

CHINESE FLYING LANTERN INFO

Conversations with the Sheriffs – Spring 2013

FIREWORKS CAUTION: The Sheriffs would like to remind us that residents need to take extra caution regarding "**Chinese Flying Lanterns**" around the lake. First of all they could be a fire hazard when they land, and secondly if they land in the lake they would then become a navigation hazard, not to mention pollution to this eco-system. Please be responsible with these.

Recently, the Sheriffs have mentioned to us that residents need to take extra caution regarding "**Chinese Flying Lanterns**" around the lake. First of all they could be a fire hazard when they land, and secondly if they land in the lake they would then become a navigation hazard, not to mention pollution to this eco-system. Please be responsible with these.

From Nav & Rec newsletter report 9/12.

Beauty in the Air - On the ground-Beware by Marion Loudon

They are called by many names - Wish lanterns. Sky lanterns, Chinese or Japanese lanterns. As they float high aloft on wind currents, they are a pretty sight to see. They are lit inside by a candle and are supposed to be self-extinguishing as they float to the ground. The concern is that these lanterns could cause a fire if they land on something while still burning.

According to the DUNDEE OBSERVER, the Sheriff received a number of calls last summer from people who were concerned about lanterns that were landing on their property. A local vineyardist, Bruce Castner, found several of the lanterns on his property after July 4th. He even found one on the roof. Castner also noted the owners of Barrington Cellars had to extinguish several lanterns that landed on their property while they were still burning. Nearer home, a lighted lantern got stuck in the power lines near a neighbor's home. He tried to dislodge it by spraying water on it from his hose - possibly risking electrocution.

From these experiences, it is easy to conclude the lanterns are far from safe. Furthermore, any property damages caused by them could result in charges of 4th degree arson against the person who launched the lantern. There could also be civil liabilities if the person who launched the lantern and the person who sold the lantern can be identified.

While the lanterns are advertised as biodegradable, their wire frames are not. According to the Sheriff, if the wires land in the lake, they could foul propellers resulting in damage to boats.

Perhaps before purchasing the lanterns, and certainly before using them, one should read the manufacturer's warning on the label: "Do not launch if it is raining, keep hair away from flames. At all times remember that each lantern is a potential fire hazard and has to land somewhere. It is the responsibility of the firer to use the product safely. Always have water or a fire extinguisher handy and wear gloves and fireproof clothes. Beware of dripping wax fuel patch. Supervise children in the launch area at all times. Check that the wind is not over 5mph. Avoid sources of ignition. No one under the influence of alcohol should be involved in the handling or igniting of the lanterns. Never use near airports, roads, dry standing crops or in places where they could be misinterpreted as a distress signal. Check wind direction to ensure that the flight path is clear of

trees and power lines and make sure lanterns will not drift into buildings. Although tested to fly in windy conditions, we do not recommend it. Use at your own risk!"

The last line of the manufacturer's warning says it best -- **USE AT YOUR OWN RISK!**

If you choose to purchase and use these lanterns, make sure you follow all the instructions to the letter and use them responsibly.

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