

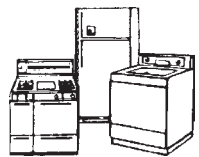
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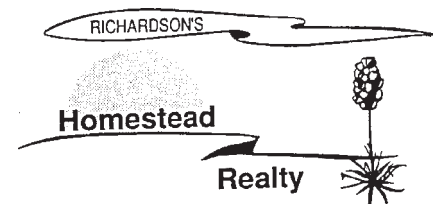


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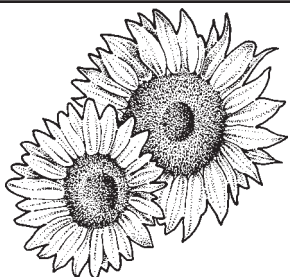


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Don't play with fire.

Officials say be extra careful this Fourth



A message from State Fire Marshal Gale Haag



A major news item for the past several months has been the drought in western Kansas and portions of Wyoming, Colorado, Nebraska, Montana and New Mexico. The tremendous forest fire south and west of Denver has emphasized the potential danger of fire worsened by drought conditions.

This July 4th will be the first celebration of Independence Day since 9/11. It is only natural that our citizens want to make this the best celebration ever!

Unfortunately, the traditional way we choose to celebrate this special day is through fireworks.

We can expect that the public displays throughout the state and nation will be spectacular.

We can also expect that many families and

individuals will choose to mark the event by firing off a greater amount of their own fireworks.

The extent of the drought in much of the country's heartland was probably not considered by our nation's founders but certainly should be considered by the sponsors of public and private displays of fireworks. How are responsible government officials and fire service organizations expected to respond to this traditional celebration of national pride in a time of extreme drought?

Fire service professionals will undertake major efforts toward public education prior to Independence Day festivities. There will also be efforts to place fire service and other emergency services on high alert during the period which fireworks can be sold in the state.

Local governments are not required to place a total ban on the sale or use of fireworks but they certainly should consider such measures in view of the drought conditions in their respective municipalities.

They should also consider the effect such measures might have on those merchants who most likely already have significant inventories of fireworks on hand for the celebration.

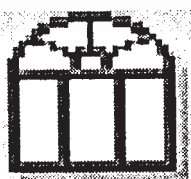
I urge government officials, fire service professionals, and my fellow citizens to remember the tragedy of September 11, 2001, and on July 4th to celebrate the fact that our country remains strong and united. I also urge that every effort be made to avoid detracting from this great holiday by the careless use of fireworks.

Tips for using fireworks safely

- ✓ Always purchase high quality fireworks from a reliable legitimate source.
- ✓ Always read and follow label instructions.
- ✓ Never carry fireworks in your pocket.
- ✓ Never give fireworks to small children.
- ✓ Never point or throw fireworks at a person or animal.
- ✓ Store fireworks in a cool, dry place.
- ✓ Adults should always supervise use of fireworks by older children.
- ✓ Have a source of water handy, in case of fire.
- ✓ Never experiment with homemade fireworks. They are dangerous as well as illegal.
- ✓ Always wear eye protection when lighting fireworks.
- ✓ Never shoot fireworks in metal or glass containers.
- ✓ Bottle rockets and other skyrockets that are mounted on a stick or wire are illegal.
- ✓ Ignite only outdoors and make sure the area is safe for the use of fireworks.
- ✓ Light only one firework at a time.
- ✓ It is illegal to shoot fireworks on or under a vehicle, on any public roadway, within 50 ft. of a firework stand, or anywhere liquid gas is stored.
- ✓ Alcohol and fireworks do not mix. Have a "designated shooter."
- ✓ Never attempt to re-light malfunctioning fireworks.
- ✓ When lighting fireworks, never position any part of your body over them.



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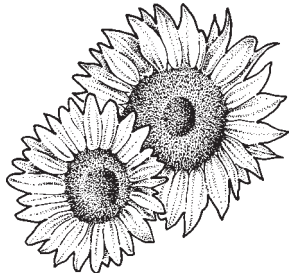
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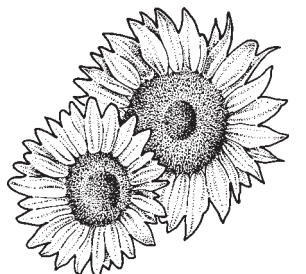


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