



Resources Safety & Health
Queensland

Organising a safe and legal fireworks display

Explosives Inspectorate

Resources Safety and Health Queensland

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1. So you want to organise a fireworks display?

Hosting a safe fireworks display takes careful planning and displays can only be performed by professional contractors who are licenced to use the different types of fireworks being used in the display. This document is intended to assist event organisers to host a safe display that meets their obligations under Queensland legislation.

Key parties

Under Queensland legislation there are 3 parties responsible for ensuring fireworks displays are carried out safely, they are the:

- **event organiser or display host:** the person, organisation, or other party that engages a fireworks contractor to hold a fireworks display.
- **fireworks contractor:** the licensed person contracted to plan and organise the display, purchase fireworks and ensure the display is conducted safely by competent fireworks operators, assistants and other personnel.
- **fireworks operator:** the licensed person responsible for, or in charge of, setting up and firing fireworks in accordance with the code of practice.

2. Your responsibilities as event organiser

In summary you must:

- select an appropriately [licensed fireworks contractor](#) – see **Choosing a licensed fireworks contractor**
- ensure appropriate insurance coverage for the display
- consider noise guidelines and appropriate times for displays – see **Reducing impacts of fireworks noise**
- if not on your property, obtain approval from the landowner or agent where the display is held
- ensure the Explosives Inspectorate, fire and rescue services, local council and community, and other appropriate authorities have been notified before the display – see **Fireworks displays - notification requirements**
- provide for emergency planning (e.g. first aid and access to and from the display firing site)
- provide enough time for the operator to set-up the display and clean-up afterwards
- ensure crowd control is in place before and during the display
- respond appropriately to changed conditions (e.g. cancel the display due to unsafe weather conditions such as high winds or other factors)
- not allow a fireworks display to proceed if it does not comply with safety requirements.

[Resources Safety and Health Queensland's](#) Explosives Inspectorate is responsible for administering the legalisation that provides for the safe use of fireworks in Queensland. If you have more questions about [contact the Inspectorate:](#)

- telephone: 07 3199 8023 during business hours, or
- email explosives@rshq.qld.gov.au

3. Choosing a licensed fireworks contractor

Fireworks displays in Queensland can only be conducted by a licensed fireworks contractor. You can find a list of [licensed fireworks contractor](#) on our website. The following tips will help you select a contractor suitable for your event.

Contractor selection checklist

1. Sight the contractor's licence and check:
 - a) Is their licence current?
 - b) What is their experience/ how long have they been licensed?
 - c) Does the licence category cover the fireworks to be used? – **see Specific considerations for close proximity fireworks**
2. Sight the contractor's insurance.
 - d) Is their policy current?
 - e) Does the policy cover the contractor and the proposed activity?
3. Discuss the contractor's plans to notify all appropriate people about the display, including neighbours, the Explosives Inspectorate and fire services.
4. Discuss the contractor's crowd control recommendations.
 - f) Do you consider the recommendations appropriate to stop anyone getting access to the site?
 - g) Is it clear who is responsible for achieving adequate crowd control?
5. Confirm how the contractor will control the hazards of a firework display.

Specific considerations for close proximity fireworks

Fireworks used inside buildings or close to people are called close proximity fireworks.

Particular care should be taken by organisers and hosts to ensure that the fireworks contractor and operator have appropriately endorsed licences to conduct close proximity displays. They should have 'CP' endorsed on their licence categories.

To ensure the safety of audiences and spectators inside buildings, do the following:

- fireworks should be tested in venue prior to performance
- fire services should inspect the building for fire safety before conducting close proximity displays
- the fireworks and pyrotechnic effects must not endanger performers and/or members of the audience
- air conditioning, ventilation and fire alarm systems must be managed by competent people during events.

