

Fireworks, the law and neighborhood etiquette

THE PA LAW:

The Commonwealth of PA legalized the sale and use of Class C, or Consumer Grade Fireworks in October of 2017. Examples of Consumer Grade fireworks include: firecrackers, roman candles, bottle rockets and other fireworks that contain a maximum of 50 milligrams of explosive material. The following rules apply to the discharge of Class C fireworks.

Fireworks cannot be discharged:

By individuals under the age of 18.

By individuals who are under the influence of alcohol, controlled substances or other drugs.

On private or public property without the permission of the property owner.

From a motor vehicle or a building.

At a motor vehicle or building.

Within 150 feet of an occupied structure. An occupied structure is defined as a structure, vehicle or place adapted for overnight accommodation, or for conducting business whether or not a person is actually present.

NEIGHBORHOOD ETIQUETTE:

Because many neighborhoods are densely populated, residents wishing to ignite Class C Fireworks are asked to let their neighbors know what they intend to do and when. Many neighbors have pets and/or young children who may be frightened by loud noises. Other neighbors may be struggling with post-traumatic-stress-disorder (PTSD) from former military service. Letting your neighbors know your intentions allows them the opportunity to prepare for the fireworks in a manner that is appropriate for their situations and is the courteous thing to do.

WHEN TO CONTACT THE POLICE (911)

When a neighbor is igniting fireworks within 150 feet of an occupied structure

When a neighbor is clearly under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs

When a neighbor continues to ignite fireworks after 11:00 PM in the evening

When a neighbor shoots fireworks at structures or vehicles or in other unsafe manners

When a neighbor is igniting fireworks that are illegal in Pennsylvania for consumer sale (i.e., display fireworks).