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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
January 4, 2024

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**Fire Marshal Reports New Year's Activity
in Unincorporated Bexar County**

Emergency calls during New Year's Eve and the early morning hours of New Year's Day 2024 once again kept firefighters and emergency medical services in unincorporated Bexar County and the 26 suburban cities busy.

Each year, the Bexar County Fire Marshal issues tips and recommendations for safely handling fireworks before the events. The following provides an overview of fireworks-related responses by Fire Marshal's Office personnel or Emergency Services District's first responders.

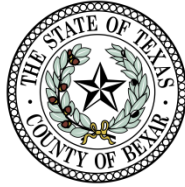
The sale of fireworks in unincorporated Bexar County started on December 24, 2023. The following data was collected from December 28, 2023, to January 1, 2024. During that period, Bexar County Fire Dispatch answered 2,970 emergency/9-1-1 calls and 3,202 calls from the non-emergency line or fireworks hotline. Those calls resulted in 107 documented fireworks-related incidents.

Summary:

- Nine fires were related to fireworks
 - One of a residential garage fire. The fire was extinguished without causing financial loss.
 - Three vehicle fires caused a total property loss of approximately \$50,000.
 - Two grass/brush fires.
 - One fence fire caused damage of approximately \$2,000.
 - Two trash fires did not cause a significant loss in dollar value.

Significant Fire Incidents:

There were no major structure or wildland fires during this period, and no injuries were reported. Fire damage to residential structures was minimal due primarily to quick extinguishment by homeowners and bystanders who had a readily available water supply. This continues downward after Bexar County's public safety messaging in a fireworks safety campaign implemented over the past few years.



Besides the emergency response coordination, the Fire Marshal's Office conducted 219 inspections of vendors and their sites.

Bexar County Fire Marshal Chris Lopez stressed that handling fireworks is inherently dangerous and observing safety rules is the best way to protect yourself, loved ones, friends, and neighbors.

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