

CAL FIRE NEWS RELEASE

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection



CONTACT: Information Officer
(916) 651-FIRE (3473)
[@CALFIRE_PIO](mailto:CALFIRE_PIO)

RELEASE
DATE: July 1, 2021

CAL FIRE Seizes Nearly 80,000 Pounds of Illegal Fireworks

Fire officials warn illegal fireworks are not only dangerous, but against the law!

Sacramento – With support from regional fire and law enforcement officials, CAL FIRE – Office of the State Fire Marshal (CAL FIRE-OSFM) announced Thursday the results of major efforts to curb the illegal importation of dangerous fireworks into California. Throughout May and June, CAL FIRE-OSFM law enforcement personnel conducted targeted interdiction operations along the California border seizing nearly 80,000 pounds of illegal fireworks.

“There is no excuse for breaking the law and attempting to transport illegal fireworks into California,” said Chief Mike Richwine, California State Fire Marshal. “The illegal fireworks our peace officers have seized puts a dent into the potential devastating injuries, fires, and damage to property that these dangerous devices pose.”

CAL FIRE’s illegal fireworks interdiction occurred along the border of California and Nevada and during the course of the operation, officers:

- Confiscated 79,411 pounds of dangerous fireworks,
- Conducted 932 traffic stops for various violations,
- Issued 215 citations for dangerous fireworks and additional violations,
- Arrested 3 individuals for various crimes.

In a press conference with the Los Angeles County Fire Department, the California Fire Chiefs Association, the US Attorney’s Office, and partnering agencies, CAL FIRE – Office of the State Fire Marshal made their message clear: California has zero tolerance for illegal fireworks and will enforce the law.

The use of illegal fireworks continuously poses a major threat that results in firefighters responding to hundreds of fires and medical emergencies. Each fiscal year, the state seizes over 220,000 pounds of fireworks requiring disposal, with over 280,000 pounds collected since July 1, 2020. In the past five years, firefighters have had to responded to over 5,000 emergencies caused by fireworks, with last year’s incidents skyrocketing over three times more the number of incidents than average. These incidents caused serious injuries and millions of dollars in property damage.

CAL FIRE wants everyone to enjoy the upcoming holiday and, along with fire service and our law enforcement partners, hopes to make this a safe and fire free 4th of July.

CAL FIRE has a detailed fireworks safety resource guide at [ReadyforWildfire.org](https://www.readyforwildfire.org). Remember, One Less Spark this 4th of July, means One Less Wildfire.

MEDIA NOTES:

For video of fireworks enforcement: <https://calfire.box.com/s/ug8x6lvk70emxq15impwqjdefh8aid1>

For graphics, visit: <https://calfire.box.com/s/tmsb0oblxscpndw8d3lh4vgemjj5gaq>