

# A p a r t m e n t

## SAFETY NOTES



SPOKANE FIRE DEPARTMENT

June 2011



### Alarm Systems Sounding Off...

With the coming of summer vacations, June is a good time to assure that **everyone** in your building is familiar with the correct procedures to follow should the alarm system be activated.

Alarms are intended to be life-saving devices, not nuisances! They are supposed to be loud and annoying!

***If your building has a monitored fire alarm system, it should never be re-set by building staff. That is the job prescribed for the responding fire crew.*** Valuable information on the cause

of the initial alarm can be lost and there may be some liability issues for owners and managers when the system is re-set by staff.

If there is clearly no fire and the manager knows the cause of the alarm, they may silence the system before firefighters arrive. But they may not reset the system. Managers need to understand the potential for harm should they mistakenly silence the alarm or stop the evacuation procedure.

If there is an acting building manager while the regular manager enjoys some vacation days, it is essential they are trained on the fire alarm system and that they know important phone numbers, the building fire escape plan, the location of resident lists as well as the name / room location of persons who may need to shelter in place because they are physically unable to independently evacuate the building.

In the event an alarm system sounds, the building contact person can expect these questions from Fire Dispatch: (1) Do you know the cause of the alarm? (2) Do you know the location of the problem in the building? (3) Do you see any signs of smoke or flame? (4) Is everyone evacuating the building?

Now is also a good time to make sure that all keys are current in the building lock box located near the front entrance. If you are uncertain whether the correct keys or electronic entry cards for your building are in the lock box, call the Spokane Fire Prevention Bureau at 625-7000 to arrange for an inspector to come check the box.

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## SUMMER SAFETY : Barbecues and Fireworks

### *Flaming Grills?*

Graduations, Father's Day and sunshine bring out the barbecue grills. But the anticipated treat can turn into a tragedy when simple safety measures are ignored.

- ✓ Keep grills at least 10 feet away from buildings, overhanging trees, carports, or dry brush and grass.
- ✓ Use soap bubbles to check gas grills for hose leaks before beginning to cook.
- ✓ Never grill indoors (e.g. garage, house, or enclosed area) because carbon monoxide kills.
- ✓ Keep a "Kid Free Zone" around the grill area to prevent burns.
- ✓ Always stand watch by whatever is cooking on the grill!
- ✓ Turn the grill and fuel cylinder off immediately after cooking.
- ✓ Dispose of charcoal briquettes in a metal container with tight lid after they have cooled for 48 hours.

### *Illegal crackle and pop?*

Towards the end of June, some individuals may purchase fireworks in communities outside the City of Spokane. Please remind your tenants that the sale or use of every type of individual firework is illegal in the City of Spokane, Spokane Valley, Liberty Lake, Cheney and most of Spokane County.

Fines for setting off fireworks in the City of Spokane begin at \$513.

In 1993 the individual use of fireworks was completely banned in Spokane because of the number of fires and injuries they caused each year between June 28 and July 6. In the 10 years before the ban, there was an annual average of 104 fireworks-caused fires just in the City of Spokane. After the ban, the average dropped to 4 fires. Before the fireworks ban, there were times when firefighters were responding to so many fireworks fires that 9-1-1 calls had to be stacked. There were not enough fire crews to immediately send to the next incident. This was perilous because about 75% of fire department calls are requests for immediate medical care.

While people may think that sparklers are harmless devices, the injury data shows that sparklers not only burn at 1200 ° F but they also cause a significant number of burn injuries each year. Some individuals have made sparklers even more dangerous by linking them together to create sparkler bombs (i.e. IEDs or improvised explosive devices). If you find one on your property, call 9-1-1 to request police assistance. Do not touch a sparkler bomb.

Firecrackers, bottle rockets and missiles are illegal in every part of Washington and Idaho with the exception of designated areas on Indian Reservations.

**Please note the attached reminder on fireworks.**

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You can sign up for this monthly newsletter, ask a fire-related question or suggest a specific safety topic by contacting Jan Doherty at [jdoherty@spokanefire.org](mailto:jdoherty@spokanefire.org) or by calling 625-7058.

Access this edition of Apartment Safety Notes as well as back issues at [www.spokanefire.org](http://www.spokanefire.org) under "Prevention".



Be sure to visit our website at  
[www.spokanefire.org](http://www.spokanefire.org)

There you will find links to our blog, Facebook,  
Twitter and YouTube pages!



# PUBLIC NOTICE AND WARNING

**ALL common fireworks are ILLEGAL in Spokane County and the Cities of Spokane, Spokane Valley, Millwood, Cheney and Liberty Lake.**

**Since 1993, NO person can BUY, SELL or USE any type of common fireworks in these areas of Spokane.**

**Fines range from \$513 to \$1,000 for each violation.**



**FIRECRACKERS, BOTTLE ROCKETS and MISSILES are NOT ALLOWED IN ANY PART OF WASHINGTON STATE *(with the exception of some Indian Reservations in areas designated by the Tribal Council).***

- ✓ **Possession of firecrackers, bottle rockets and missiles is illegal throughout Washington State. They can be confiscated at any time.**
- ✓ **In addition to the fines and court costs, persons who start fires with fireworks are liable for restitution of damaged property and for recovery of Fire Department response costs.**
- ✓ **If it has to be lit, it is an illegal firework in Spokane. SPARKLERS are illegal: they burn at 1200 °F and cause serious injuries.**
- ✓ **PARENTS are responsible for damages associated with their children using fireworks.**
- ✓ **For violations of the ban, call CRIME CHECK at 456-2233.**