

Acton Police Department

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Acton Fire Department

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Acton Police and Fire Departments Share Tips for Safe Fourth of July Celebrations

ACTON — Police Chief James Cogan and Interim Fire Chief Anita Arnum wish to share several important safety tips and reminders as residents prepare to celebrate the Fourth of July holiday.

The Town of Acton will not be holding its traditional fireworks display this year, but residents are still encouraged not to take fireworks into their own hands.

According to the [state Department of Fire Services and State Police](#), Massachusetts fire departments reported nearly 1,000 fires related to illegal fireworks between 2013 and 2022. In addition to the 42 fire service injuries, five civilian injuries, and \$2.5 million in damages attributed to these fires, Massachusetts medical facilities reported about 30 severe burn injuries extending to 5% or more of the victims' bodies that were caused by

illegal fireworks. In 2022 alone, fire departments reported 106 fires and explosions attributed to fireworks, an increase of nearly a third over the prior year.

It is illegal for private citizens to use, possess, or sell fireworks of all kinds in Massachusetts without a license and a permit. This includes fireworks purchased legally elsewhere and brought into Massachusetts. It includes sparklers, firecrackers, cherry bombs, and other fireworks. Fines range from \$10 to \$1,000, and some violations could carry a one-year prison sentence.

Residents are encouraged to report any misuse of fireworks they notice in the community to the Acton Police Department at 978-264-9638.

In case of a firework-related or other emergency, always dial 911.

Additionally, residents are reminded of these key safety tips for Fourth of July celebrations:

- Attend organized and permitted fireworks displays only.
- Report illegal fires to the police.
- Remember that alcohol/drugs and fireworks do not mix.
- Keep pets indoors and away from fireworks. The loud noises and flashing lights can be frightening and overwhelming for pets. Pets can become frightened and run from familiar environments and people, becoming lost. [Read more here](#).

The departments also urge residents to observe the following tips from the [National Highway Traffic Safety Administration](#) on getting home safely following Fourth of July celebrations:

- Be mindful of pedestrians.
- Always wear your seatbelt.
- Do not drive under the influence of drugs or alcohol. From 2017 to 2021, 1,460 drivers were killed in motor vehicle crashes over the Fourth of July holiday period — 38% of the drivers killed were drunk.
- Even if you've had only one alcoholic beverage, do not plan on driving. Instead, designate a sober driver or use a ride-share service to get home safely.
- Take keys away from individuals who are under the influence and are planning to drive. Alcohol and drugs impair perception, judgment, motor skills, and memory, which are critical for safe and responsible driving.
- If you see an impaired driver on the road, safely pull over and call 911.

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A message from the Acton Fire and Police Departments

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