

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



City of Duluth - Police Department

Mike Tusken, Chief of Police
2030 North Arlington Avenue • Duluth, Minnesota 55811 •
www.duluthmn.gov

*For more information contact:
Public Information Officer, Kate Van Daele at 218-730-5309 or
kvandaele@DuluthMN.gov*

DATE: 6/24/2021

SUBJECT: Duluth Police to step up firework enforcement

BY: Kate Van Daele, Public Information Officer

NATURE OF INCIDENT: Firework Enforcement

CASE NO.:

INCIDENT DATE:

INCIDENT TIME:

INCIDENT LOCATION:

Duluth Police to step up firework enforcement

[Duluth, MN] In response to neighborhood and citizen complaints around fireworks, the Duluth Police Department will be addressing the problem this summer by issuing citations for violations of Minnesota State Statutes and City Ordinances. Last year firework complaints nearly tripled to over 600 from 2019. efforts are being made to reduce neighborhood disturbance calls overall.

"Many of the calls that we have received are reported as "sounds of shots" which often require a much different response than responding to a nuisance call," Deputy Chief Steve Stracek said. "A commitment to issuing citations will not only restore neighborhood peace, but it also will help to free up resources that can be better served elsewhere."

"It's important to remember those in our community who are sensitive to these types of loud disturbances," Stracek said. "Loud bangs can invoke PTSD episodes and be harmful. Loud noises can also negatively impact infants and young children in addition to pets. We want people to have fun, but we also ask that they be respectful."

In Duluth, City Ordinances clarify that persons shall not engage in conduct that disturbs the neighborhood at any time of the day. Duluth Police may issue a citation if someone is found in violation of the Statutes or City ordinance. This could result in a \$1,000 fine, or up to 90 days in jail, or a fine payable to the city under the ordinance.

The Duluth Fire Department reminds the public that if they chose to use fireworks, to make sure that they are legal and to be in open areas away from structures and trees. In Minnesota, fireworks that explode or shoot into the air are considered illegal. While items like sparklers and novelty items like party poppers and snakes are legal, over 30% of firework injuries come from sparklers. Forty percent of firework injuries happen to children.

"Fireworks can be dangerous," Deputy Chief Jon Otis said. "We have seen too many injuries due to fireworks, and unfortunately, have seen structure and grass fires that have been caused by people not using them safely."

The City of Duluth is a proud sponsor of the fireworks show that concludes Fourth Fest. Representatives from both the Duluth Fire and Police Departments encourage the public to come to Bayfront Park to see the show put on by professionals instead of creating their firework show at home.

"Fourth Fest is a great event," Otis said. "It's a great time to gather with friends and family members, eat good food and relax while appreciating the importance of the day. The fireworks show is the best in our region; you won't want to miss it."

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