

Fireworks Regulation in Washington State

This page provides an overview of the authority of local governments in Washington State to regulate fireworks, including relevant state laws, permitting and licensing, dates and times that fireworks may be sold or discharged, emergency fireworks bans, and examples of local ordinances and advisory votes.

Overview

State law governs the regulation of fireworks, including what fireworks are legal, licensing for public fireworks displays and for fireworks sellers, and when fireworks may be discharged.

However, it leaves some room for local regulation, such as when fireworks may be sold or discharged. Cities and counties may even prohibit the sale and discharge of fireworks entirely.

Any local fireworks ordinances that are more restrictive than state law may not take effect until at least one year after adoption. However, some jurisdictions have also implemented emergency fireworks bans during times of high fire danger.

Statutes and Legal References

The [Washington State Patrol](#) enforces the state fireworks laws:

- [Ch. 70.77 RCW](#) – State Fireworks Law
- [Ch. 212-17 WAC](#) – Administrative regulations adopted by the State Patrol

Permitting and Licensing

State License

A license issued by the State Patrol is required for:

- Wholesale and/or retail fireworks sales, manufacturing, or importing ([RCW 70.77.315](#)).
- Possession or use of fireworks, other than consumer fireworks lawfully purchased at retail ([RCW 70.77.255\(4\)](#) and [RCW 70.77.315](#)).
- Public display of fireworks (including those put on by local governments). A "public display of fireworks" is defined by [RCW 70.77.160](#) as "an entertainment feature where the public is or could be admitted or allowed to view the

display or discharge of display fireworks."

There are licensing exceptions for the purchase and use of certain agricultural and wildlife fireworks by government agencies and for the purchase of consumer fireworks by religious or private organizations for "religious or specific purposes," provided a permit is obtained from the local fire official ([RCW 70.77.311](#)).

Local Permit

In addition to obtaining a the state license, [RCW 70.77.260](#)(1) instructs anyone wishing to manufacture, import, sell, or transport fireworks must also obtain a local permit issued by a city or county (as the case may be) prior to carrying out these activities.

An application is to be made to the local fire official ([RCW 70.77.260](#)), who submits a report of findings and a recommendation for or against the issuance of the permit, together with reasons, to the governing body ([RCW 70.77.265](#)). The governing body, or a person designated by the governing body, must grant the permit if it meets state standards and any standards that may be adopted by local ordinance ([RCW 70.77.270](#)). The governing body must complete this process:

- by June 10, or no less than 30 days after receipt of an application, whichever date occurs first, for sales commencing on June 28 and on December 27; or
- by December 10, or no less than 30 days after receipt of an application, whichever date occurs first, for sales commencing only on December 27 ([RCW 70.77.270](#)).

If the application is for a public display permit, only the city or county governing body (but not a designee) may grant the permit, based on an investigation by the local fire official ([RCW 70.77.280](#)).

Cities and counties may impose fees for fireworks retail sales and displays sufficient to cover all legitimate costs, up to the maximum amounts prescribed by [RCW 70.77.555](#).

Prohibited Types of Fireworks

[RCW 70.77.401](#) prohibits the sale of, or offer to sell, the following types of fireworks:

[C]consumer fireworks which are classified as sky rockets, or missile-type rockets, firecrackers, salutes, or chasers as defined by the United States department of transportation and the federal consumer products safety commission except as provided in [RCW 70.77.311](#).

The Washington State Fire Marshal's Office has two handouts that can assist in the identification of legal and illegal fireworks:

- [Legal Consumer Fireworks for Sale in Tents and Stands per RCW 70.77.136](#)
- [Illegal Fireworks and Illegal Explosive Devices](#)

In a similar vein, the City of Snoqualmie produced a [handout](#) showing which fireworks are considered illegal within city limits.

Dates and Times Fireworks May Be Sold or Discharged

RCW 70.77.395 sets the allowable times for sale or discharge of fireworks.

DATE	MAY BE SOLD/PURCHASED	MAY BE USED/DISCHARGED
June 28	Noon – 11 pm	Noon – 11 pm
June 29 – July 3	9 am – 11 pm	9 am – 11 pm
July 4	9 am – 11 pm	9 am – Midnight
July 5	9 am – 11 pm	9 am – 11 pm
December 27 – 30	Noon – 11 pm	May not be discharged
December 31	Noon – 11 pm	6 pm – 1 am (January 1)

Note: Does not apply to tribal lands. City/county regulations may be more restrictive or prohibit fireworks entirely but may not be less restrictive.

Fireworks may be *sold and purchased* on the following dates and times:

- **June 28:** 12:00–11:00 p.m.
- **June 29–July 4:** 9:00 a.m.–11:00 p.m.
- **July 5:** 9:00 a.m.–9:00 p.m.
- **December 27–31:** 12:00–11:00 p.m.

Fireworks may be *used and discharged* on the following dates and times:

- **June 28:** 12:00–11:00 p.m.
- **June 29–July 3:** 9:00 a.m.–11:00 p.m.
- **July 4:** 9:00 a.m.–12:00 a.m. on **July 5.**
- **July 5:** 9:00 a.m.–11:00 p.m.
- **December 31:** 6:00 p.m.–1:00 a.m. on **January 1**

Cities and counties may, by ordinance, further restrict the days and times when fireworks may be sold and discharged, or even prohibit the sale and discharge of fireworks entirely.

However, any such ordinance further restricting when fireworks may be sold or discharged, or which prohibits their sale and discharge, may not take effect until at least one year after adoption, per [RCW 70.77.250\(4\)](#).

