

## Picnics & pyrotechnics place premium on prevention

by Bend\_Weekly\_News\_Sources

Forecasters are predicting continued clear skies and warm weather for much of the Pacific Northwest—just the thing for this year’s Fourth of July observances. But however the weather turns out, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the U.S. Fire Administration (USFA) warn that careless handling of fireworks and outdoor grills can ruin parties and picnics—and entire summers. More than 23,000 fires are attributed to fireworks every year, and according to FEMA Administrator R. David Paulison, more than half of those occur the first week in July. “When celebrating the 4th of July, Americans need to remember to use fireworks, fires and barbecues with care,” said Paulison. “Have fun, but be safe.” Susan Reinertson, FEMA Regional Administrator for Alaska, Idaho, Oregon and Washington, couldn’t agree more. “The best way to enjoy fireworks is through public fireworks displays put on by trained professionals,” said Reinertson. “Before cooking out or lighting fireworks, review fire safety precautions with your family. Summertime should be a source for fun and happy memories, not regret and remorse.”

Thousands of serious fireworks-related incidents typically injure eyes, heads and hands each year. Most of those injuries are inflicted on victims between one and 24 years of age. Sparklers, firecrackers, and bottle rockets are leading contributors to these injuries. Older children should be closely supervised, and younger children should not be allowed to play with fireworks. USFA serves the American public and the nation’s fire services through training, data collection and analysis, public fire education, and fire protection technology research. For more information, visit: <http://www.usfa.dhs.gov>. FEMA coordinates the federal government’s role in preparing for, preventing, mitigating the effects of, responding to, and recovering from all domestic disasters, whether natural or man-made, including acts of terror.

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