



Fireworks ban reminder for New Year

- Ban on the retail sale, purchase or use of fireworks that project into the air or explode
- Use of sparklers remains legal, but residents are urged to follow necessary safety steps
- Place pets in a sheltered and escape-proof area of the home during firework displays

As revelers prepare to ring in the New Year on Dec. 31, Pinellas County reminds residents of the ban on the retail sale, purchase or use of fireworks that project into the air or explode.

Pinellas County Emergency Medical Services and Fire Administration urges residents to play it safe by enjoying fireworks displays that are conducted by trained professionals.

Resident Safety:

Sparklers and fountains remain legal, but they can be dangerous, reaching temperatures of up to 1,200 degrees Fahrenheit. Only those over 12 years of age should handle sparklers of any type. Youth often get burned by sparklers every year, so responsible adult supervision is necessary at all times. Officials urge extreme caution and advise residents to follow basic safety recommendations:

- Read and understand all product warnings.
- Never place any body part directly over a device when lighting the fuse.
- Use sparklers only as intended outdoors.
- Keep a bucket of water or a garden hose handy in case of fire or other mishap.
- After using these devices, douse them with plenty of water from a bucket or hose before discarding.

Residents who witness the use of illegal fireworks are asked to call their municipality's law enforcement non-emergency number. A list of law enforcement non-emergency phone numbers is available [online](#). Residents should call 911 only in the event of an emergency.

Pet Safety:

[Pinellas County Animal Services](#) reminds pet owners to keep a close eye on their pets during firework displays as these can lead to animals running loose onto streets and freeways, getting lost or ending up in shelters.

"Pet owners should be aware that some dogs will do anything they can to escape the noise of fireworks," said Pinellas County Animal Services Director Doug Brightwell. "One of the easiest ways for pet owners to ensure their pet won't run away is by placing them in a quiet, sheltered and escape-proof area of the home."

Other safety tips include:

- Make sure your pet is microchipped, license is current and tags are secured to the pet's collar.
- Keep pets indoors in a cool, comfortable place with some minor noise distraction such as a radio or television.
- Do not take pets to fireworks events.
- If you are leaving town and cannot take your pets with you, make sure you leave them with someone who will be particularly cautious and responsible during New Year's Eve celebrations.