

TO:	CHAIR AND MEMBERS COMMUNITY AND PROTECTIVE SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING ON DECEMBER 13, 2016
FROM:	JOHN KOBARDA FIRE CHIEF
SUBJECT:	OPEN AIR BURNING BY-LAW – EDUCATION PLAN

RECOMMENDATION

That, on the recommendation of the Fire Chief, and the concurrence of the Managing Director of Neighbourhood, Children and Fire Services, the Open Air Burning By-law Education Plan and related actions outlined in this report **BE APPROVED**.

PREVIOUS REPORTS PERTINENT TO THIS MATTER
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- *Report to CPSC - October 30, 2006*
- *Public participation meeting at CPSC, December 11, 2006*
- *Open Air Burning By-Law - April 2, 2007*
- *Public participation meeting at CPSC, May 7, 2007*
- *Open Air Burning By-Law – Review Of 2007 Responses - March 17, 2008*
- *Open Air Burning By-Law – Review Of 2008 Responses – November 24, 2008*
- *Open Air Burning By-Law – Review Of 2009 Responses – February 25, 2010*
- *Open Air Burning By-Law – Air Quality & Enforcement – March 30, 2016*

BACKGROUND

The purpose of this report is to provide a response to Council's Resolution #5 dated April 5, 2016 shown below:

5. That the following actions be taken with respect to the Open-air Burning By-law:
- b. the Civic Administration **BE REQUESTED** to review and report back to a future meeting of the Community and Protective Services Committee on the following matters with respect to the enforcement of the Open-air Burning By-law:
 - iv. an enhanced education plan;

HISTORY

London City Council passed a By-law in 2002 to regulate open-air burning within the City of London. Looking to strengthen the original By-law, the London Fire Department (LFD) proposed amendments. Council enacted the proposed By-law on May 14, 2007. This By-law is now known as F-7 Open Air Burning By-law (hereafter referred to as the By-law). Through the 2007 discussions, Council requested that Administration develop an education program. Toward this goal, LFD engaged Corporate Communications to assist in the development of a communications plan aimed at:

- increasing the awareness of the new By-law requirements and enforcement measures; and
- educating the public on safe and responsible burning practices.

The 2007 education campaign included the following actions:

- Purchasing ad space in the London Free Press;
- Issuing a Press Release;
- Posting the new By-law to the City of London and Fire Department websites;
- Posting a banner ad in July/August edition of Enviroworks; as well as
- Developing a Fact Sheet summarizing the By-law's requirement and enforcement procedures.

PLAN

On Council's 2016 request to review and report back on an enhanced education plan, the LFD once again engaged Corporate Communications for advice and assistance. For almost a decade, the LFD and Corporate Communications have worked closely together on the Fire Safety Marketing strategy and campaign. The campaign has produced significant and demonstrable results. That being said, the campaign is very geographically and demographically focused. Unlike the strategy behind the fire safety campaign, this initiative would require a city-wide approach. The LFD does not have the budget capacity to parallel the Fire Safety campaign.

One of the key challenges of this education plan will be the messaging. Unlike cooking and smoking safety messages that can be captured in a few words, the By-law is multi-faceted and complex. Accordingly, it is recommended that two (2) approaches be used. The first approach aims to provide a summary of the By-law in local newspapers. Using the information found in the ads, citizens could clearly understand the restrictions. Furthermore, citizens could cut-out the ads for future reference. The second method will use a graphic ad directing citizens to the Fire Department's website. From this point, individuals can download an electronic copy of the Open Air Burning pamphlet or use the link to obtain a copy of the By-law on the City's website.

Realizing the goals, as well as the challenges and constraints, Corporate Communications provided a number of no-cost/low-cost ideas aimed at educating Londoners about open-air burning. The proposed plan is broken out into the two (2) categories:

By-law Summary

- Purchase a ½ page ad in the London Free Press and a full-page ad in the Londoner summarizing the requirements of the By-law;
- Through the Department's Public Fire and Life Safety Educators distribute Open-Air Burning pamphlets at all Fire Safety events; and
- Through the Department's Firefighters distribute Open-Air Burning pamphlets during the Smoke Alarm Program as well as during the After-the-Fire Programs.

Directing Graphic Ad

- Issue a press release to the media directing people to the By-law on the City's website, as well as to an electronic version of the Open-Air Burning pamphlet;
- Create a graphic ad directing people to the LFD webpage regarding the Open-Air By-law with links to By-law on the City's website;
- Request that the graphic ad be placed in City controlled mediums:
 - CityGreen;
 - Spring 2017 edition of the Spectrum; and
 - Our City and Play Your Way e-newsletters;
- Post educational posters in common areas at City facilities (i.e. recreation centres, community centres and City Hall);
- Use social media ads to broaden the reach (i.e. Facebook); and
- Approach Rogers about the possibility of conducting an interview about open-air burning on their Daytime show.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

In consultation with Corporate Communications, it is estimated that full cost of the above initiatives will cost approximately \$10,500. To minimize impacts to the operating budget, the LFD plans to split the associated costs over 2016 and 2017. The plan in 2016 is to complete all graphic design related work, as well as print the necessary number of pamphlets for distribution. Placing the ads in newspapers, as well as placing ads on Facebook, will not occur until the Spring of 2017, just before the open-air burn season. The LFD will cover the cost through its approved operating budget.

SUMMARY

Council requested that Administration conduct a review focused on providing an enhanced education plan surrounding open-air burning.

In consultation with Corporate Communications, the LFD will take a two (2) pronged approach because of the complexity of the subject matter. The first approach focuses on providing a summary of the By-law through media sources, as well as through the distribution of pamphlets. The second approach will use a graphic ad directing citizens to the LFD website where they can download an electronic version of the Open Air Burning pamphlet, as well as access the By-law.

Fire Administration estimates that cost of the Plan to be approximately \$10,500. The LFD will accomodate that cost within its approved operating budget.

RECOMMENDED BY:	REVIEWED AND CONCURRED BY:
JOHN KOBARDA FIRE CHIEF	LYNNE LIVINGSTONE MANAGING DIRECTOR, NEIGHBOURHOOD, CHILDREN & FIRE SERVICES