

Hello All ~

The 4th has come and gone.

Comments on social media and in private emails tell us that it was bad. Of course. Many said they saw less than 2019, some said about the same. Circumstances every year (e.g., the day of the week of July 4th) can make a difference. This year we had fewer people on the beaches but plenty of fireworks in the neighborhoods.

Below is an email we sent today to the County Sheriff and City Police Chief, copied to four members of the Board of Supervisors. Frankly we've given up on Supervisor Caput, who has never shown any interest in stopping the annual mayhem. We'll report in the next newsletter any responses we receive.

In the letter we sent, you'll notice there are no 2020 statistics for either the City of Capitola or Scotts Valley. We'll dig further for those.

We've a new web page [Citations Issued](#), where we are compiling statistics as we get them. We've 2016, 2017 and 2020 so far. We'll add 2015, 2018 and 2019 when we have them confirmed.

Also, we updated our [News and Articles](#) page and there are many for 2020 that you may find informative.

Mostly we want you all to know that we intend to reconnoiter and strategize how to proceed, as best as possible, given current circumstances. We'll call together our FFF Steering Committee, composed of 6 - 8 of us, put our (masked) heads together and get to work. If any of you would like to be engaged in this strategizing, please reply to this email.

Meanwhile, was it only the two of us who heard just one firework detonated last night (7/6)?

All the best,
Jean and Michael

From: Jean Brocklebank <jeanbean@baymoon.com>
Date: July 7, 2020 9:44:14 AM PDT
To: chris.clark@santacruzcounty.us, Andrew Mills <amills@cityofsantacruz.com>, Jim Hart <jim.hart@santacruzcounty.us>
Cc: John Leopold <John.Leopold@santacruzcounty.us>, Ryan Coonerty <ryan.coonerty@santacruzcounty.us>, Zach Friend <Zach.Friend@santacruzcounty.us>, Bruce McPherson <Bruce.McPherson@santacruzcounty.us>, Michael Lewis <malewis@calcentral.com>
Subject: Fireworks Reports

Dear Officer Clark, Chief Mills and Supervisors ~

First, we thank you for any and all efforts made to deal with the past weekend's annual free for all and mayhem caused by a large portion of the populace. In 2019 we thought we were seeing

improvement after four years of our organized campaign to solve the *intolerable health and safety* problems injurious to people, pets, wildlife and the environment in general. Clearly, the problems continue to plague our communities and much more must be done going forward to next year's crime spree.

[Freedom From Fireworks](#) will continue to strategize and work closely with law enforcement and our elected officials, who set policies to guide enforcement.

An initial news story <https://pajaronian.com/illegal-fireworks-keep-local-law-enforcement-busy-on-fourth/> lists the citations given on July 4th for five jurisdictions:

City of Salinas - 50 citations (\$2500 each)
City of Gilroy - 94 citations
City of Watsonville - 27 citations.
City of Santa Cruz - 6 citations (300 calls)
County of Santa Cruz - 11 citations (280 calls)

What's wrong with this picture?

- Why did three cities cite 50, 94, and 27 individuals (a total of 171) for fireworks, but the unincorporated County only issued 11 citations and the City of Santa Cruz only issued 6 (a total of 17)?!
- Why only 11 citations in the unincorporated county, with 280 calls from hundreds of people impacted by fireworks, noise, and air pollution all over the county, many of which pinpointed the general area of concern? Certainly many provided enough specific information to warrant more than 11 citations.
- The Pajaronian states that the County confiscated 110 pounds of fireworks. Were those who had their fireworks confiscated also cited for breaking the law? Possession, not just the use, of fireworks is prohibited.


While we are very aware of the limitations of the Sheriff Department and SC City Police Department, we cannot figure out how we never seem to make any inroads in seeing *more* citations, which could help to result in *fewer* fireworks. Gilroy police issued 94 in 2020 compared to 60 in 2019. Why can't the County manage to increased its numbers also?

