

DEVAL L. PATRICK  
GOVERNOR

ANDREA J. CABRAL  
SECRETARY

*The Commonwealth of Massachusetts*  
*Executive Office of Public Safety and Security*  
*Department of Fire Services*

*P.O. Box 1025 ~ State Road*

*Stow, Massachusetts 01775*

*(978) 567~3100 Fax: (978) 567~3121*

*www.mass.gov/dfs*



STEPHEN D. COAN  
STATE FIRE MARSHAL

## MEMORANDUM

**To:** Heads of Fire Departments

**From:** Stephen D. Coan  
State Fire Marshal

**Date:** June 1, 2014

**RE:** Summer 2014 Fireworks Season

---

With the summer fireworks season fast approaching, final plans for weekend fireworks displays are taking place and precautionary planning for these events becomes increasingly important. Advance planning is necessary for the Department of Fire Services to respond appropriately, should problems be encountered the day or evening of a fireworks display. While the primary concern is the prevention of accidents that have the potential to injure, other issues of non-compliance may occur on the day of the display.

The Division of Fire Safety has reminded our licensed fireworks shooters of their responsibilities to the public for safety as well as an obligation to abide by the state's laws and regulations on fireworks. Licensed fireworks shooters have also been reminded that being involved in an unsupervised and/or un-permitted fireworks display is, in addition to being a violation of law and the fire code, a violation of the terms and conditions of their license, which could result in suspension or revocation of their Certificate of Competency. If you become aware of such activity in your municipality, please contact our office immediately.

The Division of Fire Safety grants natural barrier approvals when needed. If you have previously received an approval and nothing has changed in the plans submitted to you by the fireworks shooter, you do not need another approval. If you need a site inspection for approval, please contact (978) 567-3375, at least thirty (30) days before the proposed date of the display.

Once again, it is strongly recommended that the same procedures used last year be followed again this year. A representative of your department should take a close look at the display during the

setup process during daylight hours in the late afternoon. This procedure provides the best opportunity to inspect and correct any compliance issues, and insures a safe and successful fireworks display.

Please be assured that, once again, the Division of Fire Safety stands ready to provide the highest possible level of technical, compliance, and enforcement support during the summer fireworks season. In an effort to provide additional inspection guidelines, please find attached to this memo a suggested checklist for the three stages of a fireworks program.

We also want to advise you that there have been changes to the permitting process, most notably that there are two separate application/permit forms that distinguish fireworks displays and special effects before a proximate audience.

The requirements of the separate application/permits are as follows:

FW display applications require the following and will be considered incomplete if all the requirements are not met:

- ❑ Diagram/site plan showing points where fireworks are to be discharged, location/distance to the audience, buildings, highways, overhead obstructions, etc. (handwritten maps are not acceptable; Maps must be Google, Bing, GIS)
- ❑ The number and description of the fireworks/pyrotechnics including the diameter of the shells.
- ❑ A copy of the natural barrier letter from the State Fire Marshal's Office (if applicable)
- ❑ FAA, Coast Guard, or other agency approvals/notifications (if applicable)

Special Effects applications require the following and will be considered incomplete if all the requirements are not met:

- ❑ Letter from owner, operator or manager of the indoor entertainment venue or theater acknowledging the proposed use of pyrotechnics within their facility.
- ❑ A plan in accordance with NFPA 1126, Section 6.3.2 (2006 Edition)

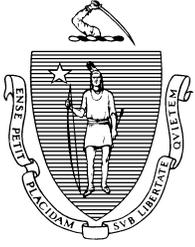
If you have any questions about Users Certificates, Certificates of Competency, or related licensing issues, please contact our Licensing Desk at (978) 567-3700, or by email at [dfs.licensing@dfs.state.ma.us](mailto:dfs.licensing@dfs.state.ma.us).

Division of Fire Safety Code Compliance and Enforcement Officers are available, 24 hours a day, to respond to your communities should the need arise. During normal business hours, please call the Division of Fire Safety at (978) 567-3375.

Should it be necessary to contact a Code Compliance and Enforcement Officer during a pre-display setup inspection by your department, or to report an accident, you should call the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency at (508) 820-2000 and ask that a DFS Code Compliance and Enforcement Officer be paged.

**During regular business hours (weekdays 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.) call the Code Compliance and Enforcement Unit, Division of Fire Safety at (978) 567-3375.**

**Outside of regular business hours, call the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency at (508) 820-2000.**



*The Commonwealth of Massachusetts*  
*Executive Office of Public Safety and Security*  
*Department of Fire Services*



DEVAL L. PATRICK  
GOVERNOR

ANDREA J. CABRAL  
SECRETARY

*P.O. Box 1025 ~ State Road*

*Stow, Massachusetts 01775*

*(978) 567~3100 Fax: (978) 567~3121*

*www.mass.gov/dfs*

STEPHEN D. COAN  
STATE FIRE MARSHAL

**FIREWORKS DISPLAY CHECKLIST**

Date of Show: \_\_\_\_\_

**Before Show** /check:

- Pre show site inspection.
- Natural barriers must be pre-approved by the State Fire Marshal's Office (plan sufficient time ahead)
- At least 20 days prior to display application/permit must be submitted, including site diagram (hand drawn sketches are not acceptable) and shell inventory.
- Verify that all applicable State Fire Marshal permits such as transportation, electrical firing board, portable firing trailers, 12-inch shells have been issued.
- Within 5 days of receipt of application/permit, form must be approved or disapproved and forwarded to the State Fire Marshal's Office. This may be done via mail, email or fax.

**Day of Show** /check:

- Establish secured area with a suitable barrier such as snow fencing or equivalent (caution tape is not sufficient), natural barriers, as approved by SFMO (secured area must be established and maintained from the arrival of the fireworks until the completion of the display).
- Verify State Fire Marshal permits (transportation, electric firing boards, and portable firing trailers).
- If using racks, determine that the rack placement conforms to the approved site.
- Check racks for correct spacing and stability. Check angling of mortars.
- If not using racks, determine that tubes are sufficiently buried. Check angling of mortars.
- Determine weather and wind condition prior to display.

**Following the Show** /check:

- A competent operator must insure a thorough search is made for any unignited shells immediately following the display and at the first available daylight.
- Upon completion of the search, a competent operator shall report all findings to the head of the Fire Department.