

# **Fireworks damage Moscow book drop: Library staff estimates damage, repair at \$4,000; police say Fourth was calm overall**

By Yesenia Amaro Daily News staff writer

Posted on: Wednesday, July 07, 2010

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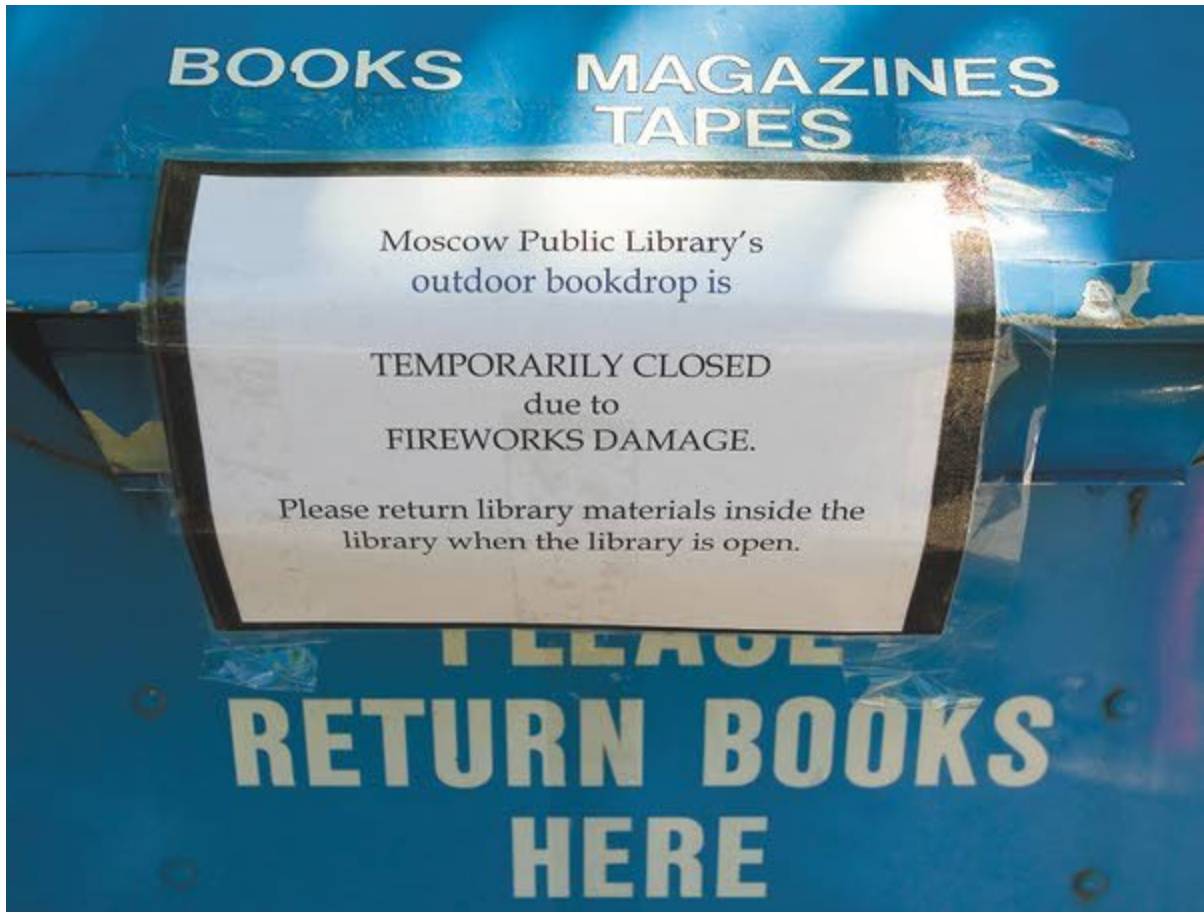
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**Geoff Crimmins/Daily News**

The Moscow Public Library hopes to reopen its outdoor book drop shortly before noon today after being temporarily closed due to damage caused by fireworks.

The fire was determined Monday to have started when fireworks were placed inside in the book drop, located near the corner of North Jefferson and East Second streets, sometime Sunday night.

About 49 library items were destroyed by the fire causing approximately \$1,000 in damage, said George Williams, Moscow Public Library access services manager. He said the items were mostly children's books, a few DVDs and audio books.

All of the items, except for one, were owned by the library, he said.

Williams said a bin inside the book drop was completely destroyed. Library staff estimate the cost to replace the bin and other parts in the book drop to be about \$3,000.

"We are hoping that our insurance will cover most of this," he said.

Williams said library staff can dip into the library's reserve fund in the event their insurance doesn't cover all of the damage.

Although the Moscow Public Library has an open investigation with the Moscow Police Department, library staff don't feel very optimistic.

"It happened in the middle of the night," Williams said. "Maybe somebody drove in and drove off. There's probably no witnesses."

Moscow Assistant Police Chief David Duke said the only detail police officers have at this point is that the fireworks were a fountain-type. There are no suspects or leads at this time.

Williams said the last time the library experienced a similar incident was in the early 1980s.

"It's been quite a while ... which is a good thing," he said.

Duke said the police department only received about five calls on fireworks complaints.

Moscow Fire Marshall Joe Williams said this was a good Fourth of July overall. He said there was only one small grass fire caused by fireworks near North Mountain View and Darby roads.

"It was a pretty quiet Fourth of July," he said. "We've had a couple of good years. Everybody is paying attention for the most part ... We can give our community a pat on the back."

Pullman Fire Department operations officer Mike Heston also said things were a little more calm in Pullman this year compared to last year. He said the weather might have contributed to that since it wasn't really hot.

Heston said the fire department only received two calls of illegal devices. One of them was a "sparklers bomb," which was composed of many sparklers put together.

The other call was of a peanut butter jar that was blown up in a parking lot across Sacred Heart Catholic Church near Northeast Ash and Northeast Maple streets, Heston said.

Aside from that, firefighters received calls of miscellaneous Dumpster fires, he said.

"It was really good," he said. " ... The weather wasn't super hot. Things were calm compared to last year. We had a few more grass fires than we responded to last year."

- Anybody with information related to the Moscow Public Library fire is asked to contact George Williams at (208) 882-3925, ext. 12 or the Moscow Police Department at (208) 882-2677.

- People can return library materials at the circulation desk inside the Moscow Public Library before the book drop reopens later today.

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