of fireworks, is asked to call the HBPD at (714) 960-8825. **HB**

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