

Info shared by Pitbull SA.

Manjaro APBT kennel.

South Africa.

My Website www.pitbullsa.co.za

My E mail "manjaro@pitbullsa.co.za"

My Facebook "Gawie Manjaro"

My Facebook page "Manjaro Kennel"

My mobile +27827838280.

Zello.com "VoIP" – ask for info.

About fireworks.

Fireworks are both sold and used illegally.

Come on we know this!

Both SAPS and the Public Safety departments are well aware of the location of the shops and hawkers that sell fireworks without a permit, yet no action is taken against them.

Why?

Because we the public and dog owners are *without backbone* to enforce that these criminals can just do whatever they want ... right in the open ... your next door neighbor or person down the street, in the streets ... on the stop streets – parking areas in the shops on the corner.

Do we have to plead “please protect the law abiding citizens especially our pet animals? – is it too much to expect of those in charge to do their job, enforce the law?

Yep!!!! Even you and you - see these illegal fireworks sold in parking areas and know the shops that sell these fireworks illegally
Might even participate to buy some?



Every pet / dog or cat owner can and must participate. {“dit het tyd geword om nie net still te bly om die vrede te bewaar nie” MK}

Take photos of those breaking the law – address - car registration – actual photos them handling these fireworks – {“duidelike fotos”} in the act photos – have witnesses – go register your complainant at the Police –get a case number – {dis jou reg} - have witnesses at hand also making statements - take photos of this episode at the Police station when lodging your complaint - for evidence that you did reported this criminal activity – get a signed complaint / case number/ copy of your statement – then follow up – even use a lawyer and take them to court. It does not matter who they are your neighbor the magistrate or the teacher – or their children.

Parents should be held responsible for the actions of their children - then also contact the newspapers or special assignment give them all the evidence these people are not above the law even if they are arrogant, self-righteous swear at you get it all on tape identify the perpetrators.

It is a criminal offence – they need to be behind bars.

Act just don't talk ... walk the walk - It is our animals that suffer.

Too long we had kept our mouths shut {"*om die vrede te bewaar*"} it's time to make a difference.



“Animals are a beautiful part of creation” YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE AND ACCOUNTABLE FOR HAVING THEM AS PETS.

They are dependent on our kindness and compassion for their well-being.

As we move forward in the new South Africa, let us never forget that our animals are part of our society and that we, as responsible people, are duty-bound to take care of them and keep them safe and happy in the best possible way.

“ Derek Hanekom, Minister of Land Affairs & Agriculture, South Africa, 1996 (foreword to Heroes & Lionhearts)

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P.O. Box 1320, Alberton 1450

Tel: 011 907 3590

Fax: 011 907 4013

E-mail: nspca@nspca.co.za

Website: www.nspca.co.za

Website: www.nspca.co.za

Cats and dogs are able to hear a wider range of sounds, and softer sounds than humans.

The pitch of a sound is measured in Hertz (Hz) and the comparative hearing ranges of dogs, cats and humans are the following:

Humans: 20 Hz – 23 KHz

Dogs: 60 Hz – 45 KHz

Cats: 45 Hz – 64 KHz

To give you a practical example of this: 64 Hz (roughly the lowest note a dog can hear) is the pitch of the lowest key on a piano.

For every doubling in Hz, the pitch goes up an octave.

Cats, with the top range of 64 KHz vs 23 in humans, can thus hear sounds at least two and a half octaves higher than humans can! This is why dogs and cats respond to dog whistles. The sound is too high for us to hear, but still within their hearing range. Cats and dogs also respond to a much lower intensity of sound than humans. Sound intensity is measured in decibels (dB). Dogs can hear five times more acutely than humans; and cats about twice as acutely as dogs. Like Hz, dB also increases exponentially, so 30 dB is ten times as loud as 20 dB, and 40 dB is 100 times as loud. A practical example is that a whisper weighs in at about 30 dB, and a dog can hear that from almost three times as far away as a human. Cats are even more sensitive than dogs to these soft sounds. This also explains why dogs and cats are so scared by the sound of fireworks which, to us, do not seem so loud. They are in fact at least 5 times louder to our pets!

Dr M. E. de Vries (BVSc)

Looking at the “EXPLOSIVES ACT No 26 OF 1956” – still relevant today.

This law applies nationwide with no exceptions. It is unlawful to discharge any firework in any building, on any public thoroughfare or in any public place or resort without prior written permission of the local authority. (Section 10.34)

Section 10.35 relates to public displays of fireworks and states that no person may do so on any premises without the written permission of the Chief Inspector of Explosives (commonly known as “having a permit”).

