



City of Wimberley

IMMEDIATE NEWS RELEASE
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Fireworks should not be used to ring in 2012 in Wimberley. That's the reminder from Wimberley City officials who are encouraging residents to abide by the City's fireworks prohibition and find another way to celebrate the arrival of the New Year.

"Possession, storage, sale, handling and use of fireworks are prohibited within the city limits," according to Wimberley City Administrator Don Ferguson. "Anyone found in possession of fireworks could be in for a hefty fine."

Illegal fireworks include anything designed to produce a visible and audible effect by ignition with a match or other heat-producing device. Sparklers, fire crackers and roman candles are examples of illegal fireworks. Fireworks found within the city limits of Wimberley are subject to confiscation, and violators could be fined up to \$2,000 for each offense.

"It is an issue of public safety," said Ferguson. "While Hays County recently lifted its burn ban and will allow fireworks this holiday season, it is important to understand fireworks are off limits in Wimberley year round, much like in other area cities."

National agencies reported 9 deaths, more than 7,000 people injured and an estimated 9,000 hospital emergency room treated injuries in the U.S. from 2008 to 2009. The age groups most affected were children aged 5 to 9 and teens aged 15 to 19. Sparklers, fountains and novelties alone accounted for 32 percent of emergency room fireworks injuries in 2009. In 2008, there were more than 22,500 fires reported to have been started by fireworks, resulting in almost \$42 million dollars in direct property damage and almost 3 times that amount in indirect damages.

"Fireworks safety is not a supervision issue," said Ferguson. "A fireworks injury happens in the blink of an eye, whether or not a parent or other responsible adult is present," said Ferguson. "The safest way to prevent fireworks-related injuries is to leave fireworks displays to trained professionals."

There is at least one professionally produced fireworks display planned in the area to celebrate the arrival of 2012. The City of San Marcos will fill the sky above Bobcat Stadium with fireworks on New Years Eve to celebrate the arrival of 2012.

In addition to cautioning residents about the use of fireworks this holiday season, Wimberley City officials are urging residents to use extreme caution when burning outdoors. Due to extreme drought conditions over the summer, a large amount of dead vegetation has accumulated in the area, increasing the potential for grass and woodland fires.