

A p a r t m e n t

SAFETY



NOTES

SPOKANE FIRE DEPARTMENT

June 2012



FIREWORKS BAN WORKS!

This July 4th marks twenty years of a complete ban on the individual use of amateur fireworks in the City of Spokane, Spokane Valley, and the unincorporated areas of Spokane County.

For those who miss the annual barrage of “snap-crackle-pop”, it may have been a long 20 years. For those who understand the history behind this ban, there is cause for celebration.

In the 10 years prior to the 1993 ban, Spokane Fire Department responded to an average 104 fireworks-caused fires between June 28th and July 6th each year! Firefighters / paramedics fought so many fires that calls to 9-1-1 had to be stacked. That could play out like this: *“My dad is having a heart attack”. “Can you hold the line, please?”*

Area fire chiefs and fire marshals, city council members and county commissioners joined forces with citizens who had suffered from the noise and threats of random fireworks to enable the adoption of an ordinance that eliminated the sale and use of common fireworks in most Spokane jurisdictions. As a result, the pre-ban average of 104 fireworks-caused fires dramatically dropped to a post-ban average of 5. The pre-ban average of 29 injuries treated at area hospitals also fell to a post-ban average of 5. None of the five patients finally treated at Spokane area hospitals in 2011 had lit the fireworks in Spokane. Also, four of the five injuries that were treated in 2011 involved amputations of the hand or fingers.

While some individuals still choose to drive outside Spokane to purchase illegal fireworks and then use them in our jurisdiction, most citizens elect to keep a safe Fourth and enjoy the public fireworks displays conducted by licensed pyrotechnicians at Riverfront Park or other public venues. Fines for using any of the banned fireworks begin at \$513.

As apartment managers, you can remind your tenants that fireworks are not allowed by posting the attached bulletin. You can also be very clear that illegal activities (i.e. the use of common fireworks) will not be tolerated on your property. Persons who ignite property with stray fireworks are not only fined but are also responsible for property damage and fire department recovery costs. One stray bottle rocket can cost a fortune!



Know that the use of bottle rockets, firecrackers and missiles is illegal in every part of Washington and Idaho with the exception of designated areas on Indian Reservations.

Area fire departments, emergency room personnel and countless pets thank all who continue to honor the fireworks ban in our community!



window clings to help renters easily identify the smoking status of a property. The three types of window clings indicate (a) whether smoking is allowed any place on the property, (b) if there is a designated area for smoking, or (c) where smoking is allowed in individual units, balconies, or patios but not within the leasing office or in common areas.

A clear majority (85%) of renters in Spokane and across Washington State prefer living in smoke-free housing. Over 80% of Spokane County residents do not smoke at all. In addition, renters are increasingly aware that secondhand smoke is the third leading cause of preventable death in the U.S.

To order the free window clings for your property, call (509) 324-1530 or visit the [Spokane Regional Health District website](http://SpokaneRegionalHealthDistrict.org).

SMOKE-FREE Housing Campaign

Fire Departments are painfully aware that careless smokers remain the number one cause of fire-related deaths.

The Smoke-Free Housing Task Force of Spokane County and Spokane Regional Health District have joined forces to underscore additional problems associated with smoking: extra cleaning costs once a smoker vacates a unit; unhealthy exposure to secondhand smoke; and legal issues associated with breach of warrant of habitability or breach of covenant of quiet enjoyment when property managers fail to stop smoke from drifting between units.

Their new Smoke Free Housing Campaign offers education for property managers and tenants through www.srhd.org. It also provides free



85% OF RENTERS PREFER
SMOKE FREE HOUSING!

You can sign up for this monthly newsletter, ask a fire-related question or suggest a specific safety topic by contacting Jan Doherty at jdoherthy@spokanefire.org or by calling (509)625-7058.



Be sure to visit our website at
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.