



CITY OF NEWPORT BEACH

Fire Department

Fire Prevention Division

GUIDELINES AND STANDARDS

GUIDELINE A.15 – Sky Lanterns

(Also known as Wish Lanterns, Flying Lanterns, Sky Candles, Kongming Lanterns, etc.)

A.15.1 PURPOSE

The purpose of this guideline is to eliminate the fire/safety hazards associated with the use of Sky Lanterns.

A.15.2 SCOPE

This policy shall apply to the regulation of Sky Lanterns and is based upon the regulations in the California Health and Safety Code and the California Fire Code.

A.15.3 GENERAL

Sky Lanterns resemble a small paper hot-air balloon, fuelled by an open flame. When released, the hot air produced by the fuel source can lift the lantern to extreme heights and allows it to drift for long distances until the fuel is depleted. These lanterns are often released in large numbers to generate an impressive visual effect.

These devices have become popular following their use in motion pictures and television productions.

A.15.4 HAZARDS

The lanterns can travel significant distances from the point of release. There is a serious fire and safety hazard associated with sky lanterns, which includes the potential to start an unintended fire on or off the property from which they are released.

Based on the following safety codes, the uncontrolled and unpredictable flight path of the lanterns, and the fire risk they pose, the use of Sky Lanterns is not permitted in Newport Beach and anyone who releases the lanterns, could be responsible for any fires that they may cause.

California Fire Code 308.1.2- Throwing or Placing sources of ignition. No person shall throw or place, or cause to be thrown or placed, a lighted match, cigar, cigarette,

matches, or other flaming or glowing substance or object on any surface or article where it can cause an unwanted fire.

Health and Safety Code, Section 13009 - Suppression Cost Collectible. (a) Any person (1) who negligently, or in violation of the law, sets a fire, allows a fire to be set, or allows a fire kindled or attended by him or her to escape onto any public or private property; (2) other than a mortgagee, who being in actual possession of a structure, fails or refuses to correct, within the time allotted for correction, despite having the right to do so, a fire hazard prohibited by law, for which a public agency properly has issued a notice of violation respecting the hazard, or (3) including a mortgagee, who, having an obligation under other provisions of law to correct a fire hazard prohibited by law, for which a public agency has properly issued a notice of violation respecting the hazard, fails or refuses to correct the hazard within the time allotted for correction, despite having the right to do so, is liable for the fire suppression costs incurred in fighting the fire and for the cost of providing rescue or emergency medical services, and those costs shall be a charge against that person. The charge shall constitute a debt of that person, and is collectible by the person, or by the federal, state, county, public, or private agency, incurring those costs in the same manner as in the case of an obligation under a contract, expressed or implied.

Additionally, portions of the City are classified as a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone. The **California Fire Code (CFC) 308.1.6** prohibits the use of **Open-flame devices** in or upon wildfire risk areas. Torches and other devices, machines or processes liable to start or cause fire shall not be operated or used in or upon wildfire risk areas, except by a permit in accordance with Section 105.6 (Required operational permit) secured from the *fire code official*.