



## TEMPLE TERRACE FIRE DEPARTMENT NEWS RELEASE

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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## FLORIDA FIREWORKS TASK FORCE SEEKS PUBLIC INPUT

*Temple Terrace Fire Department Encourages Participation and Stresses Holiday Safety*

(TEMPLE TERRACE, FL. – 11/27/07) – The recently formed *Consumer Fireworks Task Force* is seeking public input on the issue of fireworks in Florida.

The eight-member task force was formed this year to develop recommendations for submittal to the Florida Legislature regarding the definition, use, sale and regulation of consumer fireworks. Citizens are encouraged to submit their opinions, concerns and personal experiences by visiting the task force's website at <http://consensus.fsu.edu/Fireworks-Task-Force/index.html>.

It is illegal in Florida to buy fireworks that shoot into the air or explode, but for years buyers and sellers have ignored the law with little consequence. The task force was created to explore the issue, and perhaps recommend the strengthening of state law.

The task force is an important first step because there are no manufacturing standards for many commonly used fireworks, said Division Chief David Becker of the Temple Terrace Fire Department. Many fireworks are produced overseas, he said, with little government oversight. That puts consumers at great risk.

"We don't want any illegal fireworks in this City," Becker said. Property damage, frightened pets and even injuries to children may result from the use of fireworks, he said.

With New Year's Eve approaching, fire officials are stressing safety – and reminding residents of the law.

"Remember, if they bang, explode or soar into the air, they're illegal," Becker said.

Sparklers and similar items sold at reputable stores generally are legal, Becker noted, but most of the products sold by tented street vendors, including firecrackers and bottle rockets, are not.

Even sparklers can be dangerous, Becker noted.

“Sparklers burn unbelievably hot,” he said. Instead of buying sparklers, he said, why not invest your money in new smoke detectors for your home?

“That’s a better, and safer, investment,” he said.

If you do decide to purchase *legal* fireworks, follow these safety tips:

- \* Always read and follow label directions.
- \* Do not allow children to light or handle fireworks.
- \* Always have water handy (a hose or bucket).
- \* Keep pets indoors; they are easily frightened by fireworks.
- \* Light one firework at a time, and move away quickly.
- \* Remember, alcohol and fireworks do not mix.

**For more information about fireworks safety or the City’s fireworks ordinance, contact the Temple Terrace Fire Department at (813) 989-7121.**

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