

NEWS RELEASE: June 28, 2011

Be safe and pick up your trash when using fireworks

The Greene County Commission urges residents to be respectful of their neighbors' property and to pick up their trash when using fireworks this holiday season.

Every July, the Greene County Highway Department spends several days collecting fireworks debris from county roadways, enough to fill multiple dump trucks.

"It's not only an expense for county taxpayers to clean it all up, it's a disruption for Highway Department road crews, who, during a very busy part of the year, are pulled off their maintenance and construction duties to clean up after others," said Dan Smith, Greene County Highway Administrator.

While use of fireworks is not allowed within Springfield and is limited in other municipalities, state law (RSMo. 320.121) prohibits Greene County from regulating the discharge of fireworks in the unincorporated portions of the county.

Presiding Commissioner Jim Viebrock urges residents to be cautious when using fireworks near houses, barns and especially hay fields.

"Dry and windy conditions could ruin your family's fun should a fire happen to get started and out of control, so please use common sense when shooting off fireworks," said Viebrock. "Have fun celebrating our nation's independence."

Greene County advises following these fireworks safety tips:

- Store fireworks in a cool, dry place.
- Use fireworks outdoors only.
- Always have a responsible adult present.
- Do not give fireworks or sparklers to small children.
- Keep small children and pets indoors or at a safe distance from fireworks displays.
- Do not obstruct traffic on public roadways.
- Do not use fireworks near structures, hay bales or livestock.
- Keep a bucket of water handy for emergencies and for dousing used fireworks, sprinklers and duds.
- Pick up your trash.

The Greene County Sheriff's Office encourages residents to obtain offenders' names or license plate numbers before contacting the sheriff's office with peace disturbances, trespassing or littering complaints.

For more information, call Jenny Fillmer Edwards, Greene County Public Information Officer, at 417-829-6019 or 417-224-5510.

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