

EUGENE CITY COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY



Work Session: Fireworks Report

Meeting Date: October 14, 2014
Department: Eugene Police and Fire
www.eugene-or.gov

Agenda Item Number: A
Staff Contact: Scott Fellman and Alan Gerard
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ISSUE STATEMENT

In response to increasing complaints of illegal fireworks use, and their impact on the community, including their adverse effects on veterans, pets, property and the environment, the City Council asked the Police and Fire Departments to review past enforcement and prevention actions and to propose a plan to mitigate the illegal use of fireworks, in order for the council to provide direction to staff about fireworks in 2016.

BACKGROUND

2015 was the second consecutive year with focused prevention and enforcement activities. In late June, a ban of fireworks in the South Hills was adopted and implemented due to dry conditions. The 2015 season included two additional events that may have affected attitudes and activities, including a significant arson at Civic Stadium and the legalization of marijuana.

Past Activities

The Eugene Police Department and Eugene Springfield Fire Department developed a plan to address illegal fireworks in 2015, including enhanced prevention and enforcement activities. The plan included the following:

- outreach from the Fire Marshal's Office to all fireworks vendors, providing flyers regarding new municipal code requirements;
- proactive contact at previous complaint locations;
- media campaign, including online, print, TV and radio venues;
- distribution of flyers regarding the south Eugene fireworks ban; and
- an amnesty turn-in day on June 28 which collected approximately 100 pounds of fireworks, compared to 200 pounds in 2014.

This year, the tip line was not activated because in 2014 there were numerous in-progress offenses with no response, because the calls were not received by dispatch, but rather left on the tip line. The tip line created a confusing and ineffective reporting process; active fireworks complaints need to be directed to the non-emergency police number.

Calls for Service and Costs – 2014 and 2015

	2014	2015
Calls for service	233	232
Cost for added enforcement	\$8,000 (estimate)	\$16,295 (actual)

2016 Planning

A plan should be developed to address enhanced enforcement and pre- and post-event investigations. Components under consideration include the continuation of an amnesty turn-in, contacting locations where previous complaints have been received, and a process to allow witnesses to submit videos for post-event investigation evidence. The plan should be completed, adopted and publicized by January 1, 2016, in order to provide adequate notice to the fireworks vendors prior to the date when inventory is ordered.

The plan should also address any full or partial ban of fireworks.

RELATED CITY POLICIES

Council Goals - A community where all people are safe, valued and welcome; decreased property crime, and a greater sense of safety

COUNCIL OPTIONS

1. Adopt a ban of all private fireworks, permitting only commercial displays.
2. Adopt a partial ban of private fireworks, continuing with enhanced enforcement and prevention activities.
3. Make no change to permitted fireworks, continuing with enhanced enforcement and prevention activities.

CITY MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATION

No recommendation is proposed at this time for council consideration.

SUGGESTED MOTION

No motion is proposed at this time for council consideration.

ATTACHMENTS

- A. Map of calls for service, 2014 and 2015

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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