

Memorandum

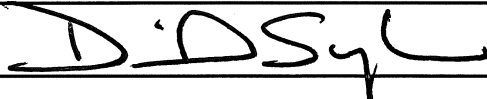
TO: HONORABLE MAYOR
AND CITY COUNCIL

FROM: Curtis Jacobson
Lenka Wright

SUBJECT: **Illegal Fireworks Public
Education Campaign 2016**

DATE: June 13, 2016

Approved



Date

6/13/16

INFORMATION

The City of San José is increasing efforts to reduce illegal fireworks use in the community through public education, higher fines, and enforcement. Our objective is to promote fireworks awareness about safety dangers while encouraging residents to enjoy a sense of community by attending one of the three local professional fireworks shows this Fourth of July.

In April the City Council approved higher fines, along with a pilot program that will beef up fireworks enforcement efforts in neighborhoods and parks. Council also directed that staff develop a public education program. The fines for fireworks-related violations are now \$500 for a first violation, \$700 for a second violation, and \$1,000 for a third violation. Code enforcement officers, park rangers, and some fire officials can issue these administrative fines to anyone who sells, uses, possesses or stores illegal fireworks.

The pilot will take place from Friday, July 1, through Tuesday, July 5, when illegal fireworks activity typically increases over the holiday weekend. The San José Police Department will focus available resources on targeted enforcement to address the blatant use of large-scale illegal fireworks shows at schools and parks. Police will utilize data analytics through its Crime Analysis Unit to capture and identify reported fireworks-related activity citywide. Dependent on available staffing, Police will look to assign designated fireworks patrols in uniform and plainclothes to advance enforcement in the community. During the pilot period, residents will also be able to report illegal fireworks and submit videos or photos through an online reporting tool that will be available on the City website.

In addition, to help promote a safe Fourth of July, the City is stepping up efforts to increase public awareness that fireworks, including so-called “safe and sane” fireworks, are both dangerous and illegal in San José and greater Santa Clara County. A comprehensive public education campaign in multiple languages (English, Spanish, and Vietnamese) is now underway.

The San José Fire Department also is collaborating with Santa Clara County Fire Department to further educate the broader community about fireworks being banned in most parts of the county including San José.

The San José campaign includes the following communications channels:

- **Movie Theaters.** A “Fireworks are Illegal” public service announcement specially produced by the City for fireworks education campaigns will be running on 55 screens through San Jose from June 17 through July 5. View the PSA. Locations include:
 - San Jose Oakridge 20
 - Eastridge Mall 15
 - Saratoga 14
 - Cinearts Santana Row 6
- **Advertising Media.** Advertising and public service time and space have been purchased or contributed for illegal fireworks messages in a variety of media during the weeks prior to the Fourth of July holiday weekend. These include:
 - Fireworks Prevention PSA airing locally on Comcast Cable, Univision, UniMás, and CivicCenter TV. View the 15-second and 30-second PSAs.
 - Mercury News
 - Spanish and Vietnamese language newspapers and radio
 - Billboard posters in San Jose neighborhoods (11 locations distributed throughout the city from June 13 through July 10; 6 other locations from June 20 through July 3)
- **Transit**
 - VTA buses (26 ads on back of buses on various routes, June 6 – July 3)
 - VTA transit shelters (16 locations, June 20 – July 3)
- **Digital Communications**
 - Social media including Facebook, Google+, Nextdoor, Twitter, and YouTube
 - City websites including SJFD.org, SJFF.org, and SanJoseCA.gov
- **Community outreach**
 - E-communications and e-flyers via Council District e-newsletters and City Manager’s Weekly Report
 - Community meetings via San José Police and Fire Departments
 - “Fireworks are Illegal” banners displayed at City fire stations
 - Neighborhoods Commission
 - Neighborhood associations
 - School districts in San José
 - Community centers and public library branches

The public can still enjoy the Fourth of July with fireworks by attending one of the several public fireworks displays in San José. The Monday, July 4 events include the Rotary Fireworks Show at Discovery Meadow in Downtown, the 3rd Annual Family Fun Festival and Fireworks Show at Almaden Lake Park, and the San Jose Giants Independence Day Celebration at Municipal Stadium.

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For more information about the fireworks ban and where to celebrate Independence Day safely, visit www.sanjoseca.gov/fireworks.

/s/
Curtis Jacobson
Fire Chief

/s/
Lenka Wright
Assistant Director of Communications

For questions, please contact Lenka Wright, Assistant Director of Communications, (408) 535-8113, or Captain Chris Salcido, SJFD Public Information Officer, (408) 794-6959.