



## City of St. Marys, PA Code Enforcement Office

### PRESS RELEASE

With the July 4<sup>th</sup> celebration just around the corner, the City of St. Marys would like to take this opportunity to explain the new Pennsylvania Fireworks Law, as well as a safety reminder when handling fireworks.

House Bill 542 was signed into law on October 30, 2017. Under the new law, the Fireworks Act of 1939 was repealed and replaced in its entirety. This new law allows the purchase and display of “Class C”, “1.4G”, or often referred to as “**Consumer Fireworks**”, within the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. “**Display Fireworks**” also referred to as “1.3G”(1.75” in diameter and larger and more than 50 milligrams of explosive material), are still required to have a municipal permit to ignite or discharge and are only permitted by professional pyrotechnicians. An explosives license is required through the Bureau of Alcohol Tobacco and Firearms (ATF), for “**Display Fireworks**” (1.3G).

**Consumer Fireworks** include firecrackers, Roman Candles, bottle rockets, and similar fireworks that contain a maximum of 50 milligrams of explosive material. This also includes fireworks up to 1.75” in diameter.

A permit is not required for the purchase or ignition of **Consumer Fireworks**; however, the Pennsylvania Law has restrictions on how and where these types of fireworks can be used. **Consumer Fireworks** can only be purchased, possessed and used by a person who is at least 18 years of age. **Consumer Fireworks** cannot be ignited or discharged on public or private property without the express permission of the owner. **Consumer Fireworks** cannot be ignited or discharged from within, or at a building, motor vehicle, or person. **Consumer Fireworks** cannot be used by a person under the influence of alcohol, a controlled substance, or another drug. **Consumer Fireworks** cannot be ignited or discharged within 150 feet of any structure.

An estimated 7,600 of the total 11,000 fireworks-related injuries in 2016 were treated in hospital emergency departments during the period between June 18, 2016 and July 18, 2016, according to a report on 2016 by the Consumer Products Safety Commission and its National Electronic Injury Surveillance System.

According to an NFPA report, U.S. fire departments responded to an annual average of 18,500 fires caused by fireworks between 2009 and 2013. These fires included 1,300 structure fires, 300 vehicle fires, 16,900 outside and other fires, and killed two people per year.

Penalties for using Consumer Fireworks in violation of the provisions of this article, could face a \$100.00 fine. Persons selling or using the larger “**Display**” type fireworks in violation of the provisions of this Act, commits a third-degree felony.

If you have any questions regarding the new Fireworks Law, you can contact the City’s Code Enforcement Office at (814) 781-1718 ext. 239. The City of St. Marys wishes a happy and safe Fourth of July to everyone, and please be safe.