



FIREWORKS SAFETY GUIDE

“This summer presents an exciting moment for our communities to come back together again, and together we can ensure that all our families are doing so safely. Fireworks are more than just a nuisance—they're a fire and safety hazard. Alongside our public safety partners, the City is working to keep fireworks from disrupting the lives of our residents so we can all have a healthy, safe, and fun summer.” - Mayor Michelle Wu

KNOW THE FACTS

- **It is illegal to use, possess, or sell fireworks in Massachusetts.**
- Sound levels from fireworks exceed reasonable levels.
- Loud noises from fireworks are triggering to individuals with trauma.
- Fireworks can cause severe injuries.
- Illegal use of fireworks is a fire hazard and can cause property damage.
- More information is on the next page of this guide.

GET NEIGHBORLY

The best way to limit fireworks in your community is by talking to your neighbors. Let individuals setting fireworks know how they are negatively impacting your quality of life. If a conversation is not an option, then get advice from your civic association, neighborhood liaison, City or elected officials.

NOISE LEVELS

Sound levels from incessant use of fireworks are unreasonably loud. The City of Boston states that unreasonable sound levels are anything louder than 50 decibels from 11 p.m. to 7 a.m., or anything louder than 70 dB at any time.

On average, daytime sound levels in the City of Boston are 62 decibels (dBA), while nighttime sound levels are 58 dBA. Sound levels from fireworks are intermittent, random, and loud, measuring 130 - 150 decibels.

Sound levels from fireworks are a public health issue. Firework noise may trigger a flight-or-fight stress response. Sound levels of 55 decibels and higher have been shown to be associated with serious diseases, such as hypertension and heart disease.

MENTAL HEALTH

Many residents describe firework sounds as triggering. That's especially true for those who have experienced trauma resulting from guns or bombs such as veterans or those who have experienced both direct and indirect gun violence. Firework noise may also trigger feelings of anxiety and hopelessness. Results from the Community Noise Lab's 2016 Greater Boston Neighborhood Noise report sheds light on these feelings. Residents felt that noise in their communities was:

- unwanted (98%)
- uncontrollable (95%)
- constant (80%), and
- impacting community health (65%).

FIRES AND PROPERTY DAMAGE

In the past decade (2010-2019), there have been 858 major fire and explosion incidents involving illegal fireworks reported to the Massachusetts Fire Incident Reporting System. The incidents caused 12 civilian injuries, 40 fire service injuries, and an estimated loss of \$2.9 million.

BURNS AND INJURIES CAUSED BY FIREWORKS

Lighting fireworks can cause severe scarring that can last a lifetime. In the past decade (2010-2019), 37 people were treated at Massachusetts emergency rooms for severe injuries including burns, loss of fingers, cuts, and loss of hearing from fireworks, according to the Massachusetts Burn Injury Reporting System. Fifty-four percent of the victims were under the age of 25.

For more information visit [boston.gov/fireworks](https://www.boston.gov/fireworks)

