

K & H DISTRIBUTING
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The Corporation of the City of London

June 1, 2023

Community and protective Services Committee

Re: Fireworks Review

Hello, I am Victor Anber. I own K&H Distributing Fireworks and I do the majority of Professional fireworks displays in the city.

I am writing to talk about the fireworks review and some of the news articles that have been published over the past couple of years.

I'll begin with Professional Firework Displays. Fireworks has a fascination for humans that transcends all boundaries, it doesn't matter what age you are, your sexual orientation, where you are from, cultural background or religion, people all around the world are fascinated with fireworks; and they demonstrate this love and fascination year after year after with their attendance at the displays. Surveys protesting fireworks are not worth consideration as a very vocal minority can influence survey results by voting multiple times and soliciting support from like-minded groups from around the world. However you cannot falsify the people voting in favour of fireworks. They vote with their attendance at the multiple displays in and around The City of London. The following attendance numbers are from the event organizers.

Fork of the Thames:	40,000+
Byron Optimists:	9,000 – 10,000
Summerside Community Club:	5,000+
WestPark Church:	7,000+
White Oaks Park:	20,000+
Highland Golf & Country Club:	numbers unknown at this time

All of these displays are on or immediately before/after Canada Day. This is a huge segment of the London population that has no issues with safe, legal, professional displays.

People speak of "Quieter fireworks." "Quieter fireworks" cannot entertain a large, spread out, group; this is especially true for the Fork of the Thames which a large majority of the City is able to see from a great distance. "Quieter fireworks" are pyrotechnic articles that do not reach the height of, nor break and spread across the sky as professional display fireworks do. If you do want to get to larger, higher pyrotechnics, you are in the "Stadium Product" line and it is certainly not quiet. Pyrotechnic articles are much pricier than display fireworks and made in much smaller quantities, often to order/per event.

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Drones have been suggested as an alternative. Drones are very expensive and usually much shorter shows than display fireworks. It was quoted in the London Free Press that one can have a 50 drone show for about \$16,000.00. The city of Woodstock was mentioned, their show was 100 drones and lasted 9 minutes. The budget is not public but doing the math using the figures in the Newspaper would have been approximately \$30,000.00. This would be without musical choreography or Lasers to heighten the effect of the show upon the audience.

Firework displays draw community together, entertain very large crowds and elicit the “oohs and ahhs” one can hear in videos of the displays showing the audience interacting with the display and the display’s effect upon the audience.

A partial list of the benefits of large, public, firework displays:

1. **Entertainment and Celebration:** Fireworks displays are often associated with joyous occasions and celebrations such as national holidays, New Year's Eve, and cultural festivals. They provide a visual spectacle and a sense of excitement, creating a festive atmosphere that brings people together. These events can boost community spirit and promote social cohesion.
2. **Economic Impact:** Fireworks displays can have a positive economic impact on local communities. Large-scale displays attract tourists and visitors, resulting in increased spending on hotels, restaurants, transportation, and other local businesses. This influx of tourism can stimulate the local economy and create employment opportunities.
3. **Cultural Significance:** In many cultures, fireworks hold symbolic and cultural significance. They may represent traditions, historical events, or religious celebrations. By organizing fireworks displays, communities can honor and preserve their cultural heritage, passing down traditions from one generation to another.
4. **Civic Pride:** Fireworks displays often serve as a source of civic pride. Communities take pride in organizing and hosting impressive fireworks shows that showcase their creativity and organizational skills. Such events can enhance community morale, promote a sense of belonging, and foster community pride.
5. **Entertainment for All Ages:** Fireworks displays have broad appeal and can be enjoyed by people of all ages. They create a shared experience, bringing together families, friends, and communities. Children, in particular, often find fireworks displays awe-inspiring and memorable, contributing to their overall enjoyment and sense of wonder.
6. **Artistic Expression:** Fireworks displays can be considered a form of artistic expression. The choreography, colors, patterns, and synchronized music can create a visually stunning and emotionally captivating experience. Fireworks designers and technicians work to create unique and aesthetically pleasing displays that can be appreciated as an art form. Huge competition fireworks festivals are held worldwide.

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Now I would like to address Consumer Fireworks. Consumer Fireworks in Canada is highly regulated by the Federal Government. The standards are unmatched almost anywhere else in the world. Consumer Fireworks have been a part of Canadian families' Victoria Day and Canada Day celebrations for almost 100 years.

Covid changed so many things and the use of Consumer Fireworks was one of them. People were housebound, no public gatherings, no public firework displays. It seems many people started entertaining themselves with firework shows in their backyards outside of the normal holiday weekends allowed. Things are almost back to "normal" now. Public displays are back, people can travel, go out and have far less down time at home. It is obvious by the drop in the number of complaints, that regular use of consumer fireworks has leveled out. There will always be someone who regardless of rules will do as they please but this is true in all aspects of life, not just fireworks use.

London is fortunate to have at least 4, long time, legal, safe, insured and professional fireworks vendors. They have operated in the city for 20 plus years and 2 for 40 years during the Victoria Day and Canada Day sales periods. The internet, however, allows purchase by anyone, anytime, no questions asked.

Reviewing the Fireworks Bylaw and using statistics from 2020 and 2021, would essentially be basing decisions on flawed data, data that is skewed by extraneous circumstances that changed the entire world for two years.

We respectfully submit that it would be more accurate, more fact based, to see what the summer of 2023 brings and address the issue at that time.

Thank you for your time in reading this and for your consideration. I would be more than happy to answer any questions and attend any meetings should you so wish.

Yours truly,



Victor R. Anber