



ATF News

Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives
New Orleans Field Division

Contact: Special Agent Austin Banks
(504) 329-1443

For Immediate Release
June 28, 2007

ATF REMINDS PUBLIC TO CELEBRATE FOURTH OF JULY SAFELY

NEW ORLEANS — As Independence Day approaches, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) wants to remind the public to exercise caution when dealing with fireworks and only purchase legal fireworks through licensed retailers.

ATF is the federal law enforcement agency charged with enforcing federal explosives laws. ATF actively works with other federal agencies, such as the Consumer Products Safety Commission through its fireworks enforcement program, to prevent trafficking and possession of illegal fireworks, which are technically classified as illegal explosive devices.

“We want to remind everyone that handling illegal fireworks can lead to serious injury or even death,” said David Harper, Special Agent in Charge of ATF’s New Orleans Field Division. “We work closely with industry and other law enforcement organizations to investigate manufacturers and distributors of illegal explosive devices in an effort to keep Americans safe.”

Illegal explosive devices meet neither the safety nor quality standards of legally manufactured consumer fireworks. Federally banned fireworks include M-80s, M-1000s, Silver Salutes and Cherry Bombs. Mail-order kits designed to build these fireworks also are banned. The manufacture, sale, and receipt of these illegal explosive devices can result in federal felony and misdemeanor charges.

State and local fireworks laws and regulations differ from jurisdiction to jurisdiction. Before purchasing or using any fireworks, check with the authorities in your area, such as the State Fire Marshal or your local fire department, to find out what is allowed.

The public is urged to report the manufacture or sale of illegal fireworks or explosive devices to local law enforcement or to ATF by calling the toll-free hotline at 1-888-ATF-BOMB (1-888-283-2662).

More information on ATF and its programs is at www.atf.gov.

###