



FIRE DEPARTMENT SANTA CLARA COUNTY

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STANDARD DETAILS & SPECIFICATIONS SUBJECT: Model Rocket Guidelines	Spec No	SI-5
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	Approved By	_____
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SCOPE

The requirements contained in this Standard apply to the use of model rockets within the municipalities served by the Santa Clara County Fire Department.

DEFINITIONS

Model Rocket: Any toy or educational device that weighs not more than 500 grams, including the engine and any payload, that is propelled by model rocket engines.

Model Rocket Engine: Commercially manufactured, non-reusable rocket propulsion device which is constructed of a nonmetallic casing and solid propellant, wherein all of the ingredients are self-contained so as not to require mixing or handling by the user and which have design and construction characteristics determined by the State Fire Marshal to provide a reasonable degree of safety to the user. For the purpose of this Standard, model rocket engines shall not contain more than 62.5 grams of propellant.

REQUIREMENTS

Authorization:

- No model rocket user shall launch any model rocket from any site without first securing authorization from the Fire Department.
- It shall be the responsibility of the model rocket user to secure permission of the owner of private lands when such land is approved to be used to launch model rockets.
- Model rocket launch permits will be issued for group educational purposes only. Single user (those not affiliated with a group educational curriculum) will not be issued a permit.
- Permits shall not be issued for any model rocket launches within designated Wildland Urban Interface Areas.

Supervision:

The permittee shall be responsible for the safety of all other spectators and other persons connected with launching of model rockets.

Launch Site:

- Shall be located outdoors in a cleared area, free of tall trees, power lines, buildings, and dry brush or grass as approved by the Fire Department.
- Model rocket shall be launched from the center of the launch site.
- Launch site diameter shall be as per the following table and based on motor type.

Equivalent Motor Type	Minimum Site (ft) Dia.
1/4-A & 1/2-A	50
A	100
B	200
C	400
D	500
E & F	1000

Approved Locations: (within the jurisdiction of the Santa Clara County Fire Department)

- Morgan Hill, Los Gatos, Cupertino and Saratoga: allowed for school sponsored, educational programs at approved school sites and/or under the supervision of permitted model rocket clubs at approved sites. Discharging of model rockets are prohibited within city/town parks.
- City of Campbell: permits issued for discharging of size A and B motors and allowed only at John D. Morgan and the Campbell Community Center and for school sponsored, educational programs at approved school sites.
- Monte Sereno: Prohibited
- Los Altos and Los Altos Hills: Prohibited.
- Unincorporated Areas: Contact County Fire Marshal's Office (408-299-5762)

Launch Site Safety:

- Model rocket shall be launched from a stable launch device that provides rigid guidance until it has reached a speed adequate to ensure a safe flight path.
- To prevent accidental eye injury, the launcher shall be placed so the end of the rod is above eye level, or the end shall be capped when approaching it.
- Launcher shall have blast deflector devices to prevent the motor exhaust from hitting the ground directly. Area adjacent to launch device shall be cleared of dry grass or combustibles.
- Launching system shall be remotely controlled and electrically operated and have a launching switch that will return to "off" position.
- All persons shall remain 30 feet from launching device and be provided with an audible 5-second countdown pending launch.
- Misfires shall not be approached until minimum of one-minute time has elapsed.
- Launches shall be discontinued when winds exceed **20 mph**.
- Launch angles shall be within 30 degrees of vertical.
- Launches shall only occur during daylight hours.

