



Gregory Wright <grgrwrgh506@gmail.com>

From PETA: firework safety in LA

Diana Mendoza <dianam@peta.org>
To: "business@nohowest.org" <business@nohowest.org>

Tue, May 11, 2021 at 7:26 PM

May 11, 2021

Dear Greg,

Greetings from People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA). On behalf of our thousands of members and supporters in Los Angeles, we're writing to ask for your support for a great new city council motion regarding a fireworks buy-back program and expanded fireworks reporting. This motion has the power to protect animals and residents and we're thrilled to report that last week City Council approved it, but that's only the first step in this process which is why we're hoping the North Hollywood West Neighborhood Council will consider submitting a Community Impact Statement in support of it.

Council File [21-0318](#) proposes an increase in reporting capability for fireworks surrounding the Fourth of July and New Year's Day holidays as well as programs to buy back illegal fireworks and offering rewards for reporting fireworks sellers. Fireworks pose numerous issues for residents and animals. Traditional fireworks sound like "bombs bursting in air"—not only to those suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder but also to dogs, cats, and wildlife—and their use has devastating consequences. Terrified dogs climb or dig their way out of fenced-in yards or crash through screens and windows as they frantically try to escape the chaos, resulting in increased stray-animal intakes at animal shelters across the nation, which further strains community resources. Many arrive with bloody paws or broken bones, some are never reunited with their families, and others are hit by cars or left to struggle to survive and suffer on the streets.

Fireworks produce plumes of smoke laden with particles that are harmful to the respiratory systems of humans and other animals. Birds caught in or near fireworks displays easily choke on the toxic residue. The California Coastal Commission banned the city of Gualala's display when, following a 2006 show, seabirds fled their nests, leaving their chicks vulnerable to predators. Most birds cannot see well in the dark, so this type of disruption can lead to injuries if they inadvertently crash into power lines, cars, buildings, trees, or each other. In one case, 5,000 birds died on a New Year's Eve in Arkansas after a fireworks display caused them to take flight and slam into objects such as houses and cars.

It's estimated that fireworks start 18,000 fires per year, causing an average of \$43 million in property damage annually. This threat must be taken even more seriously in Los Angeles, where wildfire season continues to wreak annual havoc—2020 alone saw the destruction of over 115,000 acres of wildlife habitat in Los Angeles County and more than 4 million acres across California.

Humans have also been injured in fireworks accidents, and the displays can exacerbate asthma and other respiratory problems, such as in people with COVID-19. Veterans and others suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder are also sensitive to and can be deeply disturbed by the noise of the explosives and the smell of the gunpowder. On average, 180 people go to emergency rooms daily with fireworks-related injuries for an entire month around July 4.


We hope you will take a moment to read the attached motion and consider bringing the item before the North Hollywood West Neighborhood Council to discuss supporting it. Please let me know if you have any questions or if PETA might be able to provide additional resources or any other help on this issue. Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to hearing from you.

Very truly yours,

Diana Mendoza

L.A. Companion Animal Program Manager

PETA

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MOTION

PUBLIC SAFETY

Fireworks continue to be a significant nuisance in the City, especially around Independence Day and New Year's Eve. Fireworks can cause significant distress to some people, and create an unsafe environment for pets, many of which run away and are either turned into animal shelters or killed or injured running across roadways. In addition, fireworks cause significant amounts of air pollution, which negatively impacts individuals with respiratory issues.

Over the years, the City has taken a number of steps to mitigate fireworks usage, often with a focus on education and outreach. Additionally, the Police Department (LAPD) has annually provided a fireworks complaint system online for a few weeks before Independence Day. Education, outreach and a dedicated seasonal complaint system are useful resources, but more should be done.

In order to further educate the public about the threat fireworks poses to pets, the Department of Animal Services (DAS), with the assistance of the Bureau of Sanitation (LASAN), should report to Council on the number of pets recovered by DAS, and on the number of dead pets recovered by LASAN. Additionally, the Police Department (LAPD) and Information Technology Agency should report on ways to improve the fireworks complaint system by allowing system access two months before and after Independence Day and New Year's Eve, and potentially increasing the capacity of MyLA311 by allowing constituents to report illegal fireworks usage throughout the year under its service request feature.

Further, the Fire Department (LAFD) and Police Department (LAPD), with the assistance of the City Attorney, should examine the feasibility of implementing new programs to curtail fireworks usage, including the creation of a reward program to encourage individuals to report major suppliers of illegal fireworks in the City, and a fireworks buyback program based on the City's gun buyback programs.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the Department of Animal Services (DAS), with the assistance of the Bureau of Sanitation (LASAN), be directed to report with data on the number of animals recovered by DAS or turned in by members of the public, and on the number of deceased animals recovered by LASAN, during periods of increased fireworks usage.


I FURTHER MOVE, that the Police Department (LAPD) and Information Technology Agency report on ways to improve the fireworks complaint system by allowing system access two months before and after Independence Day and New Year's Eve, and potentially increasing the capacity of MyLA311 by allowing constituents to report illegal fireworks usage throughout the year under its service request feature.

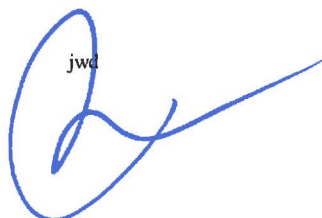
I FURTHER MOVE, that the Fire Department (LAFD) and LAPD with the assistance of the City Attorney, be directed to report on the establishment of a "fireworks buyback program," modeled after the City's gun buyback programs.

I FURTHER MOVE, that the LAPD, with the assistance of the City Attorney, report on the feasibility of implementing a reward program to offer rewards leading to the identification, arrest and conviction of persons responsible for the sale of illegal fireworks in the City.

PRESENTED BY: 
MONICA RODRIGUEZ
Councilmember, 7th District

MAR 17 2021

SECONDED BY: 


jwd