



MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor Lawlor and Members of Council

FROM: Alex Fuller, Director of Communications
Valerie Petryniak, Town Clerk & Director of Legislative Services

DATE: January 7, 2025

MEMO NO.: ADMIN-2025-001

SUBJECT: Education and Enforcement plan for New Fireworks By-law No. 2025-0006

PURPOSE OF THE MEMORANDUM:

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide Council with the education and enforcement plan for the new Fireworks By-law No. 2025-0006, which bans the sale and discharge of consumer fireworks in Halton Hills.

BACKGROUND:

At the Council meeting on October 28, 2024, Council was presented with the findings of a fireworks survey that was conducted by Forum Research Inc. through report ADMIN-2024-014. The statistically valid survey was conducted at the request of Council to gain insight into the thoughts of the community on the sale and discharge of family fireworks.

Prior to the survey, a series of reports were brought forward to Council over the past couple of years. The complete timeline can be found in the attached Report No. ADMIN-2024-014. (Appendix A). Using all of the information provided to Council, the following recommendation was made and carried on October 28, 2024:

Recommendation No. GC-2024-0149

THAT Report No. ADMIN-2024-014 dated October 28, 2024 regarding Fireworks Survey Results be received;

AND FURTHER THAT Council amend Fireworks By-law 2023-0032 to allow for community and special event exhibition fireworks (high hazard) with proper permits and certification and to prohibit the sale and discharge of family fireworks (low hazard) in Halton Hills.

AND FURTHER THAT Staff are directed to create an education and enforcement plan to let the community know of the changes.

Due to the number of amendments required to By-law 2023-0032, to clearly reflect the changes, staff have drafted a new Fireworks By-law which is included in Section 16 of this Council agenda. By-law No. 2025-0006 will receive final adoption by Council at the January 20, 2025 Council meeting.

As per Council's decision, the new by-law prohibits the sale and discharge of family style low hazard (consumer) fireworks but allows for the discharge of high hazard (display) fireworks where proper permitting and certification has been received by the Town.

In order to obtain a permit to discharge high hazard (display) fireworks, any person applying must have a valid Fireworks Display Supervisor Certification (or higher) from Natural Resources Canada. The Fire Chief or their designate will ensure all applications are complete with the necessary documentation and payment and will have the ability to issue, issue with conditions or refuse to issue permits. All safety precautions have been addressed in the issuance of permits, such as proper insurance, property owner's permission, specified dates and times of discharge amongst other requirements.

Communications

Communications will focus on two areas: past vendors of display-style fireworks and the general public. Messaging will note that Council's decision on October 28, 2024, to amend Fireworks By-law 2023-0032 reflects a comprehensive approach to balancing community safety and celebration and that the by-law includes stringent measures and enforcement provisions.

Vendors who previously sold display style fireworks in Halton Hills will receive correspondence advising that the Town's by-law has changed and that the sale (and discharge) of these fireworks is no longer permitted.

Communications to the general public will advise of the by-law change (noting reasons such as the negative impacts to wildlife and the environment and the Canadian Association of Fire Chiefs' motion to ban) and advise that high hazard fireworks are still allowed pending fulfillment of the associated conditions. Messaging will note that the use of sparklers is permitted.

In addition to updating the Town's website, communication tactics will include messaging on social media, web banners, e-newsletters and advertisements. Talking points will be prepared for use by staff and/or Council should they receive questions.

Enforcement

Any individual who violates a provision of this by-law is committing an offence. Administrative Monetary Penalties, as specified in By-law 2025-0008 (AMPS – Non-Parking By-law), will be imposed on offenders, with fines ranging from \$500 to \$1000 for first-time violations. Staff may also opt to pursue charges through the Provincial Offences Act (POA) Court if deemed necessary.

Complaints should be submitted through the enforcement portal on the Town's website. To facilitate the enforcement process, especially for complaints received after hours, the by-law defines an Officer as a municipal law enforcement officer, fire inspector, fire prevention officer, or any other person appointed by Council to enforce this by-law. This allows staff members other than MLEOs to issue penalty notices for by-law violations.

CONCLUSION:

The education and enforcement plan for the new Fireworks By-law No. 2025-0006 aims to effectively inform the community about the changes and ensure compliance. By focusing on comprehensive communication strategies and stringent enforcement measures, the Town of Halton Hills seeks to balance community safety with the celebration of special events. The successful implementation of this plan will help mitigate the negative impacts of consumer fireworks while still allowing for controlled high hazard displays under proper supervision and permitting.

Reviewed and approved by,

Chris Mills, Chief Administrative Officer