




RALPH M. TERRAZAS
FIRE CHIEF

June 5, 2018

BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS
FILE NO. **18-061**

TO: Board of Fire Commissioners
FROM:  Ralph M. Terrazas, Fire Chief
SUBJECT: ANTI-FIREWORKS CAMPAIGN 2018

FINAL ACTION:	<input type="checkbox"/> Approved	<input type="checkbox"/> Approved w/Corrections	<input type="checkbox"/> Withdrawn
	<input type="checkbox"/> Denied	<input type="checkbox"/> Received & Filed	<input type="checkbox"/> Other

SUMMARY

The use of illegal fireworks throughout the City has contributed to the increase in calls for service both fire and police. The Homeland Security Division established a Fireworks Workgroup to develop strategies that focus on reducing the use of illegal fireworks in the City. This report highlights those efforts.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Board receive and file.

DISCUSSION

Under current California law, fireworks are divided into two categories: "dangerous" fireworks and "safe and sane" fireworks. The possession, sale, and use of "dangerous" fireworks by the general public is illegal in the State of California. Only individuals who possess a Special Display License, which is usually only issued to pyrotechnic operators for special events such as Independence Day fireworks shows, may use or possess dangerous fireworks. "Safe and sane" fireworks are legal to possess in jurisdictions that allow them and may be sold at fixed locations from June 28 until July 6 each year. The City does not allow the sale of fireworks within its jurisdiction. Los Angeles Municipal Code Section 57.5608.1.2 states that it is unlawful for any person to use, give, possess, sell or discharge *any* fireworks in the City of Los Angeles.

Research indicates that members of the public are surprised to learn that the personal use, sale or possession/transport of fireworks, including the so-called "safe and sane" variety has been illegal in the City of Los Angeles since 1942. The authorized use of fireworks (typically by professionals performing a public display) in the City of Los

Angeles requires a formal permit from the Los Angeles Fire Department (LAFD) Fire Marshal's office.

The LAFD partners with Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) and MySafe:LA on a number of issues related to our Anti-Fireworks Campaign. In a collaborative fashion, we worked on several anti-fireworks projects, common messaging, and outreach efforts that helps reach the public. These efforts address the hazards associated with illegal fireworks use.

Annually LAFD performs a joint press conference with Los Angeles Fire Department and Los Angeles County Fire Department along with Grossman Burn Center, we utilize pyrotechnics to blow up a watermelon emphasizing the power of fireworks and potential injuries.

The goal of our outreach effort in conjunction with LAPD and MySafe:LA is to reduce injuries and property loss caused by the private use of fireworks. This campaign emphasizes that the private use of all fireworks is illegal in the City of Los Angeles. In spite of much progress, fireworks still represent a significant public safety threat to the community of Los Angeles. Below is a list of Fireworks Workgroup activities:

- Council Motion: Establish Illegal Fireworks Task Force (LAPD, LAFD, CA, CLA)
- Public Safety Committee Report – Chief Legislative Analyst Report on Illegal Fireworks
- Update LAFD Department Bulletin – Anti-Fireworks Campaign
- Surveyed Fire Stations for anti-fireworks materials
- LAFD PIO will performs news media and public service announcements(PSA's) interviews
- LAFD PSO will use Social Media as a force multiplier
- LAFD and LACoFD will post a list of fireworks shows on LAFD.org and MySafe.org
- Continue using 888 654-FIRE hotline
- If available, utilize LAFD vehicles staffed with CERT members to patrol areas at risk
- New anti-fireworks flyers and posters distributed to Fire and Police Stations
- Display new anti-fireworks banners at all Fire and Police Stations
- Support MySafe:LA conducting LAUSD, Recreation and Parks educational presentations
- Work with Council Districts and attend community meetings
- Coordinate with Los Angeles County Fire Department on Fireworks strategies

In 1982, the LAFD initiated its annual Anti-Fireworks Campaign. The goal of this campaign has been the reduction of injuries and property loss caused by the private use of fireworks. The campaign emphasizes that the private use of all fireworks is illegal in the City of Los Angeles. In 2017, the Anti-Fireworks Campaign had three primary objectives:

1. Reduce fireworks-related injuries and fires throughout the Los Angeles area through participation in a multi-agency Anti-Fireworks Campaign.
2. Inform the public of the dangers associated with the private use of fireworks through PSA's, billboard advertising, a multi-agency press conference, and flyer distribution.
3. Encourage safer alternatives by publicizing the locations of professional fireworks shows throughout the Los Angeles area via the Internet, a fireworks show hotline, a multiagency press conference, and press releases.

CONCLUSION

The Fireworks Workgroup is working to address the use of illegal fireworks by partnering with key stakeholders to prevent their use and educate the public on the associated dangers.

Board report prepared by Robert W. Nelson, Commander, Homeland Security Division.