This written permission will stipulate conditions and any non-compliance with them is a criminal offence.

In terms of the Explosives Act, no person shall allow or permit any children under the age of 16 to handle or use fireworks except under the supervision of an adult person.

This means the parents is responsible and accountable – they can't say they did not know – ignorance of the law is no excuse and the "children" will not just go free because they are classed under age and "children".

This Act is enforced by the South African Police Service (SAPS) not by the SPCA. Please report any offences to your nearest SAPS, giving as many details as you possibly can and quoting the Act name and number plus the relevant section as given above.

Ignorance of the law is no excuse – penalties are severe do not be afraid to report offenders.

Fireworks on private property.

Referring to domestic properties - in this section and to shop-bought fireworks.

Whether or not it is legal to set off fireworks on a person's own property is governed by the local by-laws – BUT IT DOES NOT CHANGE THE LAW.

In some areas, no firework may be set off at any time without the written permission of the local authority – that written permission you need to see ... the local authorities must notify you in writing before the time so you can make needed preparation to safeguard your family and pet.

In other areas, it is permitted to set off fireworks on specified dates between certain times on domestic properties – then with beforehand dated and timed written permission.

This written permission should be issues to you and not only be presented afterword – this leaving the door open for corruption.

Please check local by-laws for your area and make sure the by-laws you examine or are referred to, are the most up-to-date ones.

Many Municipalities amended their by-laws recently specifically on the issue of fireworks.

You're Municipality council or your local SPCA should be knowledgeable on the situation in your area.

In some areas, the discharging of fireworks could be an offence in terms of noise pollution.

It is worth checking - and it is always worth reporting any untoward or hooligan use of fireworks.

Discuss the matter with a local councilor, magistrate or chief in charge of the Police before the time (make notes and email confirmation of this meetings to those concerned for future reference ... have proof they received the correspondence ... today is the best time to do so ...

Everyone in your municipality will then be aware of your possible challenging the act of breaking these Law or by law ... especially in regarding future issuing any permissions for fire works in your area.

Advise and call your security company before the time.

This falls under the Explosives Act and conditions for sale of fireworks are strict.

It is not possible for any informal sale of fireworks (hawkers, roadside or any open-air sellers) to conform to this Act – it is illegal and if so breaking the law.

It is imperative that any informal displays of fireworks for sale or sellers of fireworks in the open air are reported to the SAPS as quickly as possible – do your homework and be prepared to snub these criminal acts in the bud.

Form a group and work together to rid your home area of these criminals.

(Those that think they are above the law) and safeguard your safety, family safety, property and safety of your animals and your peace of mind – it is your right!

In addition to the principles and ethics involved, there is a real danger if fireworks are displayed, handled and sold in the open air.

Any seller of fireworks must then be in possession of a current license issued by the Chief Inspector of the Department of Explosives.

This license (often referred to as a permit) is not transferable. That is, a shop with a permit to sell fireworks may not remove stock to a market or roadside and then claim "We have a permit." The license refers to the premises stated on this permit – so the legal seller and shop owner cannot have foot soldiers.

Don't be fooled.

Fireworks may not be displayed in a window or on top of a counter or any other place where fireworks can be interfered with by the public. This means that fireworks in a licensed shop must be either under the counter or locked in a cabinet.

It is an offence to display or place fireworks where a shopper can pick them up or handle them in any way – including being able to put them into a shopping basket or trolley.

If you see fireworks displayed in a way that violates the law – report it – but get your ducks in a row – this breaking of the Law and the never you mind attitude of the authorities in charge must be stopped.

For example!

There are strict regulations relating to signage (NO SMOKING, for example) and the necessity of having exits (preferably two) unlocked and unbolted whilst fireworks are on sale and that a clear passage must exist between counters holding fireworks and the exits – if not it will be a criminal offence ... disregarding the Law.

The Act states that if a firework dealer has only one exit, the fireworks must be placed at the rear (relative to the exit) of the building.

PACKAGING.

This is important and an often overlooked aspect of the issue. Reports confirm that fireworks have been sold at tuck shops, having been taken out of their packaging, much in the way that individual cigarettes are sold at spaza shops.

Fireworks must be marked, labelled, packed and sold in accordance with regulations and fireworks must be in the original packaging complete with instructions when sold - if not it will be a criminal offence ... disregarding the Law.

