



Safe use of ceremonial cracker chains

- Keep cracker chains at least 8 m from any operation which could lead to ignition (mobile phones, cameras, sparks, smoking, heat, impact/shock, flame, non-flameproof equipment).
- Keep people affected by alcohol or any drug, spectators and unauthorised people at least 10 m away from firing positions.
- Wear suitable clothes, footwear and personal protective equipment (PPE). This includes eye protection, hearing protection, non-synthetic foot wear, fire retarding clothes (non-synthetic long trousers and shirt) and safety gloves.
- Keep yourself and others safe when lighting cracker chains; e.g. PPE, safe position, extended lighter, move away after lighting the fuse.
- Never relight a cracker that has not functioned as expected. Wait 15 minutes and make it safe (e.g. by thoroughly submersing in a bucket of water).
- Spent cracker chains and other residual materials must be collected, made safe and disposed of in accordance with the manufactures instructions.
- Prohibit unauthorised people and spectators from the exclusion zone until the area is made safe.

Initiate cracker chains safely

- Restrain cracker chains before use within an exclusion zone at a safe distance to spectators.
- Restrain cracker chains on a hard, flat, fire and impact resistant surface.



REPORTING INCIDENTS

Report incidents involving the cracker chains to the Department. Incidents may include injuries, fires, property damage, theft, attempted theft or unexplained loss of cracker chains.

www.dmp.wa.gov.au/Documents/Dangerous-Goods/DGS_F_IncidentReport.docx

SELF-AUDIT TOOL

Use the Department's self-audit tool to confirm safety requirements have been met.

www.dmirs.wa.gov.au

This publication is available on request in other formats for people with special needs.

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Cracker chains are also known as

Chinese firecrackers, ceremonial firecrackers, strings of firecrackers, Tom thumbs and Po Ha's. Cracker chains are classified as explosives. Cracker chains are used for ceremonial purposes and special community events of cultural significance.

In Western Australia (WA) a person must hold a fireworks operator licence or a pyrotechnics (special use) licence to be in possession of and to use cracker chains.

This pamphlet will assist persons licenced to use cracker chains, local authorities and the police to understand the regulatory requirements and safe use of ceremonial cracker chains in WA.

WHAT IS A CRACKER CHAIN?

A cracker is a type of firework made of a tube of rolled paper containing explosive powder and fitted with a wick. On igniting, the cracker explodes with a single sharp report.

Cracker chains are crackers connected to one another to produce a series of reports in rapid succession.

Some cracker chains are prohibited in WA. This includes any cracker chain with crackers:

- more than 75 mm long
- more than 30 mm in diameter
- where three or more of the crackers will initiate simultaneously.

APPROVALS

- The operator must have permission from the owner or the occupier of the place to use ceremonial cracker chains at the place.
- The operator must give a Ceremonial Fireworks Notice to the WA Police and to the local government authority at least 7 days before the event. The notice may relate to the use of multiple cracker chains at the one ceremony.
- The ceremonial fireworks notice is available on the Department's website at www.dmirs.wa.gov.au

STORAGE AND TRANSPORT

A licenced person is also permitted to store or transport limited quantities of cracker chains (see Table 1). Because cracker chains are classified as either Division 1.3 or 1.4 explosives, storage and transport must be conducted in accordance with the Dangerous Goods Safety (Explosives) Regulations 2007 (the Regulations).

An additional licence is required to store or transport explosives for more than these quantities of cracker chains.

SECURITY

Cracker chains must be kept secure at all times in a closed and locked container. This protects the cracker chains from weather, contamination and sources of ignition, stops explosives powder from escaping and leaking and prevents access to the cracker chains by unauthorised people.

Authorisation

- Any person who has access to or uses cracker chains must be authorised under a relevant licence or with written authorisation issued by the licence holder. People under 18 years of age must not be in possession of cracker chains.

Table 1 Storage and transport of cracker chains by user licence

Permitted quantity (kg)		
	Storage	Transport
Division 1.3	≤ 15	≤ 1000
Division 1.4	≤ 30	Unlimited quantity

- All authorised persons must keep the cracker chains secure from unauthorised access.
- The means to unlocking the container must also be secured from unauthorised access and restricted to authorised persons. If the container is unsecured it must be attended by authorised person/s only.
- A person may be permitted to access cracker chains without authorisation if they are supervised at all times by an authorised person.

Separate and segregate

Keep the cracker chains container:

- in a dry, cool and secure location until the cracker chains are ready for use
- inside a locked building, that does not contain a residence or shop
- in close proximity to, but clear of, exits
- at least 8 m from sources of ignition, flammable liquids and gases, combustible liquids and other combustible materials

Container requirements

The container must:

- be made of wood or metal that is fully lined with wood with no exposed metal
- have internal screws and nails countersunk and covered by a suitable filler
- be sturdy, spark proof and incapable of producing sparks
- be lockable with a high security lock
- be painted white or light colour inside and out
- have the name, address and licence number of the operator in legible lettering on the inside
- have on its outside a class 1 label of minimum size 100 mm, a clearly visible sign saying "EXPLOSIVES" or "FIREWORKS/PYROTECHNICS" in bold red print at least 25 mm high.

SAFE USE OF CRACKER CHAINS

- Prepare a safety plan that deals with emergencies and incidents such as fires, embers and personal injury, along with emergency contact numbers and responsible persons.
- Have suitable fire protection equipment ready for use and easily accessible. This includes water, fire blankets and suitable fire extinguishers (e.g. dry powder or water type).
- Have suitable resources readily available to deal with any other incidents. Suitable resources include first aid kit, burns treatment, buckets of water, broom and dust pan.
- All persons involved should read and follow the manufacturer's instructions, the safety plan and the information described in the safety data sheet (SDS). If the information provided is different from the Regulations, comply with the Regulations.