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SHERIFF LOU VALLARIO
GARFIELD COUNTY, COLORADO

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

June 29, 2011

TIPS FOR STAYING SAFE THIS FOURTH OF JULY

Garfield County, Colorado – The Fourth of July is a rare opportunity for a day full of family fun, including parades, cookouts, swimming and enjoying fireworks. The Garfield County Sheriff's Office wants to remind you that fireworks are not toys and to please use caution to ensure a fire-safe holiday.

According to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), the risk of a fireworks-related injury is two-and-a-half times higher for children ages five to nine and teens ages 15 to 19 than the general population. With thousands of adults and kids suffering from these injuries every Fourth of July, the NFPA is rightfully motivated to get the word out about fireworks safety. Their first tip is to leave the show to the professionals, and make sure children are not able to reach fireworks leftover from the display afterward, since they may still be active. Sparklers and firecrackers are also dangerous as they burn at temperatures hot enough to cause third degree burns.

Make sure to review and obey the laws. Remember that fireworks of any kind are illegal on U.S. Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management lands. It is also illegal for persons under the age of 16 to purchase fireworks.

Of course, safety should be the number one priority when planning creative ways to celebrate our country's independence. Remember to keep children and pets away from all fireworks. By taking the following simple safety steps, we can enjoy the 4th of July in style, while preventing unnecessary injuries:

- ❖ Once you've made your firework purchase, keep them in a safe place... out of the reach of children at all times.
- ❖ Young children should not light or handle fireworks.
- ❖ Use common sense. Always read and follow all warnings and instructions that appear on the fireworks or its packaging.
- ❖ Always keep a hose and a bucket of water nearby in case of emergencies. Used fireworks should be soaked in a bucket of water prior to being discarded.
- ❖ Use fireworks outdoors, only in clear areas, away from houses, buildings, fences, dry grass, and trees. Your fireworks display area should also be smooth, flat, level and swept clean of debris.
- ❖ Never attempt to fix or relight a firework – if it fails to light, do not relight it. Place it in a bucket of water and make sure it is fully soaked before discarding it.
- ❖ Animals are sometimes frightened by fireworks. To protect your "best friends," keep them indoors – away from the loud noise – and secure.

- ❖ Remember – not all fireworks are the same. Be sure to purchase products that are manufactured by a trusted, established company that puts safety first.
- ❖ Do not smoke when handling any type of fireworks.
- ❖ Do not use fireworks while under the influence of alcohol.
- ❖ Always use products that are legal in your community. State and local communities regulate the type of products that may be sold and used by consumers. So make sure you follow state laws and local ordinances.
- ❖ And last but certainly not least, please avoid situations that may put our local Fire fighters or EMS at risk.

Following these precautions will help you stay safe and healthy this holiday and throughout the summer.



Please celebrate safely!

The mission of the Garfield County Sheriff's Office is to provide solutions for the people by utilizing and employing strong morals, good character, untarnished integrity, technical knowledge and fiscal responsibility through professional, ethical and equitable conduct.