Each year, healthcare practitioners and public safety officials warn consumers about the dangers of fireworks that can result in injury, death and destruction of property. They emphasize that the best and safest way to enjoy fireworks is to attend a professional fireworks show; yet, each year, thousands of fireworks-related injuries occur.

Should you choose to purchase fireworks, Acting Chief Tim Keen, Prince William County Fire & Rescue Department, recommends buying from a fireworks stand that has been inspected and approved by the Fire Marshal’s Office. All stands in Prince William County are properly permitted to sell the fireworks displayed.

June is National Fireworks Safety Month, but the observation continues through July 4th. In an effort to assist residents, the Fire Marshal’s Office suggests the following safety tips:

• Fireworks should only be ignited by an adult.
• Fireworks should only be used outdoors in an open space clear of spectators, buildings, vehicles, debris and flammable materials or on a driveway, sidewalk or other fire-resistant surface. Remember, fires are caused by careless handling of fireworks in areas exposed to sparks or live fireworks.
• Keep spectators a safe distance away from legal fireworks (at a minimum of 25 feet for ground items).
• NEVER ignite fireworks during high winds, where flying sparks can start a fire.
• Keep a bucket of water handy in case sparks ignite a fire.
• Be sure children around fireworks know to "stop, drop and roll" if their clothing catches fire.
• Deposit sparklers in a metal container, as they may be stepped on while hot or become lost in the grass and stepped on while playing.
• DO NOT place used fireworks in combustible trash cans or bags.
• NEVER aim or throw fireworks at another person.
• NEVER try to re-ignite fireworks that malfunction or fail to go off.
• DO NOT wear loose clothing when using fireworks.
• NEVER experiment or make your own fireworks.
• NEVER carry fireworks in your pocket.
• Pets may be frightened by the noise and lights of fireworks so keep pets inside, or away from the area, when in use.

These are just a few tips to keep you, your loved ones and your property safe when fireworks are in use. To view the list of 2019 permissible fireworks, visit the Fire Marshal’s Office website at www.pwcgov.org/fire, and click on “Fireworks.”