




RALPH M. TERRAZAS  
FIRE CHIEF

June 3, 2019

BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS  
FILE NO. 19-071

TO: Board of Fire Commissioners  
FROM:  Ralph M. Terrazas, Fire Chief  
SUBJECT: ANTI-FIREWORKS CAMPAIGN 2019

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 Withdrawn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 an increase in service calls for both fire and police departments. The Homeland Security Division initiated and continues to lead an all City 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 are 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 help reach the public. These efforts address the hazards associated with illegal fireworks use.

Annually, LAFD performs a joint press conference with the Los Angeles County Fire Department and the Grossman Burn Center, utilizing pyrotechnics to blow up a watermelon as a means of emphasizing the power of fireworks and potential injuries. This year, Los Angeles County Fire Department will host the press conference on June 26, 2019 at Los Angeles County Fire Department Headquarters located at 1320 N. Eastern Ave, Los Angeles, CA 90063.

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 Anti-Fireworks Workgroup activities:

- Council Motion: Establish Illegal Fireworks Workgroup (LAFD, LACoFD, LAPD, LACOSD, LASPD, City Attorney's Office, Recreation and Parks)
- Updated LAFD Department Bulletin – Anti-Fireworks Campaign 2019
- All Fire Stations and Police Stations provided for Anti-Fireworks materials
- Display Anti-Fireworks banners at all Fire and Police Stations June 10 thru July 7
- LAFD and LAPD will track Fireworks related incidents
- LAFD PIO will performs news media and public service announcements
- Anit-Fireworks public service announcements (PSA's) including Mayor Garcetti, City Attorney Mike Feuer, Fire Chief Terrazas, and Police Chief Moore  
<https://vimeo.com/275310764>
- LAFD PSO will use Social Media as a force multiplier
- Social Media Anti-Fireworks content, #Safe4th provided by MySafe:LA
- LAFD and LACoFD will post a list of fireworks shows on LAFD.org and MySafe.org
- Create Anti-Fireworks Post [LAFD.org/news](https://lafd.org/news) encouraging public fireworks events
- Continue using 888 654-FIRE hotline
- LAFD will utilize CERT members to patrol areas at risk
- MySafe:LA outreach efforts – LAUSD and Neighborhood Council presentations
- Encouraging all Fire and Law to share/mirror Fireworks content for consistency
- Coordinate with Los Angeles County Fire Department on Fireworks strategies
- Online (LAPD) Public Reporting <https://complaint.lacity.org/Complaint/fireworks/>

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.