

Connecticut Fireworks Law

Fire and Explosion Investigation Unit – State Police

Fireworks and Special Effects

ALL FIREWORKS (with the exception of sparklers) **ARE ILLEGAL** in Connecticut and may NOT be sold, purchased or used, with the EXCEPTION of regulated fireworks displays by state licensed, professional pyrotechnicians at sites which have been approved by state and local officials. Fireworks are defined by law as "any combustible or explosive composition prepared for the purpose of producing a visible or audible effect by combustion, explosion, deflagration or detonation." Novelties, and trick noise makers such as *smoke bombs, party poppers and snappers and the "snake"*, and are banned by Connecticut General Statute 29-357. Effective June 1, 2000, Public Act 00-198 allows any person who is sixteen years of age or older to buy, sell and use sparklers of not more than one hundred grams of pyrotechnic mixture which are **non-explosive and non-aerial**. PA-06-177 added new subdivisions to CGS 29-357 relating to the some compounds that are prohibited in sparklers and fountains as well as adding a total pyrotechnic composition if more than one fountain is mounted on a common base. Public Act 06-177 also added Fountains to this category and provided definitions for 'sparklers' and 'fountains' that are found in CGS 29-356.

Larger so-called "fire crackers" are actually explosive devices which are banned by both state and federal law. They include M-80's, M-100's, M-250's and larger, cherry bombs, quarter sticks, block busters and other similar devices. Possession of these devices is prohibited by Connecticut General Statute 29-348, Illegal Possession of Explosives; manufacture of these devices is prohibited by Connecticut General Statute 53-80a., Manufacture of Bombs. The only exceptions to the fireworks statute are paper caps which contain less than .025 grains of explosive material.

Transportation to Connecticut of fireworks which have been privately purchased out-of-state is illegal. The fine for *violation of transportation regulations is not more than \$1,000 for a first offense; persons found guilty of subsequent offenses will be fined not less than \$1,000 and not more than \$2,000, or imprisoned not more than six months, or both. If injury or death results from such violation, the fine shall be not more than \$10,000 or imprisonment for not more than ten years, or both.* To order and purchase fireworks by mail is illegal in Connecticut.

Violation of CGS 29-357(d) calls for a fine of *not more than \$100 or a prison term of not more than 90 days or both;* offering for sale, exposing for sale, or selling at retail or possessing with intent to sell a value exceeding \$10,000 is a Class A misdemeanor.

The penalty for illegal possession of explosives, CGS 29-348, *is a fine of not more than \$10,000 or imprisonment of not more than 10 years, or both for each offense.*

Violation of CGS 53-80a (*manufacture of bombs*) is a Class B felony; if a *fire caused by fireworks* is determined to be arson, first degree (CGS 53a-111), it is a Class A felony; 53a-112 arson second degree, Class B felony; arson, third degree, Class C felony; or if such a fire is determined to be reckless burning, (53a-114), it is a Class D felony.

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Office of State Fire Marshal

To: Vendors:

Re: Sale of Sparklers

Public Act No. 00-198, which took effect June 1, 2000, legalized the sale, purchase and use of Sparklers by anyone age **sixteen** or older.

Sparklers, as determined by the state, include sparkling devices of not more than one hundred grams of pyrotechnic mixture per item, which are non-explosive and non-aerial. These include the common stick sparklers and cone, base, spike and handle fountains.

Did PA 00-198 legalize any other types of fireworks?

No. Although there were others listed in the proposed bill, sparklers were the only items that made it through the process. Smoke bombs, poppers, snakes, glowworms, and other novelty items are still illegal.

Items pictured below are ***illegal*** to sell, purchase or use in Connecticut.



Roman Candles, Bottle Rockets, Fire Crackers

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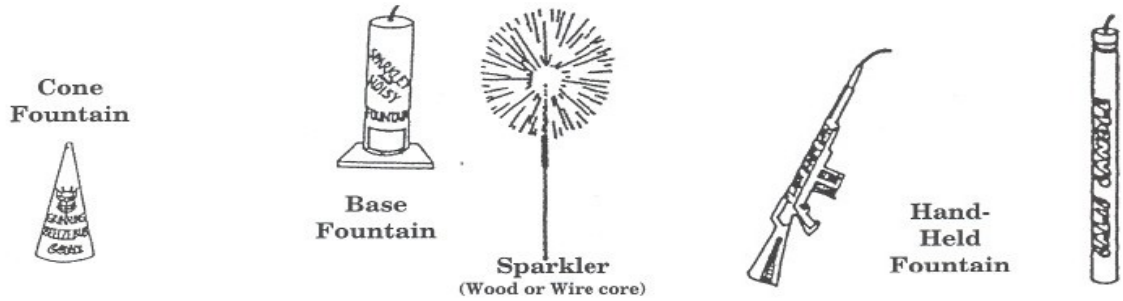


