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Kern County Public Works Reminds Residents to Properly Dispose of Fireworks and Barbecue Coals

Celebrate Safely this Fourth of July

KERN COUNTY, Calif. July 1, 2026 – As Independence Day approaches, Kern County Public Works is reminding Kern County residents to celebrate safely and responsibly by properly disposing of fireworks debris, barbecue coals, and other hot materials to help prevent fires at County disposal sites.

Over the past several weeks, two Kern County Public Works' landfills have experienced fires caused by "hot loads," commonly known as trash containing materials such as still-hot barbecue coals or fireworks debris that have not been fully extinguished. These incidents put County disposal site staff, emergency responders, equipment, and nearby communities at risk.

By taking a few simple precautions before throwing away holiday waste, residents can help protect our landfills and transfer stations and the people who work there.

Before disposing of fireworks or barbecue waste, please follow these safety tips:

1. After using fireworks, soak them completely in water for at least 15 minutes – preferably overnight – and make sure they are cold to the touch before placing them in your trash container.
2. Thoroughly extinguish barbecue coals and ashes by soaking them with water and stirring until all heat has been eliminated.
3. Never place hot coals, ashes, fireworks, or other hot materials directly into trash bags or containers.
4. Store cooled or soaked materials in a non-combustible container before disposing of them.

Kern County Public Works appreciates the community's cooperation in helping keep County disposal site staff, facilities, and neighborhoods safe. Practicing proper disposal year-round can help prevent dangerous and costly fires.

For more information, contact Kern County Public Works' Solid Waste Division at 661-862-8900 or visit www.kernpublicworks.com.

Kern County Public Works is a department of the County of Kern and is responsible for the planning, design, construction, maintenance, and operation of roads, bridges, traffic signals, sanitary landfills, and publicly owned facilities. Kern County Public Works strives to provide quality public services including road permit inspection, building permit inspection and plan check, code compliance, engineering and surveying review of proposed land development, solid waste and hazardous waste disposal, wastewater treatment, public transportation, and community outreach, which serve to protect and enhance the lives of the people of Kern County. For more information, visit www.kernpublicworks.com and follow us on Facebook and Instagram @kerncountypublicworks.

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