

Hello,

Please see below. Thank you for reading.

Marc Hulet

In a perfect world, there would be no need for the enforcement of fireworks. However, we live in a world that is far from perfect - especially since the pandemic, which has arguably made people more aggressive, more self-centred, and less concerned about their neighbours. This is not 1985.

Just this past Canada Day, I witnessed new neighbours bringing two giant green garbage bags overflowing with fireworks and cases of beer into their backyard where they were clearly hosting people with the intention of setting them off that night — the night before Canada Day when fireworks were not allowed.

People don't care about the "allowed" dates for fireworks - explosions can be heard constantly throughout the long weekends - Friday, Saturday, and Sunday nights. This is why I believe fireworks should only be allowed in designated areas... if people would self-police themselves, this limitation would not be necessary but people cannot...

Almost every city around London has banned or is banning individual fireworks because people are behaving the same everywhere in Southwestern Ontario and beyond.

I know in my neighbourhood, we have elderly residents who go to bed early, we have young children and babies that go to bed early. Other people, young and old, have mental issues that are triggered by loud noises. We have many animals that are spooked by the loud noises. And we have shift workers like my wife who works at the hospital and, at times, has to be at work for 6AM on a weekend to help save lives — Do we really want all these people to be disrupted for three nights? Do we want them to not have proper sleep?

On a side note, going back to that night when the neighbours planned to set off fireworks on a banned date... it is incredibly frustrating trying to get someone to care about the enforcement of the existing fireworks bylaw. My contracts happened like this:

1. I reached out to the number on the city website that says enforces the illegal fireworks: The police non-emergency number. They told me not to call them and that they did not enforce the bylaw. The person (a dispatcher) refused to give me their name - even a first name. I was told to call the bylaw office or the non-emergency fire department line.
2. I called the bylaw number and it advised no one was monitoring the line outside of normal business hours but I could send an email - with no information about it being monitored or not, which seemed like a dead end and very poor communication by the city. I choose to do neither assuming both were unmonitored.
3. I called the non-emergency fire line advising of the issue and also that we live in a very heavily treed area that makes our neighbourhood a very risky area to set off fireworks — especially when it had been so dry. I was told they don't deal with it, and they gave me the same bylaw officer number that the police did and told me "They are actively monitoring this line and you will have no issues getting through to someone."
4. I called the number again and got the same message that it wasn't being monitored but that I could send an email (with no promise to do anything).

5. I sent an email. I got no auto-response advising it would be monitored and addressed within a certain SLA, or anything. It's a gaping hole of nothing, which is very disappointing for the city.

6. I do feel that someone from the bylaw office did visit as the party abruptly left clearly to go somewhere else and no fireworks were ever set off - that night or on Canada Day... they took their big bags of fireworks and cases of beer that they had brought just two hours earlier.