

# ORANGE & ROCKLAND UTILITIES WARNS ABOUT THE RISKS OF METALLIC BALLOON USE

No summer celebration is complete these days, it seems, without the ultimate versatile party decoration --- the metallic balloon. As a single, shiny, floating, sphere or as a clustered bouquet of multi-colored-and-metallic silver, these balloons have become the favorite party favor. They can bring a sparkle to almost any celebration, making it seem more festive and fun.

But they are not always the welcome centerpiece to every picnic.

Sometimes, because of their metallic coating, they can conduct electricity and represent a public safety risk. Other times they can interfere with electric powerlines and cause service outages.

Here are some facts from Orange and Rockland Utilities (O&R) about the responsible and safe use of metallic balloons:

- **Do not tie a metallic balloon to a child's wrist or a dog's collar.** If the balloon contacts electricity, that charge can travel through the balloon and into the child or dog, causing serious injury or death.
- **Keep metallic balloons indoors when possible** or make sure they are securely tied down.
- **Never release helium-filled metallic balloons into the air.** They can become tangled in power lines and interfere with electric service reliability.
- **Do not bundle metallic balloons together.** That increases the chances of their interfering with overhead electrical services or other equipment.
- **If metallic balloons do get loose and stray into power lines, do not attempt to retrieve the balloons.** That would be extremely dangerous. Call O&R at 1-877-434-4100 and report the incident so the energy experts can safely deal with the situation.
- **Once the party's over, puncture the metallic balloon** in several places to deflate it and then dispose of it in a closed trash can or container.