



County of Santa Cruz

County Administrative Office

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Susan A. Mauriello, J.D., County Administrative Officer

Meeting Date: September 20, 2016
Date: September 13, 2016
To: The Board of Supervisors
From: Susan Mauriello, County Administrative Officer, Jim Hart, Sheriff-Coroner
Subject: Fireworks on 4th of July

On May 10, 2016, your Board requested that the Sheriff's Office return with a report on the effectiveness of increased measures related to illegal fireworks used during the July 4th celebrations in Santa Cruz County. This joint memo between the County Administrative Office and the Sheriff's Office provides information and requests that you accept and file this report.

Media Outreach and Education Campaign

County outreach efforts included earned, social and paid media to educate the public about the dangers and penalties associated with fireworks. Local radio, television and print media covered the issue extensively, and the County posted regularly on Twitter and Facebook.

The County expended approximately \$6,800 to produce and place advertisements on the Internet and on local television and radio stations. Those efforts began two weeks prior to the 4th of July holiday, and expanded during the week leading up to the 4th of July. County efforts were partly underwritten by the City of Santa Cruz, and our message was tailored to residents of all County jurisdictions.

Targeted to Santa Clara County and the three Central Coast counties, the Google Adwords campaign resulted in 175,000 impressions and 600 clicks. Campaigns on KSBW-TV and KION-TV reached an estimated 347,000 people, while 30-second radio spots on Spanish-language KSES and KLOK and English-language KDON reached a combined 290,000 people.

Sheriff's Office Outreach and Enforcement

During the 4th of July holiday, the Sheriff's Office increased measures consisted of identifying zones/sectors along coastal areas of the County, and deploying personnel

and supervisors to specific zones/sectors (rather than general deployment). Sheriff's personnel and supervisors were required to have a historical and operational understanding of their specific zone/sector. Citizens and personnel could utilize the Citizen Connect App to report historical fireworks locations and active locations. Fireworks mitigation personnel were able to monitor fireworks calls for service throughout the evening by contacting the reporting party and coordinating responses with zone/sector personnel. These measures increased effectiveness and applied more of a personalized and knowledgeable response to local communities.

During the period from June 29, 2016 to July 5, 2016, the Sheriff's Office received 388 calls for service relating to fireworks. The following table shows the number of calls for service relating to fireworks on July 4th in 2016 compared to 2015:

	2015	2016
Fireworks Specifically	160	201
Shots Heard	3	5
Ordinance Violations	3	5
Noise Disturbances	17	18
Total	183	229

On July 4, 2016, there also were 246 reports of fireworks submitted through the Citizen Connect App. This is the first year that the fireworks reporting feature was available.

The 4th of July holiday occurred on a Monday and experienced minimal activity with the exception of fireworks. Road closures were eliminated to allow better access and increase mobile presence/response. The elimination of roadblocks did not contribute to any identified issues and allowed better access for the public and public safety. No violence or serious incidents occurred.

The Sheriff's Office developed an informational fireworks video that was provided to local schools for student education. The video was also posted on social media for general public education. Metal sign boards were placed in strategic locations throughout the County, notifying visitors of local ordinance violations.

The Sheriff's Office noted no incidents related to vacation rental occupants.

Summary and Recommendation

Through a multitude of efforts, we were effective in raising general awareness of the fireworks issue. This increased public awareness resulted in a greater number of calls for service received by the Sheriff's Office and new reports submitted through the Citizen Connect App. The targeted deployment of personnel also aided in strengthening the connection with local communities.

However, due to the strong cultural tradition of celebrating the Declaration of Independence with fireworks, we faced headwinds. While we cannot say that these efforts reduced the use of illegal fireworks on the 4th of July holiday, we believe they represent a starting point for greater future compliance, were worthwhile and should be continued in 2017.

It is, therefore, RECOMMENDED that your Board accept and file this report on the effectiveness of increased measures related to illegal fireworks used during the July 4th celebrations in Santa Cruz County.

Submitted by:



Jim Hart, Sheriff-Coroner

9/13/2016



Susan A. Mauriello, County Administrative Officer

9/14/2016