

Illegal use of fireworks ... It's just not on

Image courtesy of Michael Marston

Authorised public fireworks displays are fun events, but illegal use of fireworks isn't funny.

Illegal use of fireworks can be dangerous to you and to others and is a public nuisance.

People who use fireworks carelessly or without knowing what they're doing can be killed or maimed. They can also kill or maim others.

Fireworks can burn down houses, damage entertainment venues such as nightclubs, frighten children and adults, cause bushfires, and terrify pets and wildlife.

Noise from fireworks can cause distress, especially as fireworks can sound like gunfire. The noise can also cause tinnitus and deafness, or aggravate a nervous condition.

People who suffer from asthma can experience discomfort and epileptics can experience seizures following fireworks displays.

When frightened by fireworks, horses have been known to thrash about in their stables or run through fences, often injuring themselves.

Some dogs have run off when they've heard fireworks and have never been seen again. Others have run under cars or through screen doors, damaging property, injuring themselves and causing accidents.

For these reasons, animal owners who have been advised of an authorised fireworks display are urged to keep their dogs, cats and other pets inside the house, so that the animals are safe and can't run away. Horse owners should take steps to protect their animals.

A calming shirt can help relieve a dog's anxiety relating to fireworks, thunderstorms and gunshots. To find out more about these products, search the web for 'dog calming shirt' or 'dog anxiety treatment', which will bring up a variety of options. More advice is provided on the RSPCA website.

Penalties

Illegal use of fireworks is an offence and carries a maximum penalty of \$53,380 or six months imprisonment.

Also, if you are responsible for the loss or injury of an expensive animal through your illegal use of fireworks, you may be sued for damages.

Planning and reporting

Please do the right thing by yourself, your neighbours, your family, your friends, your pets and the environment: enjoy a fireworks display but make sure that you hire a properly trained and licensed professional to do the job.

To find a list of reputable fireworks contractors, visit www.qld.gov.au and search for 'List of fireworks contractors'.

To report the illegal use of fireworks, please contact the Explosives Inspectorate using the form at <https://www.qld.gov.au/emergency/safety/explosives-fireworks/explosives-fireworks-complaints> or Policelink on 131 444.

More information

Contact Resources Safety and Health Queensland Explosives Inspectorate:

Telephone: **1300 739 868**

Email: explosives@rshq.qld.gov.au

Website: www.rshq.qld.gov.au