



**REMARKS AS PREPARED FOR CYNTHIA QUARTERMAN
ADMINISTRATOR
PIPELINE AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS SAFETY ADMINISTRATION
CONSUMER PRODUCT SAFETY COMMISSION FIREWORKS SAFETY EVENT
-- TUESDAY, JUNE 26, 2012 --**

Thank you and good morning. First, I'd like to thank Chairman Inez Tenenbaum and everyone at the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) for hosting this important event each year and inviting me to participate.

I'd also like to acknowledge Arthur Herbert of ATF¹, and of CBP². Thank you for your tireless efforts to make sure all Americans can enjoy a fun and safe Independence Day.

My name is Cynthia Quarterman and I serve as the Administrator of the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA), which is an agency within the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT).

For those of you who may be unfamiliar with PHMSA's work, we are the federal agency that was responsible for the approval and classification of the fireworks used at the Cherry Blossom Festival earlier this year. Those fireworks came all the way from Japan. We are also responsible for the approval and classification of the fireworks that you'll see at this year's public Independence Day celebrations. PHMSA works every day to make sure materials that are hazardous to the public are transported safely. No fireworks can be transported commercially in this country without our approval.

The Fourth of July is a time to commemorate our Nation's birthday and honor those who made it possible. But it is also a time for us to connect with friends and family—and it often involves grilling, backyard gatherings, and for many *fireworks*.

We are here today because we all have a common goal: We want to assure that everyone has a fun and *safe* Fourth of July.

Fireworks are mesmerizing displays that we all gather to watch each summer. But, fireworks are—first and foremost—explosives. That means that it's imperative for you to protect yourself and your family by staying informed.

¹ ATF: Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives; USDOJ

² U.S. Customs & Border Protection; USDHS

The CPSC does a great job of telling you how to stay safe around fireworks. Today, I want to remind everyone that safety includes the transportation of fireworks as well.

Consider this...

- Transportation- and handling-related firework accidents strike with great consequences. Thankfully, over the past 25 years, there have been a relatively small number of these accidents (less than 50). However, when they have occurred, most resulted in fatalities, not injuries.³
- More Americans fly in July than in any other month. That will mean nearly 60 million people flying next month. If you are flying on any commercial airliner, please remember that fireworks are not accepted as either checked or carry-on baggage. Save yourself and your fellow passengers by regularly checking our SAFE TRAVEL dot D-O-T dot GOV website.
- Fireworks shippers, distributors and carriers can incur significant civil penalties, criminal fines, and imprisonment for not adhering to federal regulations. The Department of Transportation is committed to everyone's safety on the Fourth of July— that includes the general public and the people who pack and deliver fireworks to their destinations. Please visit my agency's website at, P-H-M-S-A dot D-O-T dot GOV, to read our Fireworks Safety Advisory Letter. That letter summarizes the requirements for shipments of consumer fireworks. There, you can also access our guide to safely transporting fireworks in your personal vehicle.

If you are transporting fireworks for your own use in your own vehicle, remember these 5 basic tips:

1. Never attempt to light a firework or fuse while in your vehicle.
2. Never smoke while handling fireworks – including loading or unloading them from your vehicle.
3. Transport fireworks in the trunk of your vehicle, not in the passenger compartment.
4. Transport fireworks in a spark-proof container, such as a cardboard box.

³According to PHMSA Program Development's 25-Year Study: *Historical Overview – Death and Injury Hazardous Materials Incidents 1985-2009*

5. If you drive a van, or other vehicle without a trunk, keep fireworks out of direct sunlight.

If you do not remember anything else I tell you, please try to remember those 5 tips.

Go to <http://phmsa.dot.gov> to print the guide, share it with friends, and access our Safe Travel website.

Celebrate Safety by Celebrating Safely. Thank you.

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