



## Sky Lanterns

### PURPOSE

To provide the fire department's position on the use of sky lanterns with applicable fire code sections.

### SCOPE

This document applies to all areas within the city limits of Colorado Springs.

### DESCRIPTION

Sky lanterns (also known as Kongming lanterns, wish lanterns, Chinese lanterns, sky candles or aerial luminaries) are typically constructed of a paper shell on a lightweight frame which holds a fuel cell. Fuel cells are typically comprised of a small candle or other waxy flammable materials.

Sky lanterns resemble small hot air balloons. The fuel cell is lit and the resulting open flame fills the paper shell with hot air causing the lantern to rise into the air. These devices have been known to travel great distances from the point of release which poses a serious fire and safety hazard due to the potential of starting unintended fires in populated or unpopulated areas.

### APPLICABLE FIRE CODE SECTIONS

***§307.5 Attendance.*** *Open burning, bonfires, recreational fires and use of portable outdoor fireplaces shall be constantly attended until the fire is extinguished.*

Required constant attendance is not possible when sky lanterns are released into the air.

***§308.1.2 Throwing or placing sources of ignition.*** *No person shall throw or place or cause to be thrown or places, 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.*

There is no way to ensure the lit fuel cell will not cause an unwanted fire when the sky lanterns are released into the air.

***§308.1.5 Location near combustibles.*** *Open flames such as from candles, lanterns, kerosene heaters and gas-fired heaters shall not be located on or near decorative material or similar combustible materials.*

There is no way to ensure where sky lanterns will land and where or not they will land on combustible or non-combustible materials.

***§308.1.6 Open-flame devices.*** *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 secured from the fire code official.*

There is no way to ensure that sky lanterns will not land in or on public and/or private wildland areas that have a significant wildfire risk potential.

### FIRE DEPARTMENT POSITION

The uses of sky lanterns or related devices are a violation of the Colorado Springs Fire Code and thus are not permitted to be used within Colorado Springs city limits.

