

July 4th, 2012

## What's the Deal With DUI Checkpoints and Fireworks 4th of July?

As preparations commence to celebrate the independence of our country on the 4th of July, it is very important to understand Florida laws regarding the use of private fireworks.

In Florida, the only legal fireworks for personal use are:

- Sparklers
- Glow worms/Snakes
- Fountains
- Other non-launching fireworks

Yes, they're all yawners for the most part, but we're fortunate enough in central Florida to have so many different spots to see some real showcases (Disney, Universal). All other fireworks are considered illegal in the state. Using launching fireworks, bottle rockets or fireworks are technically illegal.

So why are there stands all over Florida selling these types of illegal fireworks?

There is a loophole in the Florida fireworks legislation that states that farmers can use fireworks to scare unwanted animals off of their farms. Most people, when purchasing fireworks at these stands, are required to sign a release form that they are purchasing these fireworks for this intention only.

If you decide to do a backyard fireworks display, you must realize that you are doing so at your own risk of being in trouble with the law.

### Responsible Drinking and the Fourth of July

It is not uncommon for people celebrating the birth of our nation to do so with alcoholic beverages. Many of us will have the day off, and with it smack in the middle of the week this year, it is a nice way to unwind all day on humpday. While this is perfectly legal for people of drinking age, all consumption of alcohol should be done responsibly.

If you are drinking, you should not drive at all. Driving under the influence is a misdemeanor but has heavy consequences. If it is your [third or fourth DUI](#), you could be facing a felony and an extensive period of time without a license. It is also punishable by fines and jail time. You will lose your driving privileges for a specific period of time, and you could also be required to perform community service.

Beyond the obvious reasons of not drinking and driving because it is illegal, it is also a high risk to all other drivers on the road. Any person who is impaired while driving runs a significant risk of causing an accident. In

addition, most of the fatal accidents that occur on Florida highways are directly related to drinking and driving.

The Florida Highway Patrol, along with many other county and local police departments, will be setting up road blocks and DUI checkpoints throughout the Central Florida area during the holiday weekend.

If you are stopped at a DUI checkpoint, you must provide your driver's license, proof of insurance, and registration of the car to the police officer. If they believe you have been drinking, they will perform a roadside sobriety test. If you are determined to be drunk, you will be arrested and your car will be impounded. We at [The Umansky Law Firm](#) stress this every holiday! Always keep in mind DUI checkpoints are a possibility on any route you take on the road tomorrow.

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