



**City
of
Milwaukee**

*INTERDEPARTMENTAL CORRESPONDENCE
LEGISLATIVE REFERENCE BUREAU*

M E M O

To: Fireworks Task Force Members
From: Leslie Silletti, Legislative Research Analyst
Date: May 4, 2007
Re: **Working Document: Fireworks Task Force: Summary of Recommendations**

This memo provides a summary of all the recommendations that were made by the Fireworks Task Force through the 4/29 meeting. It organizes information presented at those meetings into various categories. Please note these points were derived from discussions during meetings; no other sources were considered in compiling this summary. Please contact me with questions relating to any of these points, or for more information relating to the Fireworks Task Force.

Recommendations:

Education/Public Announcements

- Establish relationships with schools: distribute fliers, ask teachers to discuss with classes, give presentations and encourage fireworks viewing at designated parks.
- Send educational materials to persons who receive permits (still need to determine where these records are stored, and if they can be accessed).
- Media blitz during peak periods.
- More signs at parks.
- Get hospitals and non-profit organizations to sponsor billboards, and focus on the health issue, especially during peak periods.
- Establish relationships with Big Brothers Big Sisters, Boys & Girls Clubs, YMCA's, etc. to educate kids (same as in schools).
- Ask neighborhood organizations or Citywide Blockwatch Council to do media blitzes in their literature or handed out by blockwatch captains.

Establishing Relationships

- Establish relationships with schools, Big Brothers Big Sisters, Boys & Girls Clubs, YMCA's, etc. to educate kids (from education section).
- Establish relationships with other counties. With multiple-county cooperation, it will make it more difficult to acquire fireworks.
- Establish intergovernmental relationships with the Milwaukee County and the County Board of Supervisors to have signs posted in the parks indicating that fireworks are illegal.
- Establish relationship with Milwaukee Health Department for education and record keeping.

Multi-county Cooperation

- With multiple-county cooperation, it will make it more difficult to acquire fireworks. (from establishing relationships section).

Using Legal Channels

- Seek an injunction from the state and create criminal liability for a 7-day period around the 4th of July. Demonstrate the need with the number of calls for service in the MPD, fire data from the MFD, fiscal impact and injury data, and determine the overall cost to the city. The result is that during this 7-day period, violations are treated as criminal violations, rather than municipal. This will need to be publicized to the community.
- Pass an ordinance that requires that fireworks injuries be tracked.
- Use the Block Watch digital cameras to capture evidence (person must be willing to appear in court), so prosecution is more likely (refer to the problem of making positive identification).
- Pass a statewide policy that ensures uniform enforcement, as a patchwork of municipal policies is ineffective (from multi-county cooperation section).
- Is it possible to require each jurisdiction to label fireworks products for identifying the distribution point of the products?
- Inquiry about whether the city can sue other jurisdictions for violation of state law if the sale of fireworks affects the city of Milwaukee. Asst. City Attorney Ehrlich stated the city could not sue jurisdictions to make them enforce.
- Suggest changing state law so that persons whose identification proves they live within the city of Milwaukee may not purchase fireworks anywhere. Asst. City Attorney Ehrlich said this would probably not be possible because of equal protection laws.
- Requiring that date of birth and telephone number be included on permits.
- Strike from the statute the permissibility for non-resident individuals to buy permits to purchase fireworks.

City Departments

- Safety Division
 - Take a more proactive role to include collaboration with the Police Department and other entities to address public safety relating to fireworks.
 - More aggressive public outreach.
 - Coordinate informational campaigns to get the word out; e.g., media events with television coverage).
 - Development of informational brochures explaining the hazards of fireworks, and seek donations to offset costs for flyers and brochures.
 - Distribution of brochures at parks during fireworks events advising citizens that fireworks are illegal.
 - Include matters related to fireworks for discussion at Safety Division meetings.
 - Stricter criteria and monitoring that would include review of policies for issuance of permits and analysis surrounding safety conditions at locations of fireworks displays.
 - Make recommendations to the Police Department or other departments so that the appropriate action may be taken by the appropriate entity.

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