It is an offence in terms of the Explosives Act to interfere with the packaging of fireworks or to permit the packaging to be interfered with. If you come across fireworks for sale that look as if the packaging has been interfered with or removed, please report it – take photos have witnesses – **FOR TOO LONG THESE CRIMINALS HAVE GOT AWAY WITH THIS.**

You could be saving a life or preventing severe injuries.

PYROTECHNICS (ORGANISED “DISPLAYS”)

The SPCA movement said in the past that it preferred organized fireworks events to the random, individual use of fireworks.

But this cannot be taken to mean that pyrotechnics events meet with SPCA approval.

In fact, it is our opinion that the vast majority of them are inappropriate and that each one should be judged on its own merits.

Perhaps this is another example of events or issues when the SPCA says, “It may be legal but we strongly oppose.”

You can oppose of any fire work display – in is your right – group and make your voice heard ... remember it is your town too – your neighborhood ... it does not belong to the Country Club or the 5 Nov town celebration group – Xmass of new year organized celebrations and their members or the fat Cat having a ball.

If you do too, then please do not be afraid to make your view known to the organizer (shopping Centre and corner-shops etc.), local newspapers, councilors in your area and the community whose peace will be shattered by the planned event.

Never underestimate the power of public opinion.

And it's never too soon to start lobbying. If this year's event disturbed you, let them know NOW before they plan next year's event.

Stay positive.

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How should I care for my dogs during fireworks displays?

Annual celebrations may involve fireworks IF PERMISSION WAS GRANTED WITH CERTIFICATION.

Unfortunately, many animals are terrified by firework displays which can indirectly pose risks to animal safety by causing them to take flight and try to escape the loud noises.

Dogs in particular may be afraid of fireworks and many try to run away or try to get out to get away, sometimes injuring themselves in the process.

SPCA and dog pounds receive calls from distressed owners whose dogs have run away.

Many of these dogs can end up several kilometers from home.

Dogs have been known to jump through plate glass windows to escape loud noises, and easily jump over, or dig their way under fences, palisade boundaries that would normally contain them – in the process injure themselves.

What can I do for my dog?

- Ensure all animals have identification – IT MAY JUST HELP TO RECOVER THEM IF YOU ARE LUCKY.
- If possible, stay home with them if you suspect fireworks fiends are about.
- If you can't be home with them, keep them inside and preferably in a room such as the kitchen where the windows are higher (and more difficult to jump through).
- Attempt to mask any noise by drawing curtains and playing calming or loud music at a reasonable volume to damp the sound of the fireworks.

- Provide them with something to do such as giving your dog a chewy bone and keep them close to encourage them.
- If your pets do react badly to fireworks, then seek professional advice from your veterinarian.
- Why not ensure your pets have a hearty and nutritious meal around nightfall. This will make them more likely to be sleepy!

Prepare early.

- Talk to your neighbors and inform them of fireworks and dogs – give out a brochure incorporating the Law and their accountability of their children free rain – if a within the Law firework display at a pre-arranged site have been obtained by the town or Country Club ... inform your neighbors of this (you might know the culprits from the previous year's illegal firework orgy next door– most times you will get a working agreement.

- Talk to your vet about the treatment options available for managing noise phobias – ask them about any new treatment options.
- Take your dog out for exercise before the fireworks start e.g. reasonably long walk – a tired dog is a happy dog - then after a couple of hours you can feed a meal.

A tired and well-fed dog will be less anxious during the night. If you can, stay home to be with your dog and monitor regularly.

- Close the blinds/curtains, create a comfortable hiding place and allow your dog to go to there to feel safe, put on some music or the TV to help mask the noise outside, and distract your dog with games and food.

- Dogs who panic can choke themselves on a collar or lead and especially a dog on a fix point chain, so constant observation during these times and never use a choke chain to restrain your dog.

- Make sure your dog is collar marked and that your contact details are up to date.

Those microchipped are registered – this might ensure they can be easily returned if they accidentally escape.

- Direct constant supervision is important to help prevent injury or escape.

If you cannot supervise your dog on the night consider making alternative arrangements so your dog will be supervised by a responsible person directly or consider boarding your dog so they will be safe.

Keeping them indoors during fireworks displays work best.

Specifically for dogs particularly vulnerable and phobic for fireworks and thunder and inclined to bolting when exposed.

Remove any sharp objects that might injure a panicking animal and make sure you supply plenty of food and water.