Novelties: Smoke Bombs, Party Poppers, Snappers, Snakes

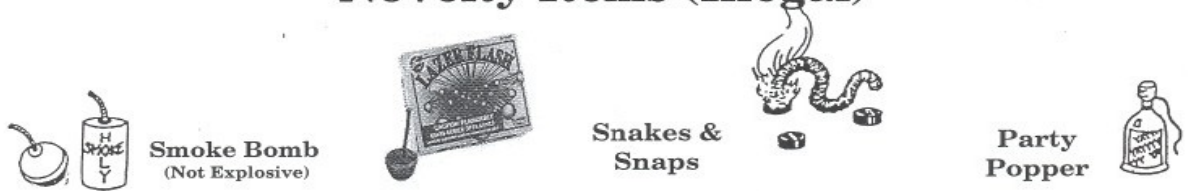
John Blaschik, Jr.
Deputy State Fire Marshal
March-2002

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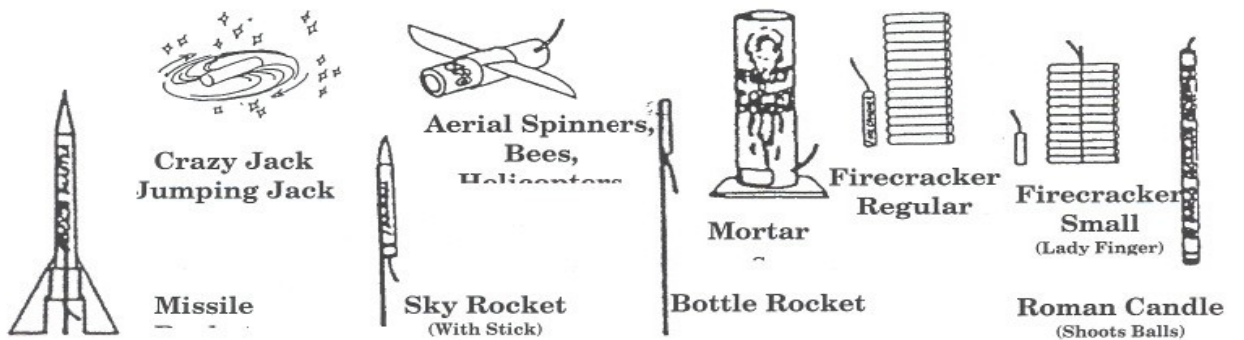
Legal Sparklers & Fountains (1.4g)



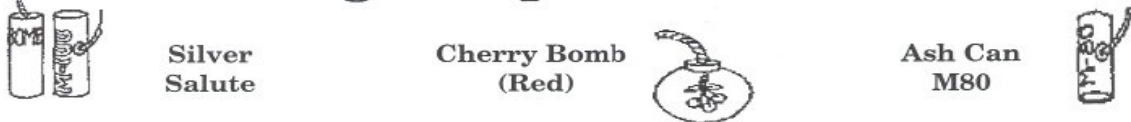
Novelty Items (Illegal)



Illegal Fireworks (1.4g)



Illegal Explosive Devices



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Sec. 29-356. Definitions. As used in sections 29-356 to 29-365, inclusive:

(1) “Fireworks” means and includes any combustible or explosive composition, or any substance or combination of substances or article prepared for the purpose of producing a visible or an audible effect by combustion, explosion, deflagration or detonation, and includes blank cartridges, toy pistols, toy cannons, toy canes or toy guns in which explosives are used, the type of balloons which require fire underneath to propel the same, firecrackers, torpedoes, skyrockets, Roman candles, Daygo bombs, and any fireworks containing any explosive or flammable compound, or any tablets or other device containing any explosive substance, except that the term “fireworks” shall not include sparklers and fountains and toy pistols, toy canes, toy guns or other devices in which paper caps manufactured in accordance with the regulations of the United States Interstate Commerce Commission or its successor agency for packing and shipping of toy paper caps are used and toy pistol paper caps manufactured as provided therein.

(2) “Sparklers” means a wire or stick coated with pyrotechnic composition that produces a shower of sparks upon ignition.

