



David A. Clarke Jr.
Sheriff

County of Milwaukee
Office of the Sheriff

May 10, 2007

Fireworks Task Force
C/O The Honorable Joe Davis, Sr., Alderman
C/O The Honorable Terry Witkowski, Alderman
200 East Wells Street, Room 205
Milwaukee, WI 53202

Dear Aldermen Davis and Witkowski:

In response to your request for additional information regarding the Milwaukee County Sheriff's Office's position on fireworks enforcement, we remit the following for your committee's review:

Milwaukee County ordinance 47.05. states , in part:

Use of firearms, fireworks; hunting with bow and arrow and trapping; throwing of missiles; making of fires; deposit or breakage of tin cans, bottles and glassware; prohibitions.

(1) *Use of firearms and fireworks; hunting with bow and arrow; trapping.* No person shall carry, fire or discharge any gun, pistol or firearm, nor any rocket, torpedo or other fireworks of any description, nor shall any person engage in trapping within any park or parkway without a written permit of the department of parks, recreation and culture; nor shall any person hunt with bow and arrow within any park or parkway. No person shall carry, fire or discharge any gun, pistol or firearm, nor any rocket, torpedo or other fireworks of any description upon any premises owned or leased by Milwaukee County, which is not part of the county parks and parkways. The word "gun" shall include airgun.

(2) *Times for the setting off of fireworks displays on county-owned parks and parkways.* No person shall cause or allow the setting off of fireworks on the county-owned parks, or on the parkways, after 12:00 midnight on any Friday or Saturday, or on any day that is, or precedes, a holiday, or unless prior approval is obtained from the county board. No fireworks shall be set off on any other day, after 10:00 p.m., unless prior approval is obtained from the county board.

Throwing of stones or missiles. No person shall throw stones or missiles in or into any park or parkway.

Service to the Community Since 1835

821 West State Street • Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53233-1488
414-278-4766 • Fax 414-223-1386 • www.mksheriff.org

Fireworks Task Force
Page Two
May 10, 2007

The policy of the Milwaukee County Sheriff's Office is to enforce all county ordinance violations that we encounter, witness, or are referred to. Fireworks are a potentially serious violation of the law, as they may cause injury, harm or set fire, if not used by licensed and authorized persons. In and of themselves, the illegal use of fireworks creates, and is indicative of, the type of general disorder that we expressly attempt to halt in enforcing quality of life issues.


With 144 parks located in Milwaukee County, it is a challenge to enforce all complaints, especially as we near the 4th of July. However, rest assured that the Milwaukee County Sheriff's Office will do all it can to strictly enforce illegal fireworks usage. Our Targeted Enforcement Unit, a uniformed division that monitors county parks during the summer months (when they are at their highest usage) is particularly tasked with this responsibility.

What could help the Milwaukee County Sheriff's Office, as well as the community, is a media campaign to inform citizens that fireworks are illegal to discharge in Milwaukee County. Also, it may be helpful to send flyers to the public schools, explaining to youth the need to refraining from discharging illegal fireworks, as well as the potential fines associated with that activity. Additionally, your committee may wish to engage the public in a discussion regarding the potential for legislation prohibiting the sale of fireworks throughout the entire State of Wisconsin.

Gentlemen, it was pleasure appearing before your committee. Thank you, on behalf of Sheriff Clarke, for the opportunity to be involved in your discussions.

Sincerely,


R. Bret Richards, Captain
Patrol Division


Edward H. Bailey, Deputy Inspector
Adjutant, Office of the Sheriff