

# Sports fans warned about the dangers of setting off pyrotechnics.



The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service and Police Scotland are urging communities to avoid bringing items like smoke bombs and flares to large gatherings of people.

Some pyrotechnics reach temperatures of 1200 degrees and can continue to burn even when discarded.

Pyrotechnics are regularly seen at stadiums and concerts across the country.

However, emergency services are highlighting the dangers and injuries associated with using pyrotechnics.

Assistant Chief Officer (ACO) Ross Haggart is the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service's Director of Prevention and Protection.

He warned: "We are seeing a variety of pyrotechnics being used

at stadiums and events across Scotland.

“Some people perhaps think it is a way of creating an atmosphere or promoting their team, but all forms of pyro – flares, smoke bombs and flash bangs – pose risks.

“There have been examples of flares being thrown onto pitches or towards individuals.

“People need to understand the potential consequences being struck by such an item can have – a flare can inflict life-threatening injuries as they burn at temperatures in excess of 1200 degrees.

“There’s also the added threat brought by smoke grenades, which emit toxic substances and can cause respiratory difficulty for people who are in attendance simply to enjoy a match or take in a concert.”

ACO Haggart added: “Ultimately, the overall message is a simple one: leave pyro to the professionals who host largescale events.

“Along with our partners, we’re absolutely committed to keeping Scotland safe – and we’d urge our communities to help us do so by working together to stamp out this dangerous behaviour.”

Police Scotland’s Assistant Chief Constable Mark Williams, Operational Support, said: “Thousands of people attend concerts and football matches and we will continue to work with and support the organisers and safety managers to ensure events pass without injury.

“A significant amount of resourcing goes into these events and we want everyone to come and enjoy them safely.

“Conditions of entry linked to tickets means you may be searched. Don’t put yourself and others at risk by bringing pyrotechnics.

“There is ‘no place for pyro’ at concerts or football. They are dangerous and can cause serious and life changing injuries; most of all to the people using them. Please be considerate of your fellow fans and the general public, both inside and outside venues.

“Taking pyrotechnics or fireworks into a designated sporting event is a criminal offence.

“If you know of anyone who carries pyrotechnics or uses them at events or football, please discourage them and report it to a steward or to the police. You can also report anonymously via Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.”

Minister for Community Safety, Ash Denham MSP, said: “I fully support the campaign by Police Scotland and the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service to tackle illegal and inappropriate use of pyrotechnics.

“There is no question about the potential serious harm they can cause, and this is completely unacceptable.

“It is time to face up to the risks and dangers they can cause and leave pyrotechnic displays to the experts.

“Keeping people safe is a priority for the Scottish Government and our partner agencies.”