# **Stop Illegal Fireworks!** (SIF)

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THE ISSUE / OUR GOALS

Formed in February of 2025, SIF is a grassroots organization in the City of Richmond working to end the use of illegal fireworks due to their fire danger during the dry months (and the potential increase in property insurance rates if they cause a firestorm); their loud noise terrifying pets and wildlife, and people with PTSD, dementia, and autism; the toxins they put in the air we breathe; the injury risk of using fireworks; and the general noise disturbance they make.

We were frustrated because RPD had been unable to catch fireworks users—by the time police arrived, it was too late and they'd left. **In July of 2025, the Richmond Police, using drone enforcement, were able to cite fireworks offenders!**

**Our goals** are to 1) create community pressure to let the folks setting off fireworks know that the community does not want illegal fireworks here, and 2) to get the City Council to enact a stronger ordinance with higher, stackable fines and a social host ordinance that extends to public areas.

Our approach is based on a successful grassroots campaign in Richmond to stop celebratory gunfire around the year 2000 called Have Fun But Don't Shoot Your Gun.

RECENT ATTEMPTS TO ADDRESS THE FIREWORKS PROBLEM

- 2026.07.04_Richmond Police Dept. used **drones as first responders and cited 6 violators and seized fireworks**. Facebook video: click
- 2026.06.24_Richmond Police Dept. and local cable station KCRT release a **public service announcement** on the harms caused by illegal fireworks on social media click
- 2026.05.26_**Council directed staff to draft an amended fireworks ordinance**–add $1,000 per discharge and host liability – to vote on at a later date click
- 2026.04.22_Council voted to send a **letter to Gov. Gavin Newsom asking him to stop the illicit importation of illegal fireworks from Nevada**. letter: click resolution: click
- 2025.fall_**Richmond Police Department created a Stop Illegal Fireworks page** on its website. click
- 2025.07.04_**Richmond Police Department used drones as first responders and were able to cite over a dozen fireworks violators and seized over $10,000 in illegal fireworks**. video: click, report: click
- 2025.06_Public education campaign/**stop illegal fireworks sign blitz** click
- 2025.05.19_Stop Illegal Fireworks in Richmond **Town Hall** click
- 2025.04.29_Richmond Standard_ The City Council tabled Councilmember Bana's agenda item to triple fines for fireworks-related violations in high-risk zones. Instead, they approved a **motion directing city staff--including the fire, police, legal, and public works departments--to work with residents and return with comprehensive policy recommendations.** A video of the discussion is in the article. click
- 2025.03.28_Richmondside_**Richmond residents fighting illegal fireworks** click
- 2025.02.04 **City Council meeting re: drones vs fireworks show on July 3**. Voted no to drone show. See presentation at hour 3, minute 54. click
    - Excerpt from staff report:

        - “RFD also noted that the most significant issues with illegal fireworks occurred during the pandemic. During that time, staff efforts to confiscate illegal fireworks were met with hostility, highlighting the challenges of enforcement.
        - **Implementing an ordinance may provide law enforcement with the ability to issue fines for the use of illegal fireworks**; however, this alone is not a guaranteed solution for curbing their use. Enforcing such regulations would require additional resources. **A complementary approach** would involve **engaging the community through social media and other media outlets to promote a zero-tolerance message regarding illegal fireworks.”**
    - 2022/2023_**Richmond Crime Prevention meeting re: the illegal fireworks problem** click
    - 2021.11.16_**Richmond City Council** voted against fining property owners with fireworks on their property and made these other recommendations: **have staff track illegal fireworks usage, review polices from other cities, consider a buyback program, educate the community on fines, and establish incentives for resident to report illegal firework sales – as of 4/28/25, these suggestions have not been implemented.** The fireworks discussion starts at hour 5, minute 22. click
    - 2021.08_**Richmond Progressive Alliance (RPA) Blog post on Fireworks** click
    - 2020_**Richmond Crime Prevention roundtable on the illegal fireworks problem** click
    - 2020.07.05_The Richmond Standard_**Video of fireworks in Richmond** click
    - 2020.07_Tom Butt’s e-forum_**Efforts made by City to discourage illegal fireworks** click

ORDINANCES

**State of California**

2023_ AB1403 signed into law, implemented in 2024. **Fines were increased for possession of fireworks in CA** (not applicable to Richmond because it's a charter city). click

2022_Patch_ **definition of Safe and Sane fireworks, dates they can be sold and list of CA cities that allow them**. click

**City of Richmond's ordinance** click

**City of San Pablo's ordinance** click

USEFUL LINKS

- 2025_**Injuries and deaths in USA**. click
- 2025.06.27_Los Angeles Times: **CA taxpayers cover cost of disposing of confiscated fireworks / fireworks air pollution comparable to wildfire's**. click
- 2025.06_**San Jose using 311 reporting app**: webinar click and CBS news story. click
- 2024_**San Francisco's Civil Grand Jury Report: Uncontrolled Burn: Dimming the Spark of Illegal Fireworks in San Francisco**. click
- 2024_Baykeeper_**Swimmers finding debris in water from fireworks is SF Bay**. click
- 2024_Cal Matters_Possible CA/NV Interstate Compact -- **data of sales of fireworks to CA residents purchased in NV shared with CA law enforcement** click See Office of the State Fire Marshal – General Fireworks Advisory Committee: Nov. 2023 – Feb. 2025 agendas and minutes. May 2024 – Illegal Fireworks White Paper, recommendation #3. click
- 2024.07.03_Green Matters_**Environmental impact of fireworks** click

- 2020_Forbes_**Drone light shows to replace fireworks** click
- 2019_Treehugger_**Fireworks' effect on birds** click
- 2016_Dialog Earth_**Shanghai, China's fireworks ban**: click
- **Anti-illegal fireworks campaign in Chino, CA** – photos of girls hugging dogs with caption "Please don't scare my best friend this July 4th" click
- **Nail'em** is a free app for reporting illegal fireworks using GPS and photos. As of 5/18/25 not connected to RPD's system. City of Atwater, CA's instructions. click
- **Night Vision Binoculars Photo/Video Camera** for recording illegal fireworks activity. click
- **Social Host Ordinances** in some CA cities have helped law enforcement cite violators. Roseville, CA's ordinance: click