

## June 29 EcoNewsWire from the Iowa DNR

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
June 29, 2017

- [DNR encourages safe storage, disposal of fireworks at home](#)
- [Avoid areas of heavy smoke near fireworks activities and displays](#)

## DNR encourages safe storage, disposal of fireworks at home

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DES MOINES — Iowans using fireworks at home this summer should take precautions to make sure they are stored and disposed properly, according to the Iowa Department of Natural Resources.

Unused fireworks should be kept in a cool, dry place and out of the reach of children. Never place fireworks on top of an electrical appliance, like a refrigerator or freezer. The appliance could be damaged through extreme weather events, such as lightning or power surges, which could possibly ignite the fireworks.

Fireworks should not be put in the garbage without taking appropriate precautions, as they pose a fire and explosion hazard. To dispose unused, misfired or "dud" fireworks:

- Completely submerge fireworks in a large bucket of water and soak overnight.
- Double wrap the completely soaked fireworks in plastic wrap or two plastic bags so they do not dry out.
- Place the double-bagged fireworks in the household trash or take them to your local landfill.

Residents can also contact their local fire department or landfill as other disposal options for fireworks may be available.

Additional information is available at <http://www.iowadnr.gov/Environmental-Protection/Land-Quality/Waste-Planning-Recycling/Recycling/Solid-Waste-Fact-Sheets>.

# Avoid areas of heavy smoke near fireworks activities and displays

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WINDSOR HEIGHTS – Whether attending a spectacular Fourth of July celebration or a picnic with backyard fireworks, the aftermath of drifting smoke can cause breathing problems for some. If the air is stagnant, fine particles can be trapped near the ground and build to unhealthy levels.

The DNR encourages sensitive individuals to stay upwind, a safe distance from fireworks smoke. People with asthma or respiratory difficulties, the elderly, children and pregnant women are most likely to suffer.

Smoke contains fine particles and gases, which can be hard on the lungs. Fine particles in fireworks' smoke are produced from black powder used to shoot fireworks skyward along with the metals that produce brilliant colors.

Those unable to avoid areas of dense smoke should limit outdoor activity and contact their health care provider if they experience difficulty breathing.

An air pollution monitor in Davenport recorded unhealthy levels of fine particles after Fourth of July fireworks in 2008 and 2015. Find more information about the 2008 event and fine particle pollution under [Firework Displays](#). Learn more about [Fine Particles \(PM<sub>2.5</sub>\)](#) and how particle pollution can affect health.