

# Trading Standards Bulletin

## Bulletin No. 32

### Fireworks

Within the next couple of days, we will be entering the season of fireworks and bonfires, culminating in Guy Fawkes Night on November 5<sup>th</sup>. Trading Standards generally deal with matters relating to the sale and supply of fireworks to the public, whereas Police Scotland generally deal with how the fireworks are used once bought, all with a view to try to prevent problems. Fireworks Regulations are a bit convoluted but Trading Standards believe that there are a number of aspects about fireworks which are worth highlighting to the general public, some new, some well-established. In simple terms, these are:

- Only authorised retailers can sell fireworks to the public. Retailers must apply and be granted a licence from their Local Authority to sell fireworks and must not do so until the licence has been granted.
- The legal period for selling fireworks each year is from 15 October until 10 November; from 26 December until 31 December; on the 3 days preceding Chinese New Year or Diwali. Anyone wishing to sell outwith these periods must apply for a special licence and pay the substantial fee involved.
- For retail purposes, fireworks fall into 4 categories – F1 to F4.
- F1 fireworks are considered low noise and low hazard, for use in confined areas such as indoors. These include party poppers, sparklers and throwdowns and can be bought by people aged 16 years or older. Sparklers should not be given to children aged under 5 and their packaging should carry a warning to that effect.
- F2 fireworks are considered low noise and low hazard for outdoors use with a recommended minimum 8 metre safety distance (SFRS).
- F3 fireworks are considered medium noise and medium hazard products for use outdoors with a recommended minimum safety distance of 25 metres (SFRS).
- F2 and F3 fireworks are often referred to as ‘adult fireworks’ as they can only be legally sold to persons aged 18 years or older. Premises selling these types of fireworks must, by law, display the following notice in a clear and prominent place. The notice should be approximately A3 sized.



**From mountain to sea**

**IT IS ILLEGAL TO SELL CATEGORY F2 FIREWORKS OR CATEGORY F3 FIREWORKS TO ANYONE UNDER THE AGE OF 18**

**IT IS ILLEGAL FOR ANYONE UNDER THE AGE OF 18 TO POSSESS CATEGORY F2 FIREWORKS OR CATEGORY F3 FIREWORKS IN A PUBLIC PLACE**

- All retailers selling fireworks should possess and use an age verification policy where someone who looks to be under 25 years of age must produce identification to prove their age. Accepted forms of ID include passports, driving licences, military ID cards and cards bearing the PASS logo such as the Young Scot card or the Citizencard. Simply asking someone's age is not acceptable.
- All F2 and F3 fireworks should bear the UKCA or the CE safety marks. Any bearing the British Standard marks are no longer legal.
- F4 category fireworks are not for sale to the general public. Only people with specialist knowledge such as companies who operate fireworks displays on behalf of others are permitted to buy them.
- Certain types of fireworks are completely banned. These include aerial wheels, bangers, flash bangers, double bangers, jumping crackers, spinners, jumping ground spinners, most mini-rockets, shot tubes or a battery containing a combination any of the above bangers.
- On 30 June 2021, new regulations came into force for F2 and F3 fireworks (adult fireworks). These regulations now restrict the sale of adult fireworks to between 7am and 6pm (during the dates mentioned above).
- The regulations also limit the amount of fireworks which can be sold at any one time to 5kgs (of total net mass of explosive substance – gunpowder to you and me).
- The regulations also create the definition of a public fireworks display as one where the public or any section of the public are present whether or not they have paid to be.
- Please also remember to follow the Fireworks Code.

**Contact Info**

For urgent Trading Standards matters, contact Aberdeenshire Council's Trading Standards at 01467 537222. For non-urgent enquiries, please contact Consumer Advice Scotland at <https://www.consumeradvice.scot/> or on 0808 164 6000.



## From mountain to sea

Contact Police Scotland on 999 if you need urgent Police assistance or 101 for non-urgent matters.

For more information about scams please visit Friends Against Scams at <https://www.friendsagainstscams.org.uk/> or Take Five at <https://takefive-stopfraud.org.uk/>

Please direct any media queries to [news@aberdeenshire.gov.uk](mailto:news@aberdeenshire.gov.uk) or 01467 538222 during office hours.

All previous Trading Standards bulletins can be found at:  
<http://publications.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/dataset/trading-standards-crime-and-scams-bulletin>