



Canadian National Fireworks Association  
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November 12, 2019

Councillor Carra– Chair and Members of Committee  
SPC on Community and Protective Services Committee  
Council Chambers

**RE: Item 7.4.1 Revised - Amendment to Fire Operations and Fees Bylaw 55M2014**

On October 21, Calgary City Council referred Report CPS2019-1311, Amendment to Fire Operations and Fees Bylaw 55M2014, for “*administration to engage with stakeholders to consider options other than a ban on consumer fireworks and report back to the 13 November 2019 meeting*”. The Canadian National Fireworks Association (CNFA) was encouraged by the direction of Council to have staff look at alternatives to a ban on the sale and use of federally regulated legal fireworks and offered to provide support to assist in this process.

On November 5, the CNFA met with Calgary Fire Department (CFD) to provide information and assistance in their preparation of a revised report to Committee and Council regarding “options other than a ban” as directed by Council. As a result of the meeting, the CNFA provided a comprehensive document (see Attachment 4) with background, recommendations and facts about consumer fireworks, the industry, retailer, and the consumer.

After a sincere and thoughtful effort by the CNFA to engage the CFD, based on the direction of Council, we are disappointed that after our extensive discussion and recommendation document, the CFD has provided no alternatives to a ban and did not accept the industry advice and facts about consumer fireworks. As a result, we ask that the Committee refer the report back to Administration to meet with community stakeholders (residents and businesses) to prepare options other than a ban for Committee and Council to consider.

We provide the following objective criteria to consider when making your decision on this important matter.

**Consumer Fireworks are federally regulated legal products in Canada**

Consumer fireworks are federally regulated by Natural Resources Canada where products go through some of the most stringent testing conducted in the world before they are approved for recreational use. Contrary to the information provided; federally approved Canadian consumer fireworks are vastly different than US firework products. There have been zero deaths from consumer firework use in Canada over the past 30 years. Products such as firecrackers, M80’s and bottle rockets, which are available in the US, are illegal for use in Canada. Canadian consumer fireworks are safe when used according to their instructions, which are labelled on each product.



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### **Calgary residents are currently using consumer fireworks, posing no risk to the public**

In the Revised report, CFD recognize that *“Calgarians are buying fireworks from online vendors or those not subject to Provincial or City regulations.”* However, the CFD *“has not seen evidence that those fireworks currently being purchased by Calgarians are being used in a manner that puts the general public or property in Calgary at risk.”*

The CNFA agrees with this statement. Canadian consumer fireworks are a federally tested, approved, and are a safe product when instructions are read and followed by the public.

The CFD then contradicts the previous assertion by suggesting that adopting a regulatory bylaw would increase risk to the city, contrary to the previous statement that fireworks currently being used do not pose a risk to the general public, or property. Limiting Calgarian’s ability to access federally authorized products eliminates the ability for our industry to educate the public on the safe use of products at point of sale.

### **Engagement with the business community is still non-existent**

The staff report includes comments that misrepresent retailers and disregards the potential economic benefits of permitting federally regulated, legal industry to conduct business in Calgary. The report suggests *“that regulations and compliance conditions required to sell and use fireworks would present undue red tape for businesses and potentially counteract any economic benefit of opening up the consumer fireworks market in Calgary.”* The report then contradicts this aforementioned assertion, confirming that *“there was not sufficient time for a full engagement with the business community.”*

Retailers in municipalities across the country continue to adhere to federal standards to sell consumer fireworks to the public. The CNFA has members that would gladly partake in the necessary measures to meet federal standards in order to sell consumer fireworks locally. These statements by the CFD are based on assumption and do not represent the industry or the business community.

### **Consumer Fireworks include over 3,000 products**

There are currently over 3,000 products that qualify as consumer fireworks, including sparklers, fountains, and cakes. These products range in burst height, and fallout radius. The Report states that *“the CFD does not oppose the use of consumer fireworks in a safe and regulated manner in rural settings where there is enough space for spectators, buildings, and other obstacles to be a safe distance away from any combustible or flammable materials, and recognizes that in several rural areas, there already exists a permitting process for use and sale of consumer fireworks.”*

The report also suggests that *“most private property in Calgary does not have the space for consumer fireworks to be used according to the manufacturer’s own safety instructions.”*



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These statement disregards and misrepresents consumer fireworks products. Permitting the sale allows the industry, retailers and the CNFA to educate the public and recommend products that are appropriate to use based on their property configuration.

### **Canadian cities permit consumer fireworks sales and use**

The report suggests that *“Eight major municipalities in Alberta, including Edmonton, Medicine Hat, Red Deer, Lethbridge, Grand Prairie, Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo, Strathcona County and Calgary have drafted bylaws which prohibit the purchase and discharge of consumer fireworks.”* This statement is misleading:

City of Edmonton:

The CNFA is currently in roundtable discussions with the City of Edmonton addressing their current consumer fireworks permitting process. The report suggests that Edmonton’s regulations *“limit the sale of fireworks to certified display technicians with conditions similar to the display fireworks requirements included in the Alberta Fire Code.”* This is misleading, as the City of Edmonton currently allows year round sales of consumer fireworks. Additionally, members from the public who do not have display technician certification can still apply for a fireworks permit from the City. CNFA and other stakeholders are currently engaged in developing a more streamlined permitting system.

City of Grande Prairie:

A regulatory bylaw allows consumer fireworks to be purchased by people over the age of 18 in the City of Grande Prairie. A permit can be obtained by the public from the fire department in order to discharge consumer fireworks in the City on private land that meets their bylaw’s set requirements.

Town of Bonnyville:

Consumer fireworks can be purchased and used within the Town of Bonnyville by the public through obtaining a permit from the fire department. For nonprofit groups, the permit is free of charge and for the general public it is \$10.00. The Fire Department issues sales permits for the cost of \$100 to those who wish to store and sell consumer fireworks in the town.

In conclusion, the CFD and Administration were directed by City Council to report back to the November 13 2019 meeting of the SPC on Community and Protective Services with options other than a ban. After extensive effort on the part of the CNFA, the CFD has not addressed Council direction. Instead, you have been provided with a report with inaccurate and misleading information about the fireworks industry in Alberta.



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As a result, we ask that this item be referred back to staff for proper consultation with the residential and business community and truly provide you with options other than a ban of consumer fireworks to consider. The CNFA would like to continue to act as a resource to provide clarity on the fireworks industry, and will offer the necessary support to the City of Calgary in this process.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

*Perry Logan*

Perry Logan  
Executive Director  
Canadian National Fireworks Association



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To Council and Mayor,

Our company would be very interested in setting up a Consumer Fireworks Retail store when Calgary creates a bylaw that people would be able to buy fireworks from reputable retailers all year.

Fireworks Central Ltd. works with customers to ensure that they get the best “bang for their buck” (to put it in terms unique to our industry.) We educate customers on the safe use of our products and provide them with what they need to perform a successful display.

Fireworks Central follows and abides by all federal regulations in the products that we sell and how we conduct sales.

We are excited about the opportunity that Calgary would bring to our customers if this bylaw is created and to the economic impact our store would have on the community.

Thank you,

*The Fireworks Central Team*