(3) “Fountain” means any cardboard or heavy paper cone or cylindrical tube containing pyrotechnic mixture that upon ignition produces a shower of colored sparks or smoke. “Fountain” includes, but is not limited to, (A) a spike fountain, which provides a spike for insertion into the ground, (B) a base fountain which has a wooden or plastic base for placing on the ground, or (C) a handle fountain which is a handheld device with a wooden or cardboard handle.

Sec. 29-357. Sale, use and possession of fireworks prohibited. Sale, use and possession of certain sparklers or fountains permitted. Permits for display. Variations or exemptions. Penalty. (a) Except as provided in subsection (b) of this section, no person, firm or corporation shall offer for sale, expose for sale, sell at retail or use or explode or possess with intent to sell, use or explode any fireworks. A person who is sixteen years of age or older may offer for sale, expose for sale, sell at retail, purchase, use or possess with intent to sell or use sparklers or fountains of not more than one hundred grams of pyrotechnic mixture per item, which are nonexplosive and nonaerial, provided (1) such sparklers and fountains do not contain magnesium, except for magnalium or magnesium-aluminum alloy, (2) such sparklers and fountains containing any chlorate or perchlorate salts do not exceed five grams of composition per item, and (3) when more than one fountain is mounted on a common base, the total pyrotechnic composition does not exceed two hundred grams.

(b) The State Fire Marshal shall adopt reasonable regulations, in accordance with chapter 54, for the granting of permits for supervised displays of fireworks or for the indoor use of pyrotechnics, sparklers and fountains for special effects by municipalities, fair associations, amusement parks, other organizations or groups of individuals or artisans in pursuit of their trade. Such permit may be issued upon application to said State Fire Marshal and after (1) inspection of the site of such display or use by the local fire marshal to determine compliance with the requirements of such regulations, and (2) approval of the chiefs of the police and fire departments, or, if there is no police or fire

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department, of the first selectman, of the municipality wherein the display is to be held as is provided in this section. No such display shall be handled or fired by any person until such person has been granted a certificate of competency by the State Fire Marshal, in respect to which a fee of two hundred dollars shall be payable to the State Treasurer when issued and which may be renewed every three years upon payment of a fee of one hundred ninety dollars to the State Treasurer, provided such certificate may be suspended or revoked by said marshal at any time for cause. Such certificate of competency shall attest to the fact that such operator is competent to fire a display. Such display shall be of such a character and so located, discharged or fired as in the opinion of the chiefs of the police and fire departments or such selectman, after proper inspection, will not be hazardous to property or endanger any person or persons. In an aerial bomb, no salute, report or maroon may be used that is composed of a formula of chlorate of potash, sulphur, black needle antimony and dark aluminum. Formulas that may be used in a salute, report or maroon are as follows: (A) Perchlorate of potash, black needle antimony and dark aluminum, and (B) perchlorate of potash, dark aluminum and sulphur. No high explosive such as dynamite, fulminate of mercury or other stimulator for detonating shall be used in any aerial bomb or other pyrotechnics. Application for permits shall be made in writing at least fifteen days prior to the date of display, on such notice as the State Fire Marshal by regulation prescribes, on forms furnished by the State Fire Marshal, and a fee of one hundred dollars shall be payable to the State Treasurer with each such application. After such permit has been granted, sales, possession, use and distribution of fireworks for such display shall be lawful for that purpose only. No permit granted hereunder shall be transferable. Any permit issued under the provisions of this section may be suspended or revoked by the State Fire Marshal or the local fire marshal for violation by the permittee of any provision of the general statutes, any regulation or any ordinance relating to fireworks.

(c) The State Fire Marshal may grant variations or exemptions from, or approve equivalent or alternate compliance with, particular provisions of any regulation issued under the provisions of subsection (b) of this section where strict compliance with such provisions would entail practical difficulty or unnecessary hardship or is otherwise adjudged unwarranted, provided any such variation, exemption, approved equivalent or alternate compliance shall, in the opinion of the State Fire Marshal, secure the public safety and shall be made in writing.

(d) Any person, firm or corporation violating the provisions of this section shall be guilty of a class C misdemeanor, except that (1) any person, firm or corporation violating the provisions of subsection (a) of this section by offering for sale, exposing for sale or selling at retail or possessing with intent to sell any fireworks with a value exceeding ten thousand dollars shall be guilty of a class A misdemeanor, and (2) any person, firm or corporation violating any provision of subsection (b) of this section or any regulation adopted thereunder shall be guilty of a class A misdemeanor, except if death or injury results from any such violation, such person, firm or corporation shall be guilty of a class C felony.