



staff report

TO: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
ATTENTION: Jeffrey L. Stewart, City Manager
FROM: Joel Hockman, Director of Public Safety
SUBJECT: Consideration and possible action to receive and file the After-Action Report for the July 4th Fireworks Enforcement Program.
DATE: July 11, 2016

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This After-Action Report provides various details concerning the use of illegal fireworks during the 4th of July holiday season. This year's public relations efforts were quite similar to recent years, but our enforcement efforts were reduced due to reductions in available personnel. The number of fireworks citations decreased from 92 last year to 43 this year.

RECOMMENDATION

- 1) Receive and file the After-Action Report for the July 4th Fireworks Enforcement Program; or
- 2) Alternatively, discuss and take other action related to this item.

FISCAL IMPACT

The added cost of 108 hours of Sheriff's overtime (OT) approximates \$8,740. A \$1,000 business donation was received to help offset the cost of the City's illegal fireworks prevention and enforcement efforts.

BACKGROUND

In addition to regularly deployed patrol personnel, this year's fireworks enforcement team consisted of nine (9) Sheriff's personnel and two (2) City staff members. Again, four (4) undercover vehicles were used to augment the more visible Sheriff's patrol cars. The following is a brief overview of this year's enforcement period:

- Deputy overtime hours dedicated to fireworks enforcement/patrol during the week of July 4:

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>HOURS</u>
2011	180
2012	148
2013	180
2014	200
2015	206
2016	108

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- Sheriff's deputies again performed their enforcement operations using unmarked radio cars, undercover vehicles, and marked radio cars. Four (4) undercover vehicles were most effective in catching people in the act of using illegal fireworks, but also were concealed from law abiding citizens who may have expected a more visible "police presence."
- As was true in past years, the problem of discharging illegal fireworks on the 4th of July reportedly was widespread throughout the City and not restricted to a few neighborhoods. Lakewood Station was inundated with fireworks calls (415FC). Processing of these calls was not consistent among the cities, as some calls were sent to the regular patrol force and others were sent to members of the fireworks enforcement teams working in the cities. As a result of the uniqueness of this holiday, trying to track and measure (415FC) response times is not meaningful. It is impractical for deputies to be dispatched to a call of illegal fireworks being discharged across town when (s)he is encountering numerous other fireworks violations requiring attention while en route to that call.
- Fireworks citation totals from 2005 through 2013: 36 (2005); 36 (2006); 10 (2007); 64 (2008) 80 (2009); 104 (2010); 73 (2011); 95 (2012); 72 (2013), 66 (2014), 92 (2015), and **43 (2016)**.
- This is the eighth year we issued \$1,000 City administrative citations for illegal fireworks use, versus criminal infraction or misdemeanor citations. It should be noted that some other cities charge \$2,000 for a first violation (e.g., Downey). If we had issued the traditional infraction citations using our previous bail amount of \$250, the final cost to the individual would have been over \$1,000 once court fees were added on. A misdemeanor filing (another option) could have resulted in even greater penalties along with a criminal record. While the court sometimes does offer payment plans for their citations, the court clerk has said, "if they're lucky, they will get three or four months to pay it off." The court also charges an extra \$30 fee for their payment plans. The City offers a much longer payment plan for the administrative citations, with no additional charge.
- Consistent with last year, the public relations effort this year included: An article in two editions of the E-Citizen (also appears on social media), website posting on the City's Homepage, distribution of flyers to fireworks stands and other public places, a poster in the City Hall Lobby, and City Council announcements. We also did some pre-Fourth and post-Fourth of July postings on Facebook, Twitter, NextDoor.com, and Nixle.