Examples of Local Ordinances

Below are selected examples of cities or counties that have adopted ordinances that are more restrictive than state fireworks laws, including those that ban fireworks entirely.

This is not a comprehensive list and is meant to provide policy examples only. The Washington State Fire Marshal's Office used to maintain a list of cities and counties with fireworks restrictions and bans but has discontinued that list.

Examples of Codes that Vary Use/Discharge Times from State Law

- [Clark County Code Ch. 5.28](#) – Use permitted June 28 at noon until July 4 at midnight.

- [Douglas County Code Ch. 8.20](#) – Discharge allowed between 1:00–11:59 p.m. on July 3 and July 4, and from 6:00 p.m. on December 31 to 1:00 a.m. on January 1.
- [Puyallup Municipal Code Ch. 16.20](#) – Discharge restricted to between 9:00 a.m.—11:00 p.m. on July 4.
- [Walla Walla Municipal Code Ch. 8.09](#) – May be discharged between 9:00 a.m. on July 4 to 12:00 a.m. on July 5, and from 6:00 p.m. on December 31 to 1:00 a.m. on January 1.

Examples of Codes that Prohibit Fireworks (with some Exceptions)

The following ordinances prohibit fireworks entirely with exceptions such as public displays, religious activities, private events, and agricultural and wildlife uses.

- [Chelan Municipal Code Ch. 8.10](#) – Establishes different penalties for unlawful possession of fireworks based on the weight of the fireworks seized.
- [Franklin County Code Ch. 8.04](#) – Includes a provision for the seizure of any fireworks found in violation of the code.
- [Kirkland Municipal Code Ch. 11.60](#) – Includes detailed minimum standards and conditions for public displays.
- [Langley Municipal Code Ch. 9.05](#) – Prohibits fireworks and sky lanterns, with exceptions for authorized public displays, religious or private organizations as provided in [RCW 70.77.311\(2\)](#), and special effects for entertainment media pursuant to [RCW 70.77.535](#).

Advisory Votes

Some jurisdictions have used nonbinding advisory votes to get citizen input on whether or not to ban consumer fireworks. For recent examples, see our [Local Ballot Measure Database](#). (Click "Search by Keyword" and type "fireworks".)

- [Covington Resolution No. 2019-09 \(2019\)](#) – Submitting advisory proposition on whether to ban the sale, possession, and discharge of consumer fireworks at all times
- [Snohomish County Ordinance No. 19-039 \(2019\)](#) – Submitting advisory proposition on whether to prohibit consumer fireworks in the unincorporated urban growth areas

Emergency Fireworks Bans

It is not clear whether local governments have the authority to impose an immediate fireworks ban during periods of high fire danger.

Some jurisdictions have adopted ordinances, effective after the statutory one-year waiting period in [RCW 70.77.250\(4\)](#), that authorize specific officials (such as the mayor, county executive, sheriff, or fire marshal) to prohibit fireworks during emergency conditions such as high fire danger. In addition, it can be argued that [RCW 70.77.250\(4\)](#) does not impact the ability of local governments to adopt emergency restrictions or bans in response to extreme heat, drought, or other circumstances that would make the discharge of fireworks unreasonably dangerous.

There is no clear law either way on this question, so local governments will need to evaluate the possible legal risks of enacting an emergency measure that restricts or bans the discharge of fireworks.

Below are examples of jurisdictions that have implemented emergency measures.

- **Camas Ordinance No. 15-015 (2015)** – Allows the mayor, after consulting with the fire chief, fire marshals, and other officials, to prohibit the discharge of fireworks during periods of extreme fire danger.
- **Kittitas County Ordinance No. 2016-005** – Allows the fire marshal to impose an emergency fireworks ban when fire danger exceeds specific criteria.
- **Leavenworth Municipal Code Sec. 8.36.160** – Allows the fire official to prohibit the discharge of fireworks during periods of extreme fire danger.
 - **Resolution No. 7-2015 (2015)** – Declaring an emergency due to extreme fire danger and authorizing the fire district chief (city is annexed) to alert the public and prohibit the sale/use of fireworks within the city for the rest of the calendar year until the fire official and council terminate the emergency.
- **Mercer Island City Code Sec. 8.35.040** – Local fire official may prohibit fireworks during periods of extreme fire danger
 - **Emergency Order Prohibiting Discharge of Fireworks (2021)** – Order from fire chief and city manager temporarily banning fireworks due to extreme fire danger; clearly states that the emergency authorization in Sec. 8.35.040 was adopted in accordance with RCW 70.77.250(4)
- **North Bend Executive Order No. 21-01 (2021)** – Mayor's executive order declaring an emergency due to extreme fire danger resulting from prolonged heat wave and temporarily prohibiting all aerial fireworks. Provides exceptions for small fireworks on July 4, if they are discharged a safe distance from combustible materials.
- **Poulsbo Municipal Code Sec. 8.20.275** – If Kitsap County has a burn ban in place, this code allows the fire chief to prohibit fireworks during periods of extreme fire danger.
- **Thurston County Code Sec. 6.68.057** – County manager, after consulting with fire marshal or other appropriate officials, may prohibit fireworks discharge during periods of extreme fire danger; ban must be in place one day prior to the date consumer fireworks may be legally sold
- **Whatcom County Code Sec. 5.20.105** – Allows the county executive (in coordination with the fire marshal and sheriff) to prohibit the discharge of private fireworks if/when the county issues a ban on outdoor burning or extenuating emergency conditions exist.

Last Modified: July 14, 2021

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