



# DODGE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Dale J Schmidt Sheriff Scott Mittelstadt Chief Deputy

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Date: June 28, 2021

Sheriff Dale J. Schmidt

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## Serious Fireworks Injury

At about 7:15 PM on Saturday, June 26, 2021, the Dodge County Sheriff's Office responded to assist EMS with an injury caused by fireworks at W8282 STHY 16/60 in the Town of Lowell. It was discovered that a 55-year-old Town of Lowell man received serious injuries to both of his hands and stomach while handling large fireworks. Due to the severity of his injuries, he was flown by Med Flight to UW Hospital in Madison. This incident remains under investigation by the Dodge County Sheriff's Office.

With July 4<sup>th</sup> celebrations upon us, Sheriff Dale Schmidt would like to remind the public that fireworks are dangerous and most are in violation of state law. Under state law the following regulations apply:

### Legal Without a Permit:

State law allows the sale, possession and use, without a permit, of sparklers not exceeding 36 inches in length, stationary cones and fountains, toy snakes, smoke bombs, caps, noisemakers and confetti poppers with less than ¼ grain of explosive mixture. Wis. Stat. § 167.10(1). There is no age restriction on the sale, possession or use of these devices and the statute does not classify them as fireworks. The use and sale of some of these items may be prohibited by local ordinances. These are the only kinds of "fireworks," as that word is commonly used, that a person may use or possess without a permit or that may be sold to a person who does not have a permit.

### Illegal Without a Permit\*:

Possessing or using any other fireworks, including, for example, firecrackers, roman candles, bottle rockets and mortars is illegal in Wisconsin without a valid permit. Wis. Stat. § 167.10(3). A commonly used rule of thumb is that a permit is required if the device explodes or leaves the ground. The sale of these fireworks to a person without a valid permit is also illegal, Wis. Stat. § 167.10(2), unless the seller is a wholesaler or jobber selling fireworks to a non-resident for shipment out of state. Wis. Stat. § 167.10(4).

\*A permit may only be obtained with the permission of your local municipality.

The sheriff's office understands that fireworks can be a great way to celebrate our nation's independence, but there are laws in place to prevent the tragedies such as the one that occurred on Saturday from happening. We need everyone's cooperation to ensure we all can enjoy Independence Day without a trip to the hospital.

Finally, fireworks complaints will be responded to by the sheriff's office and we will dispatch those types of complaints to police departments within Dodge County. Please understand that we receive hundreds of fireworks complaints each year

and those phone calls do tie up our 911 dispatchers. If you would like to file a fireworks complaint, you may do so by launching our Dodge County Sheriff's Office app and file an "Incident Report". Your fireworks complaint will be transmitted through the app to the dispatch center and our dispatchers will be able to send an officer without the need to tie up our emergency or non-emergency phone lines. You can download our app from your Google or Apple app stores.

Questions may be directed to Sheriff Dale J. Schmidt.

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