



# GENERAL ORDER

## GENERAL ORDER 630.02

### Fireworks, Ammunition and Other Explosive Devices

#### OFFICE OF THE FIRE MARSHAL

Issue Date: January 17, 1995

Revision Date: February 06, 2018

#### 1 APPLICABILITY

2 All uniformed personnel.

#### 3 POLICY

4 In accordance with Section 17.104(c)(287-288) of the Howard County Fire Prevention Code,  
5 which codifies and amends Sections 65.1.4-5 of the National Fire Protection Association 1: Fire  
6 Code, the Office of the Fire Marshal (OFM) shall have the authority to confiscate, and assist in  
7 the disposal of, any illegal fireworks, ammunitions, and other explosive-type devices in Howard  
8 County.

9  
10 This policy establishes procedures for use by Emergency Services Bureau (ESB) field operations  
11 and Office of the Fire Marshal (OFM) personnel when handling fireworks, ammunition and  
12 other explosive devices.

#### 13 DEFINITIONS

14 ➤ **Legal Fireworks** - Party poppers, ignitable snakes, hand-held sparklers and snap ‘n pops  
15 are the only types of fireworks legal for sale and use in Howard County.

16  
17 ➤ **Illegal Fireworks** – all other types of fireworks not mentioned above are illegal in  
18 Howard County, to include ground based sparklers. It is also illegal to sell fireworks to  
19 anyone under the age of 16 years old.

#### 20 PROCEDURES

##### 21 GENERAL:

22 The sale, possession and use of all fireworks is prohibited in Howard County, with the exception  
23 of those allowed under the definition section of this General Order. This General Order does  
24 not apply to professionally licensed, public fireworks displays, which are permitted by the Office  
25 of the State Fire Marshal, and inspected and monitored by OFM personnel.

##### 26 27 PROCEDURES FOR ESB FIELD OPERATIONS AND PSAP PERSONNEL:

28 After receiving a citizen complaint or upon the observation of the illegal discharging of  
29 fireworks or explosive devices:



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- 30 • The witnessing personnel shall contact the Public Service Answering Point (PSAP) to
- 31 report the activity.
- 32 • The PSAP will dispatch the Howard County Police Department (HCPD) to handle the
- 33 complaint(s).
- 34 • If an HCPD officer is not available, the PSAP shall notify the on-call Fire Marshal (OCFM)
- 35 to investigate the complaint.
- 36

37 If a citizen contacts the station because he or she has possession of fireworks, ammunition, or  
38 other devices and would like to dispose of them, the person taking the call shall direct the call  
39 to the Station Officer or Volunteer Duty Officer.

- 40 • The Station Officer or Volunteer Duty Officer shall obtain the following pertinent
- 41 information:
  - 42 ○ Name of person in possession of fireworks, ammunition or explosives;
  - 43 ○ Contact phone number;
  - 44 ○ Location where fireworks, ammunition or explosives may be picked up; and,
  - 45 ○ The type and quantity of fireworks, ammunition or explosives, if known.
  - 46
- 47 • Notify the OCFM and provide the information obtained.
- 48

49 If a citizen drops off fireworks, ammunition, or other devices at a fire station:

- 50 • All items shall be handled by the Station Officer or Volunteer Duty Officer, who shall
- 51 also:
  - 52 ○ Obtain the name of the person and a contact phone number should the Fire
  - 53 Marshal need to speak to the individual.
  - 54 ○ Secure all fireworks in a designated locked area of the station (preferably outside
  - 55 in a storage shed).
  - 56 ○ Notify the OCFM.
  - 57

58 **Field operations personnel shall not dispose of illegal fireworks.** All recovered fireworks,  
59 ammunition or explosives shall be turned over to the OFM.

### 60 PROCEDURES FOR OFM PERSONNEL:

- 61 • When contacted by the Station Officer or Volunteer Duty Officer, OFM Personnel shall
- 62 obtain information on the type and quantity of material in question.
- 63 • If material is secured and/or a type that is not hazardous, an immediate response to the
- 64 location is at the discretion of the OCFM.
- 65 • The OCFM may need to contact other resources (such as the State Fire Marshal bomb
- 66 squad) for disposal of the material.
- 67 • The OCFM will ensure the safe disposal of illegal fireworks, ammunition and other
- 68 explosive devices.
- 69
- 70

### 71 ILLEGAL FIREWORKS:

72 The Howard County Fire Prevention Code grants the authority to the Department to confiscate  
73 any illegal fireworks in Howard County. OFM personnel shall use the following criteria in dealing  
74 with illegal fireworks violations:



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- 75 • If there is no history of past violations, educate the responsible party that the material is  
76 in violation of the Howard County Fire Prevention Code, issue a notice of violation and  
77 confiscate.
- 78 • If the person refuses to cooperate, issue a citation for failing to obey an order to remedy  
79 a dangerous or hazardous condition (pursuant to Section 65.1.5 in the amended Howard  
80 County Fire Prevention Code) and confiscate the product.
- 81 • If at any time the responsible person becomes unruly, request police assistance.
- 82 • Confiscation may require the need for additional resources such as pickup trucks or a  
83 box truck for removal from the site.
- 84 • For any confiscated fireworks, a receipt will be given to the possessor and a copy will be  
85 kept for the file, documenting the type of product and amount removed.

86  
87 The Howard County Fire Prevention Code allows for penalties for sale, possession, and use of  
88 illegal fireworks.

## 89 REFERENCES

- 90 • Current Version of the Howard County Fire Prevention Code

## 91 SUMMARY OF DOCUMENT CHANGES

92 Updated formatting.

## 93 FORMS/ATTACHMENTS

- 94 • N/A

## 95 APPROVED

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