

Information for Firework Display Organisers

Licensing & Legislation

Did You Know?

- It is against the law to carry fireworks in public if you're under 18
- Fireworks must not be sold to anyone who is under 18
- It is an offence to let fireworks off during night hours (11pm to 7am), except on Bonfire Night (midnight), Diwali, New Year, and Chinese New Year (1am)
- It is an offence under the Explosives Act 1875 to tamper with or modify fireworks.

Display Success

- Remind the public not to bring their own fireworks to the event
- Keep sparklers away from fireworks by having a separate area cordoned off. Do not give sparklers to under-5s and wear gloves when handling them. Ensure spent sparklers are out by putting them in a bucket of water
- Good publicity is essential. If possible, appoint a publicity officer who will be in charge of press and advertising the event. Distribute flyers/posters around the local area
- Have other events during the display like competitions, fancy dress, a licensed bar, hot food, disco etc
- Merchandise can raise money for a good cause and add atmosphere
- Following this guide can help make your event safe and fun. But remember **FIREWORKS ARE EXPLOSIVES – GET WISE OR GET HURT.**

Did You Know?

- All category 3 fireworks (display fireworks) must not exceed 120 decibels.
- If you supply or sell fireworks, you should be aware of your responsibilities which can be found in the [Retailer's Guide: Selling fireworks](#).

RoSPA acknowledges that information on these pages is used courtesy of the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy.

Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) Firework Safety Warning

You should be aware that the CAA has guidelines for organisers of major events using fireworks near airports. The guidelines are available from the [CAA website](#).



accidents don't have to happen

Ready... Steady... Go!

To have a successful and safe fireworks display, you should start planning at least three months beforehand. Follow our handy checklist to see what you should be doing when!

Three months to go!

Start planning now! At this stage have you...

- Decided what kind of display you want and how many people you expect to attend
- Agreed on a budget – one for the fireworks and another for any additional activities
- Decided what other events you want to have at the display and applied for the necessary licences.
- Appointed your firing team
- Identified a site taking into consideration how much space you will need
- Obtained adequate insurance
- Enlisted the help of volunteers
- Arranged first aid cover?

Two months to go!

You should...

- Apply for a licence – your application could take up to six weeks, so apply for it now to make sure you get it in enough time ***Applies to Northern Ireland only**
- Plan the firing script for the display
- Decide what fireworks you will need to buy
- Gather together the safety equipment you will need
- Book specialist equipment.

Three weeks to go

- Time to buy your fireworks – go to a licensed supplier
- Only buy fireworks that carry the CE mark
- If your supplier does not have what you need, order them now
- Read the instructions carefully
- Store the fireworks in a dry, secure place
- Check that you have all the necessary entertainment licences
- Practise the firing schedule.

Two weeks to go

- Brief your volunteers on the schedule
- Assign each person with his or her own job



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- Plan the site layout
- Contact the relevant people so they are aware of your display
- Start publicising your event – go to the local media, put up posters, hand out flyers, anything to spark interest!

One week to go

- Have a dummy run and make sure all your volunteers know what their jobs are
- Check the fireworks for damage again - if any are damaged, dispose of them safely
- Confirm the entertainment
- Work out the safety plans in the event of an emergency
- Practise the firing schedule again.

The day before

Now the hard work starts!

- Set up the site
- Cordon off the different areas in preparation for tomorrow
- Have a final meeting to brief the volunteers one more time
- Practise the firing schedule one last time.

On the day

- Bring your licence with you ***Applies to Northern Ireland only**
- Set up the fireworks in daylight – put the last firework in place about 30 minutes beforehand if possible and cover them with plastic bags to keep dry
- Remember your safety equipment and clothing
- Keep spectators away from the site and guard the fireworks when in place
- After the display pick up the spent fireworks
- Douse the duds in water
- Pack away all the paraphernalia
- Come back the next day to clear the site.

...Relax – it's finally over!

