



**CALIFORNIA FIREWORKS
SAFETY & EDUCATION
PROGRAM**

CALIFORNIA FIREWORKS SAFETY & EDUCATION PROGRAM

Over the years, a number of individual fire departments, the Office of the State Fire Marshal (SFM), and elements within the fireworks industry have sponsored or participated in the production of public safety messages about illegal and/or state-approved fireworks. However, prior to 1991 most of these efforts had not been distinguished by a great deal of cooperation and coordination between the fireworks industry, the non-profit organizations and charities who sell state-approved fireworks, and all the various levels of the fire protection and prevention communities.

On November 7, 1990, American West Marketing and Freedom Fireworks, both now known as American Promotional Events, Inc., appeared before the State Board of Fire Services¹ and proposed an aggressive, coordinated effort between the fire service, the fireworks industry and the non-profit organizations. Pursuant to a unanimous resolution by the Board, the proposal was referred to as the SFM's Public Education Advisory Committee (PEAC) to study the issue and report back.

After discussing the scope, direction and limits of a statewide safety and education effort with numerous fire protection and prevention officers throughout the State, PEAC suggested that the program be limited to the following four goals:

1. The proper and responsible use of state-approved fireworks;
2. How to identify legal fireworks;
3. The hazards of illegal fireworks; and
4. The use or possession of illegal fireworks is illegal and may result in a criminal citation or arrest, including a felony.

PEAC further recommended that delivery of this program be limited to those 200 communities that currently permit the sale and use of state-approved fireworks. At the February 6, 1991 quarterly meeting, the Board adopted PEAC's recommendation unanimously.

2004 marks the fourteenth year of this highly successful, cooperative program. From its initial award-winning, public service announcements (PSA's) featuring the late former President Ronald Reagan to its PSA's featuring television personality Ron Masak, to its Illegal Fireworks Amnesty Program; to its "Dangerous Games" video; to its "Private Eyes" campaign, and, most recently, its two new radio and television PSA's featuring country music duo sensation "Brooks & Dunn," this program has received wide acclaim from school districts, the media, the fire service, City Councils, Boards of Supervisors and the State of California for the successful impact it has had on 4th of July safety.



¹An advisory board to the California State Fire Marshal that meets quarterly and provides a state level forum for addressing fire protection/prevention issues of statewide concern. Its membership is composed of representatives of local and county government, fire service, labor and management organizations, California Department of Forestry, Office of Emergency Services and the insurance industry.

PROGRAM AGAINST ILLEGAL FIREWORKS

The Office of the State Fire Marshal (SFM) was established in state government to foster, develop and promote ways and means of protecting life and property against fire, panic and explosion. California law grants the SFM primary, and in most instances exclusive, responsibility and jurisdiction for administering the laws governing fireworks as well as directs the SFM to adopt and enforce regulations governing the use, sale, storage and transportation of these fireworks in California. In 2004, the SFM will be offering the following safety and education materials on illegal fireworks:

Printed Material



ILLEGAL FIREWORKS BROCHURES

"Dangerous Games - THE PREVENTOR Talks to You about the Dangers of Illegal Fireworks"

This illegal fireworks brochure outlines the dangers and safety risks posed by the use of illegal fireworks. It also provides some sound advice to parents about how they should talk to their children about illegal fireworks and the emotional, criminal and financial consequences that they and their children might have to face if they fail to take the time or make the effort.

The back panel of this brochure has illustrations and descriptions of the more commonly found dangerous, illegal firework items. This portion of the brochure was designed so that it could be used by police and fire departments as well as teachers and parents to help them identify illegal fireworks. This brochure can be used by teachers as a classroom teaching aid when showing the award-winning, short subject video, "Dangerous Games." In 2004, over 1½ million brochures were distributed to students at over 1,700 schools in 250 school districts throughout California.



"The Trouble With Illegal Fireworks"

In response to requests from a number of school districts throughout California that this Safety & Education program offer a "more hip" version of the SFM's illegal fireworks brochure for use with older students, in 1998 the SFM designed an illegal fireworks safety brochure for grades 7 through 12 entitled "The Trouble With Illegal Fireworks." The message in this brochure is essentially identical to that presented in the "Dangerous Games" brochure but is targeted to reach a pre-teen to teenage audience.

ILLEGAL FIREWORKS POSTER

"THE PREVENTOR Says - 'Stay Away from Illegal Fireworks'"

This full-size 18"x 24" poster featuring the PREVENTOR provides a compelling warning about illegal fireworks.



Video Material

TELEVISION PSA

"Illegal Fireworks" featuring THE PREVENTOR

In an effort to more directly target children and preteen audiences with a captivating message designed to educate them on the dangers and safety risks posed by illegal fireworks, the SFM designed a 30-second PSA which urges kids to do their part to protect their community by not using dangerous, illegal fireworks.

Standing in front of a fully-engulfed home which was set afire by bottle rockets, THE PREVENTOR declares, "Every year hundreds of people see their dreams go up in smoke as a result of illegal bottle rockets." Then, while holding a handful of the dangerous, illegal items in front of his "Darth Vader-like" helmet, he drives home the point that when these items shoot in the air you do not know where they will land, "Maybe on someone's roof." As he turns and points to the fire he states, "That's what happened here."

This 30-second PSA is distributed to over 45 network-affiliated and independent television stations throughout California. In addition, American Promotional Events, Inc. purchases additional "paid" spots on over 26 cable systems throughout California for a 7 to 14 day period surrounding the 4th of July.