Attached is the **Fourth of July Activity Report 2017** the County issued that year. Notice the good information!


Notice that in 2017 there were 28 citations for fireworks. Unlike 2020's eleven.

We do not have the statistics for 2018. However, we do know that in 2019 only 16 citations were issued for fireworks, drugs or alcohol combined -- with no breakdown of how many were actually for fireworks. So for 2017 the 28 citations were a step forward. Now it seems like we've taken a step backward in enforcement.

If for no other reason than consistency, it would be wise to have this kind of detailed report every year:








Santa Cruz County Sheriff's Office



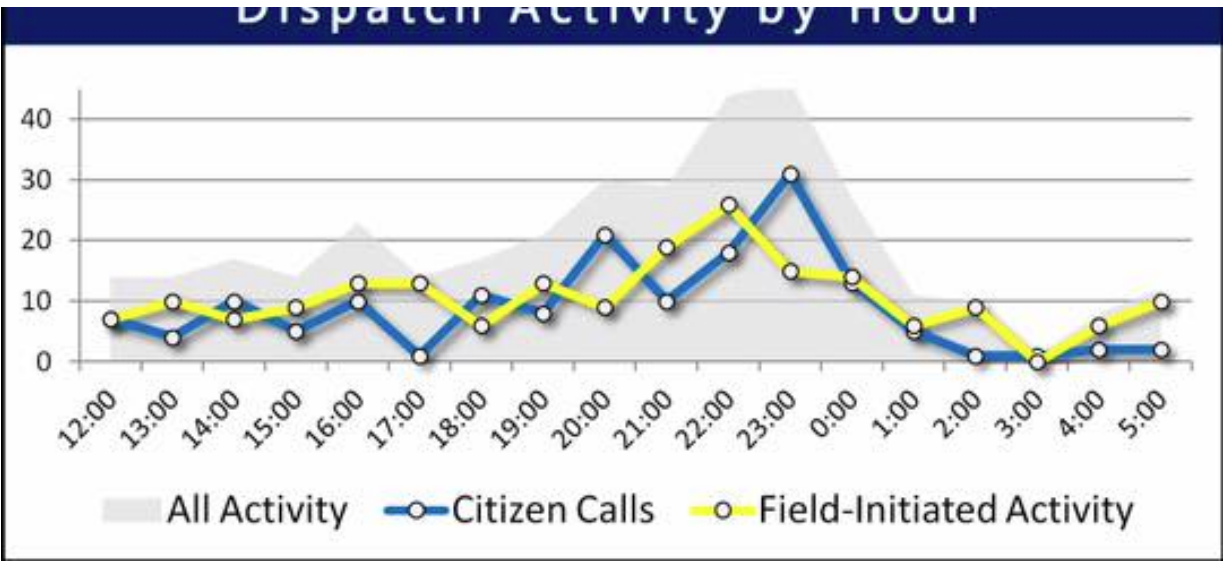
Fourth of July Activity Report 2017

JULY 4TH 12:00PM TO JULY 5TH 6:00 AM

-  The Sheriff's Office responded to **160** calls for service between the hours of 12:00 PM on July 4th and 6:00am on July 5th.
-  The Sheriff's Office made **5** arrests involving alcohol, warrants and simple assault charges.
-  Deputies wrote **50** citations, of which **28** were fireworks violations.
-  There were **19** bookings at the Santa Cruz County Jail and an additional **8** diversions to the Janus Sobering Center.
-  Deputies confiscated hundreds of illegal fireworks.



Dispatch Activity by Hour



As the months progress, we look forward to working with all of you on this annual (and ongoing) fireworks and fire threat to the *health and safety* of people, pets, wildlife and the environment in general -- as best as we can -- given current circumstances. We look forward to hearing from all of you that you will join us in this effort.

Respectfully,

Jean Brocklebank
 Michael Lewis
 on behalf of <http://freedomfromfireworks.weebly.com/supporters.html>