4. Reducing the impacts of fireworks noise

If you arrange or organise a fireworks display, you must take all reasonable and practical measures to minimise the impact of noise. These measures include:

- holding fireworks displays only between certain hours
- positioning of fireworks
- selecting appropriate fireworks
- limiting the frequency of events at a location to agreed intervals.

Holding fireworks displays only between certain hours

To minimise the impact of noise, you should hold your fireworks displays at these times:

- Monday to Thursday, 7 am–9 pm
- Friday and Saturday, 7 am–10 pm
- Sunday and public holidays, 1 pm–9 pm
- New Year's Eve, 7 am–12.30 am (New Year's Day)

Positioning and selecting fireworks to minimise impact

You can minimise noise impacts by:

- using the shielding effects of natural or constructed features
- placing the display as far away as practical from any noise-sensitive areas
- excluding or limiting the use or size of high-noise fireworks from an event, such as 'salutes' and other aerial shells.

Limiting the frequency of events

Venue	Minimum interval between events	Events per year
Commercial (theme parks, shopping centres)	5 days	Not more than 6
Sporting events (football clubs)	5 days	Not more than 6
Community organisations (shows, religious festivals)	24 hours	Not more than 6
Educational institutions	24 hours	Not more than 6
Residential, rural areas and private functions	3 months	Not more than 4

5. Fireworks displays- notification requirements

You must notify the Explosives Inspectorate and your neighbours **before** you conduct a fireworks display. This can be done by either yourself or by the contractor. As long as someone does it at least four days prior to the event.

6. Event readiness

The following should be considered the day before and on the day of your fireworks display.

On the day checklist

1. Are the weather conditions good enough to hold the display (little wind, no rain)?
2. Is the licensed fireworks contractor or operator present?
 - a) Have you seen their licences?
3. Are there sufficient people to prepare the display, provide security, and clean the site after the display?
4. Are the fireworks operator and assistants appropriately attired?
 - a) Do they have full-length clothing on?
 - b) Do they have head, ear and eye protection?
 - c) Are they wearing appropriate protective footwear?
5. Are crowd control measures adequate and working?
 - a) Is the fireworks area properly defined and barricaded, so no one can approach them?
6. Is there appropriate safety equipment at the display site, such as fire extinguishers and first aid equipment?
 - a) If emergency services are on site, have they been made aware of what to do if something goes wrong?
7. Confirm the contractor's plan for cleaning up after the display, including searching the entire area for fireworks material and fireworks that are still 'live'.
 - a) Is it too dark for a proper search at night?
 - b) If so is a further search in the morning necessary?
8. If anything looks unsafe do not allow a fireworks display to proceed.
 - a) If you have questions ask the fireworks contractor or the operator on site.
9. If a firework doesn't function in the expected way, damage occurs, or someone is injured report the incident to the Explosives Inspectorate on 1300 739 868 (24/7 emergency contact).

7. Web pages referenced in this guideline

- The Queensland *Explosives Act 1999*
<https://www.legislation.qld.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/act-1999-015>
- The Queensland Explosives Regulation 2017
<https://www.legislation.qld.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/sl-2017-0150>
- The Queensland code of practice: Control of outdoor fireworks displays
https://www.resources.qld.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0015/1400361/outdoor-fireworks-code-practice.pdf
- List of licensed fireworks contractors
<https://www.qld.gov.au/emergency/safety/explosives-fireworks/fireworks/fireworks-contractors>
- Reducing the impacts of fireworks noise
<https://www.business.qld.gov.au/industries/mining-energy-water/explosives-fireworks/requirements/fireworks/noise>
- Fireworks display notification requirements
<https://www.business.qld.gov.au/industries/mining-energy-water/explosives-fireworks/requirements/explosives-fireworks-reporting/notification>
- Fireworks notification form
<https://forms.business.gov.au/aba/landing.htm?formCode=SH-EXP-002-FDN>
- Contact the Queensland Explosives Inspectorate
<https://www.rshq.qld.gov.au/contact/explosives-inspectorate>