"PRIVATE EYES" CAMPAIGN

In an effort to try to stress the seriousness of the risks posed by the use of dangerous, illegal devices and to bring the message home to potential violators on how serious local law enforcement and fire officials view this subject, the SFM has assisted many local communities in implementing a "Zero Tolerance" effort against illegal fireworks along with encouraging them to have tough sentencing guidelines that apply to both adults and juveniles found to be using illegal fireworks.

In 2002, the "Private Eyes" campaign debuted. It is the latest wrinkle in this "Zero Tolerance" effort. The "Private Eyes" campaign consists of television and radio PSA's supported by large traditional as well as LED billboards. The program solicits the public's help in identifying illegal fireworks violators and provides the public a toll-free number of "888-SAFE-4TH" (888-723-3484) to contact their local, police, non-emergency dispatch number to report the alleged violation.

SAFETY AND EDUCATION VIDEO ON ILLEGAL FIREWORKS

"Dangerous Games"

This 7-minute, short subject, safety video featuring THE PREVENTOR was developed and produced in conjunction with the Greater Sacramento Area Fireworks Safety Task Force, a safety coalition composed of representatives of local government, the fire service, non-profit organizations, the media and the state-approved fireworks industry. In 2004, VHS copies of the video were distributed to over 1,700 schools in 250 school districts throughout California as well as being broadcast on numerous local originations, public access and local government cable channels in over 228 communities for a 2-week period surrounding the 4th of July.

PROGRAM ON RESPONSIBLE USE OF STATE-APPROVED FIREWORKS

Consistent with the request made by the fire service and PEAC, the Office of the State Fire Marshal (SFM) has produced or assisted with the production of several printed and video items which encourage state-approved fireworks consumers to be responsible and safe in their use and enjoyment of these products. In 2004, the SFM will be offering the following safety and education materials on state-approved fireworks:

Printed Material

SAFETY BROCHURES

"Celebrate Safely" (Bilingual: English/Spanish)

This bilingual safety brochure featuring THE PREVENTOR is designed to promote consumer awareness and responsible use and enjoyment of these products approved and tested by the State Fire Marshal. Distribution of this brochure is limited to the almost 262 communities throughout California that permit the sale and use of state-approved fireworks every 4th of July. The brochure urges that these products be used as they were intended... safely... as part of a healthy... family-oriented 4th of July celebration. In 2004, over 1½ million brochures were distributed to students at over 1,700 schools in 250 school districts throughout California.

"Celebrate Smart – Be A Leader"

In response to requests from a number of school districts throughout California that this Safety & Education program offer a "more hip" version of the SFM's safety brochure designed to promote consumer awareness and the responsible use and enjoyment of state-approved fireworks, in 1998 the SFM designed a State-approved fireworks brochure for grades 7 through 12 entitled "Celebrate Smart – Be A Leader." The message in this brochure is essentially identical to that presented in the "Celebrate Safely" brochure but is targeted to reach a pre-teen to teenage audience.

TRADING CARD

"The PREVENTOR - Put Safety First on the 4th"

This full-color, safety trading card features a commanding picture of THE PREVENTOR on the front. It serves as a nice pocket-size reminder of all the safety tips that should be followed when celebrating safely and responsibly with state-approved fireworks. Safety tips, the SFM seal and other key information are printed on the back side of the trading card. This card is available for school and community distribution.



PROGRAM ON RESPONSIBLE USE OF STATE-APPROVED FIREWORKS

Video Material

TELEVISION PSA



“Only In America” and “Time To Celebrate” featuring “Brooks & Dunn”

These two, new, 30-second radio and television PSA's featuring country music duo sensation “Brooks & Dunn” encourage proper, safe and responsible use of state-approved fireworks. American Promotional Events, Inc. purchases “paid” spots on cable systems in “open” communities for the period of June 25 through July 4, 2004. Thousands of these spots are broadcast on over 26 cable systems throughout California, reaching over 262 communities, over 3 million homes with the potential of over 6 million viewers. The two television PSA's will be broadcast on CNN, CMT, MTV, VH1, ESPN, TNT, Nickelodeon, Headline News, The Discovery Channel, USA and Lifetime. The two radio PSA's will be broadcast on news/talk and country music stations in the Greater Sacramento Area and throughout the Central Valley area from Modesto to Bakersfield.



SAFETY AND EDUCATION VIDEO

“Celebrate Safely”

This short 8-minute safety video suggests some common sense precautions and safety measures parents and their children should follow when using state-approved fireworks. In addition to its distribution to over 1,700 schools in over 250 school districts, this video is run on public access, local origination and local government channels on over 26 cable systems throughout California for a 2-week period leading up to the 4th of July.

HOW CAN I GET INVOLVED?

I am a Fire Prevention Officer and would like to become involved in California's Fireworks Safety and Education Program.

NAME _____

TITLE _____

ORGANIZATION _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

PHONE _____

FAX _____

My specific prevention/protection responsibilities for my department are:

Please fax or mail to:

Office of the State Fire Marshal
1131 “S” Street
Sacramento, CA 95814
Fax: (916) 445-8458

I am a school teacher/official and would like my school/district to be involved in California's Fireworks Safety and Education Program.

NAME _____

TITLE _____

ORGANIZATION _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

PHONE _____

FAX _____

I teach _____

My school is in session from _____
(i.e. September 1-June 1, year round, summer school, etc.)

Please fax or mail to:

Revell Communications
1121 L Street, Suite 806
Sacramento CA 95814
Fax: (916) 443-5065