

# City of San José Fireworks Ordinance Work Plan Status Report

Presented by:

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CITY COUNCIL

OCTOBER 27, 2020



# 2020 Fireworks Problem

SAN JOSE

## San Jose: Illegal fireworks complaints more than triple amid pandemic

by Carina Woudenberg



## Fireworks complaints surge in US cities

23 June 2020



NEWS > LOCAL NEWS



## Reports of illegal fireworks on the rise in San Diego

## Illegal Fireworks Create Nightmare 4th Of July For Bay Area Firefighters

July 5, 2020 at 7:26 am Filed Under: 4th Of July, Alameda, Fires, Fourth of July, Illegal Fireworks

LOCAL // BAY AREA & STATE

## Hundreds of Fourth of July fires, many from illegal fireworks

Tatiana Sanchez and Rusty Simmons | July 5, 2020 | Updated: July 5, 2020 at 1:22 p.m.

CITYLAB

## What's Behind the Great American Fireworks Boom?

As U.S. cities report a surge in illegal fireworks complaints, New York Mayor Bill de Blasio orders a police task force to crack down on late-night explosives.

By Kriston Capps

June 24, 2020, 11:27 AM EDT

## 'The worst': Illegal Fourth of July fireworks ignite hundreds of fires in California

Associated Press

Published 8:33 a.m. ET Jul. 6, 2020 | Updated 1:22 p.m. ET Jul. 8, 2020

## Santa Rosa fields widespread complaints of illegal fireworks

## To Plague Long Beach

## Fireworks Complaints Surge in Rancho Cucamonga



By STEVE SCAUZILLO | sscauzillo@scng.com | San Gabriel Valley Tribune  
PUBLISHED: August 24, 2020 at 2:49 p.m. | UPDATED: August 24, 2020 at 5:41 p.m.

## 'WILD WEST' Cuomo blasts 'dangerous' and 'illegal' fireworks surge in New York City as July 4 holiday approaches

BREAKING

Fionnuala O'Leary, News Reporter  
New York | 29 Jun 2020, 17:27 | Updated: 29 Jun 2020, 21:22

# Program Components

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Education  
and Outreach  
(Awareness)

Reporting

Enforcement

## Goals

- Reduce Injuries and Fires
- Decrease Illegal Fireworks Activity
- Increase the Number of Actionable Reports
- Increase Awareness of Fines



# 2020 Fireworks Campaign

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Carried over successes of the “Fed Up With Fireworks” campaign

- Banners at City facilities
- Highway billboards
- VTA advertisements

Created additional outreach/education videos – using the reporting tool (English/Spanish/Vietnamese)

Expanded stakeholder outreach & increased public safety presence in hotspots

Campaign summary provided to Neighborhood Commission October 14, 2020 – not actionable



# Outcomes/Highlights

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- Reporting Tool: 335 actionable reports (161 in 2019 ) | 6,601 total reports
- Unprecedented fireworks use and increased 911 calls for service
- Fireworks Related: 54 Fires (15 in 2019) | 2 Medical Emergencies
- Data inspired decisions, outreach and community contacts
- Enforcement actions:
  - Neighborhood presence by Police and Fire Departments
  - 3 Arrests (2 in 2019)
  - 1 Field Citation (1 in 2019)
  - 4 Online Citations (7 in 2019)
  - 331 Warnings (150 in 2019)
  - Confiscated 425 lbs. of Fireworks (300 lbs. in 2019)



## Lessons Learned

**Online Reporting Tool** High percentage with Insufficient/No Information, customer and staff recommendations for additional improvements

**Public Safety Presence** Lack of public safety presence to deter illegal activity a concern, appropriate authority required for enforcement

**Public Education and Outreach** Effective messaging is critical. Outreach through partnership delivers a consistent message to a broader audience

**Actionable Reporting Results** Significant amount of data collected in 2020, more focus is needed on information/evidence to make a report actionable

**Consequences** Citation/fines does not appear to be an effective deterrent

# Next Steps

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## Education and Outreach

- Refine and refresh messaging campaign to capture broad community interest and compel safe celebrations.
- Provide public education “how to” for reporting of illegal fireworks and on City illegal fireworks abatement activities.

## Reporting

- Evaluate and improve reporting tool to improve accessibility and ease of use, increase the number of actionable reports and decrease insufficient evidence and incomplete reports, and if possible, integrate with new version of MySanJose App.

## Enforcement

- Perform comparative analysis of illegal fine amounts across the Bay Area and comparable California cities.
- Engage regional partners to leverage illegal fireworks mitigation resources and programs.
- Police Department deployment plan and enforcement.



# Questions?

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