



County of Fairfax, Virginia

To protect and enrich the quality of life for the people, neighborhoods and diverse communities of Fairfax County

DATE: May 4, 2011
TO: Fireworks Display Operators, Shooters, and Sponsors
FROM: Fairfax County Office of the Fire Marshal
SUBJECT: Display Site Radius and Separation Distances for Aerial Fireworks Displays

This letter serves as a reminder that effective March 1, 2011, the minimum required clearances and separation distances for aerial fireworks displays are as follows:

Display Site Radius. In accordance with Section 3308.4 of the *Virginia Statewide Fire Prevention Code (SFPC)*, spectators, spectator viewing areas, and dwellings, buildings, or structures shall not be located in the display site. The site for the outdoor land and water display shall be at least 100 ft/in. radius of internal mortar diameter of the largest shell to be fired as shown in *SFPC* Table 3308.4.

Increased Separation Distance for Chain-Fused Aerial Shells. The minimum separation distance from chain-fused aerial shells (cakes) to spectators, spectator parking areas, and dwellings, buildings, or structures shall be twice the distance listed in Section 3308.4 of the *Virginia Statewide Fire Prevention Code (SFPC)* for the largest shell to be fired. This increased minimum separation distance for chain-fused aerial shells shall remain in effect until further notice, and is in accordance with sections 5.1.1.2 and 5.1.3.3.2 of *NFPA 1123, Code for Fireworks Display*, 2006 Edition. The NFPA sections are listed below for ease of reference.

5.1.1.2. Where unusual or safety-threatening conditions exist, the AHJ shall be permitted to increase the required separation distances as it deems necessary.

5.1.3.3.2. For chain-fused aerial shells and comets and mines to be fired from mortars, racks, or other holders that are not sufficiently strong to prevent their being repositioned in the event of an explosive malfunction of the aerial shells, comets, or mines, the minimum required radius shall be doubled.

Sincerely,

/s/

Deputy Chief Dereck A. Baker
Office of the Fire Marshal
Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department

Proudly Protecting and
Serving Our Community

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