



July 4th Preparedness

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Presentation Overview

- What is the law in Fort Worth?
- What have we seen historically on the 4th of July?
- Enforcement Strategies
- Enforcement concerns
- Police and Fire calls for service and resources
- Education and outreach efforts
- Recommendations to consider for future July 4th holidays in Fort Worth



Enforcement Strategies

- The response is multi-faceted and scalable depending on several factors:
 - Communications and 911 system management
 - Crowd and traffic control
 - Resource management
 - Intelligence including monitoring of social media
 - Heat maps
- The Fire and Police Departments dedicate specific patrol units using additional resources on overtime during high suspected illegal fireworks activity.
 - Units are assigned to respond citywide to calls for service and attempt to serve all areas and council districts equally; however, some locations are deemed unsafe to enter for fire personnel by the Fort Worth Police/Fire Department.
 - Where life safety or significant property damage issues were reported, every attempt is made to intervene after a thorough risk analysis and inventory of available fire and police resources.

Enforcement Concerns

- There are several concerns from both the Police and Fire Department perspective:
 - Firefighters are not armed but are being asked to perform enforcement activities.
 - There is a real concern about over-policing in certain areas of our city and enforcement efforts for illegal fireworks can damage the relationships the police have with the community for a low-level Class C offense, a citation.
 - Of key importance is the correlation of degree of enforcement to probable use of force.
 - We have experienced that the more aggressive the enforcement, the greater likelihood of a use of force incident, injury to a citizen, or injury to an officer.



Police and Fire - Calls for Service & Resources

- To ensure Fire Operations and Fort Worth Police Department resources are available to respond to emergencies and high priority calls for service.
- Utilize a Firework Hotline - A specific telephone “hotline” was dedicated to report fireworks.
- 4th of July is resource extensive event for public safety agencies



Calls by Council District for the Week of the 4th of July, 2020:

Council District	July 1	July 2	July 3	July 4	July 5	July 6	Total
2	4	29	168	420	41	13	675
3	7	39	136	358	50	15	605
4	8	18	127	352	31	6	542
5	15	35	202	433	61	21	767
6	4	52	276	668	112	14	1126
7	10	46	119	512	22	1	710
8	14	75	246	483	90	14	922
9	4	16	154	369	70	16	629
Unknown	-	1	2	10	2	1	16
Grand Total	66	311	1430	3605	479	101	5992

Call Volume for Public Safety Response

- For an example, we will use July 4, 2020 since it was the largest call volume day.
 - On July 4, 2020, we received 3605 calls for service in reference to fireworks.
 - Each call takes, on average, 45 minutes to complete
 - Response
 - Handle the incident
 - Document the efforts either by report, citation, or disposition
- Using the 24-hour time period for July 4th
 - We would need, on average, **224 patrol officers (two-person call) for each hour of the 24 hours to handle the call volume.**
 - $3605 \text{ calls} / 24 \text{ hours} \times 0.75 \text{ (time to answer call)} = 112.7 \times 2 \text{ officers}$
- If we assume that most of the calls (60%) are received during a 6-hour window from 8:00 p.m. until 2:00 a.m., then we would need 540 patrol officers (two-person call) for each hour of the 6 hours to handle the call volume
 - $3607 \text{ calls} \times 0.6 \text{ (60\%)} / 6 \text{ hours} \times 0.75 \text{ (time to answer call)} = 270.3 \times 2 \text{ officers}$

Public Safety Response

- The number of officers and firefighters calculated on the previous slide do not take into account the amount of public safety personnel needed for the Downtown Fireworks Show at the Panther Pavilion and Panther Island
- Additionally, the number of personnel on the previous slide were for fireworks calls only. This does not take into account the other calls for service that occur throughout the July 4th weekend during the listed times



Fire Department – Resources

- Joint Emergency Operation Center (JEOC) will be operational and fully staffed
- Additional call takers are being added to keep the CAD operational
- Triage of calls with priorities on injury, fires, personal assistance
- Investigation of all injuries and fires associated with fireworks
- Additional arson and explosive ordinance staff spread throughout the city to respond to confiscation/citation requests from FWPD
- Increase in messaging about fireworks to media
- Invite council/city leadership to the JEOC to observe the evening



Education and Outreach

- The Fort Worth Fire and Police Departments spend a considerable amount of time educating the public of the dangers and prohibition of possession, sales, and use of fireworks the 4th of July holiday.
- Both departments utilize their social media platforms as well as one-on-one meetings with apartment complex owners/managers and neighborhoods that have historically known to have heavy illegal fireworks use.
- Additionally, messages about illegal fireworks are sent out through the City of Fort Worth communication channels as well as news media outlets.



Recommendations for Improvement

- Continued collaboration between the Fort Worth Police and Fire Departments to develop a coordinated response plan to reduce illegal fireworks in high incident areas. A coordinated response was the most effective prevention and enforcement strategy used.
- Collaborate with the Texas Department of Transportation for education and enforcement message displays on highway electronic information boards for vehicles traveling into the City from areas that sell fireworks.
- Continue fireworks public education in the areas of fireworks injury prevention.
- Conduct policy discussions on efforts to place additional cost share on those that purchase fireworks for use in Fort Worth.
- Collaborate with area fire and police departments to share education and enforcement action planning.
- Increasing enforcement has challenges related to responding to the number of calls and trying to de-escalate issues around confiscation and citations. The Police Department will have approximately 200 personnel assigned to answer all calls between 8 P.M. and Midnight.

Thank you!



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