



# News Release

Fire Chief Curtis Jacobson

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## **San José Steps Up Efforts to Curb Illegal Fireworks in City Limits**

*City Council approves pilot enforcement program and increases fines to \$500 for first offense*

*SAN JOSE, Calif.* – The City of San José is making it clear: fireworks are banned in San José and those who sell, use, possess and/or store fireworks will face stiffer penalties.

During the Tuesday, April 12 meeting, the City Council approved a pilot program that will increase enforcement efforts in neighborhoods and parks during Friday, July 1 through Monday, July 5, 2016 when illegal fireworks activity is most likely over the Independence Day holiday weekend. The goal is to encourage safe celebrations, eliminate fireworks-related injuries, and prevent fires caused by fireworks.

“As fireworks have become larger, more dangerous and more readily available, it’s important that we increase penalties and our enforcement efforts,” said Mayor Sam Liccardo. “Yesterday’s action is another step we can take to address the dangers posed by illegal fireworks, and both deter and punish bad behavior.”

To address residents’ concerns about illegal fireworks usage in their neighborhoods, an online illegal fireworks reporting tool will become available on the City website, [www.sanjoseca.gov](http://www.sanjoseca.gov), in the coming months. The online form will make it easier for the public to report illegal fireworks immediately and anonymously, if desired.

As a result of City Council action, the fines for illegal fireworks-related violations are increasing:

- 1<sup>st</sup> Violation: \$500
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Violation: \$700
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Violation: \$1,000

Property owners will be held responsible for the sale, use or storage of fireworks on their property. Guardians of minors will also be liable for the public safety costs associated with responding to the unpermitted use of fireworks. The new Fireworks Ordinance and fines take effect Thursday, May 26, 2016.

“Our fire fighters have seen too many injuries in children and adults as well as house fires caused by fireworks,” said San José Fire Chief Curtis Jacobson. “We’re asking everyone to

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celebrate safely and enjoy 4<sup>th</sup> of July fireworks at large public displays that are permitted and run by professional pyrotechnicians.”

The City’s fireworks ban applies to all types of fireworks. Illegal fireworks not only include large bottle rockets, roman candles, and firecrackers but also the popular ‘sparklers,’ usually reserved for younger children. Sparklers can reach over 1,000 degrees Fahrenheit. They account for 50 percent of fireworks-related injuries to children under the age of five and 10 percent of fireworks-related injuries overall.

For more information on the laws, regulations, and rules regarding fireworks in San José, call the Bureau of Fire Prevention at (408) 535-7750 or visit the SJFD web site, [www.sjfd.org](http://www.sjfd.org).

The San José Fire Department encourages everyone to  
PREPARE, PRACTICE AND PREVENT.  
For fire and life safety tips, visit <http://www.sjfd.org>.

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