

Destin Fire Control District

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Chief Kevin Sasser

Weddings and Special Events on the Beach

Destin and Okaloosa County are home to some of the most beautiful beaches in the world. The sugar white sand and crystal blue waters are idyllic back drops for weddings, anniversaries and other special events. As you plan for that special day, you are sure to have many questions.

Let's look at some of the most frequently asked ones:

Do I need a permit from the Fire District to hold an event on the beach?

No. However, you may need a permit from the City of Destin. Contact their building Department for more information.

Can I have a bon- fire on the beach?

Okaloosa County ordinances prohibit **any** type of burning on all of the beaches in the county. This includes bon-fires (small or large), cooking fires, BBQ grill or any similar type of device.

What about fireworks. Is it okay as long as they are shot off the beach?

The State of Florida prohibits the consumer use of fireworks *anywhere* in the state. "Fireworks" are basically defined as anything that flies or is launched into the air, explodes or goes boom. Fireworks are a danger to the user, bystanders and may even be a threat to the multiple types of shore birds and nesting sea turtles.

Can I release "Hope Lanterns" as part of my event?

The same rules that ban fireworks also include "hope Lanterns, Peace Lanterns or any *"type of balloons which require fires underneath to propel them"*. Once released, there is no control of where they will go. This can greatly increase the risk of in the upland areas. Additionally, balloons that end up in the Gulf of Mexico waters are a very real danger to sea turtles, birds, fish and may other types of wildlife in the region.

What if I use a Professional Coordinator or Catering Service?

Wedding planners, caterers or other coordinating services must follow the same rules as individuals. There are no *exemptions or special circumstances* afforded them.

These rules are intended to help provide a safe and memorable environment for you and your guests, as well as to protect the beauty of our beaches for future guests dreaming of their own special day.

Hope your event turns out as special as the beaches you will be enjoying.



A Heart Ready Community



An Advanced Life Support Service