

## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT FIREWORKS**

### **Who is allowed to use fireworks?**

Adults. Fireworks may not be used by persons under 18 or persons who are intoxicated.

### **Is the use of fireworks now allowed anywhere except in the city centre?**

Yes. However, persons using fireworks should note that they must always follow the fireworks manufacturer's instructions and use fireworks in a safe manner. Fireworks must not be used when the safe distance specified by the manufacturer of the product cannot be maintained, for example. Weather conditions, such as strong winds or snowfall, can also prevent the use of fireworks. The use of fireworks always requires the user to make an assessment of whether they are safe to use. If this is not the case, fireworks may not be used, even if their use is not specifically banned in the area in question.

### **What is the safe distance?**

The safe distance is the distance at which it is safe for spectators to observe the fireworks and the distance at which the fireworks do not pose a hazard to buildings and other property, for example. For consumer fireworks, the safe distance is usually between 8 and 25 metres from people, buildings and other objects. The safe distance of a firework is indicated on the product label and in the manufacturer's instructions.

### **Why were the fireworks ban areas in Helsinki changed?**

The designation of fireworks ban areas is based on a risk assessment. The occurrence of accidents is monitored and the risk assessment is regularly updated. Most of the fireworks ban areas in Helsinki have been in effect since 2009. The need for changes to the ban areas has been assessed over the last four years. During this period, arguments have been gathered from a variety of sources to support the decision-making process. As the review of the previous ban areas did not identify any factors that would make the use of fireworks particularly hazardous, they are no longer defined as ban areas. For this reason, the previous fireworks ban areas have now been changed.

### **Why are fireworks not banned throughout Helsinki?**

A rescue authority cannot categorically ban the use of fireworks throughout its operating area. Banning the use of fireworks is only possible in places where their use can be considered to pose a particular hazard. The designation of fireworks ban areas is based on a risk assessment conducted by the rescue authority. Particular hazards may arise in e.g. areas where buildings are close together or where large numbers of people congregate, making it difficult to maintain safe distances. According to the rescue authority's assessment, there are areas in the city of Helsinki where it is possible to use fireworks safely in accordance with the regulations and guidelines.

**Why are fireworks not banned in a particular area, even though their use can be hazardous?**

If used safely and in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions, fireworks should not pose any hazards. Fireworks must not be used when the safe distance specified by the manufacturer of the product cannot be maintained or conditions prevent them from being used safely, for example. The user of fireworks must always assess whether the situation is safe. If the conditions for safe use are not met, fireworks may not be used, even if their use is not specifically banned in the area in question.

**Why is the use of fireworks not banned near dog parks, animal farms, the zoo or bird wintering areas?**

The emergency authority cannot ban the use of fireworks in areas where the use of fireworks causes noise or other disturbance, for example. The use of fireworks can only be banned in places where it poses a particular hazard, such as in areas with old wooden buildings.

**How can animal welfare and nature conservation be taken into account in the use of fireworks?**

Please determine whether there are any e.g. dog parks, nature reserves or nature sites in the vicinity of the place where you plan on shooting fireworks. Please take care not to use fireworks near dog parks, animal farms, the zoo or bird wintering areas. Please do not scare animals – many animals are afraid of fireworks. You can use the <https://kartta.hel.fi/> service to check the locations of nature reserves, nature sites and dog parks, for example.

More information on the safe use of fireworks is available on Tukes's website:

<https://tukes.fi/en/home-and-leisure-time/how-to-light-fireworks-safely>