



City of Richmond

Report to Committee

To Community Safety - Sept 11, 2003

To: Community Safety Committee
From: Sandra Pearson
Manager Operational Support, Community Safety

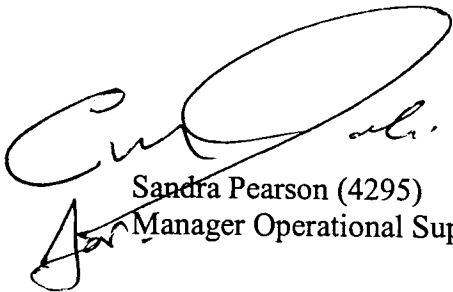
Date: August 27, 2003
File: 8060-20-7585
8060-20-7586

Re: Fireworks Regulation Changes for Halloween 2003

Staff Recommendation

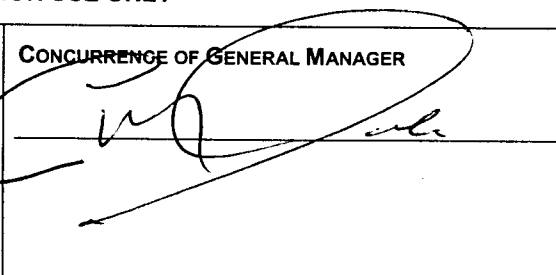
That:

1. Bylaw 7585 which amends Firecracker & Fireworks Regulation Bylaw No. 2116 be introduced and given first, second, and third readings.
2. Bylaw 7586 which amends Municipal Ticket Information Authorization Bylaw #7321 be introduced and given first, second, and third readings.



Sandra Pearson (4295)
Manager Operational Support, Community Safety

FOR ORIGINATING DIVISION USE ONLY

ROUTED TO:	CONCURRENCE	CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER
Community Bylaws	Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	
Fire Rescue	Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	
R.C.M.P.	Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	
Parks Design, Construction & Programs.....	Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	
Licensing	Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	
Recreation & Cultural Services	Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	

Staff Report

Origin

Halloween creates the biggest demand for Fire and Police services. In response to issues raised through Council’s Advisory Task Force on Fireworks and the high demand for emergency services during this event, A *Community Safety Operational Team* was formed in 2002. The team’s purpose was to develop an integrated operational approach to address the community safety needs associated with Halloween.

The Halloween Operational Team consists of members from: RCMP; Bylaws; Fire Rescue; Emergency Programs; Parks and Recreation; Business Licensing; Richmond School District and is currently being expanded to include representatives from volunteer groups such as: Parent Advisory Committee; Block Watch; and Citizens’ Crime Watch Patrol.

The team meets to discuss and make operational changes that will improve their collective response to this annual event. This report is one action resulting from the team’s evaluation of the 2002 Halloween experience.

Findings Of Fact

In 2002 the first detailed fireworks data was collected with incident information received from the RCMP, Fire Rescue, and School Custodians. Statistical data was captured for 63% (49 incidents) of the reported incidents. Of these 78 calls, 44 were Police and 34 Fire Rescue. The data presented below is representative of only the *fireworks* related incidents and doesn’t provide a complete statistical picture of the event.

In reviewing the data, the team noted the high number of incidents involving roman candles. Roman candles can be described as a ground level fireworks that is capable of projecting or discharging a charge or series of charges more than 10 meters. These types of projectiles have been inserted into household mail slots; aimed at emergency response personnel and their vehicles; plus directed at a city facility caretaker. In addition, these types of devices are often responsible for vegetation and garbage container fires.

Total # of Seizures	Device Type	# of Items Seized
17	Firecrackers (illegal)	10
	Roman Candles	16
	Bottle Rockets aka Screechers (illegal)	12
	Other	4
Fire Types	# of Incidents	
Vegetation	23 Total	
Shrubs	2	
Trees	12	
Hedges	9	
Garbage Bins	6 Total	

Several factors contribute to the preferred use of roman candles: low cost (\$1.09); projectile range (10m) and volume (5+ shots), ability to purchase in single quantities; and concealable size.

Other communities have experienced similar problems with this device. Vancouver, Saanich, and Abbotsford currently restrict the sale of roman candles to family packs, of which not more than 25% can be roman candles. Chilliwack is in the process of preparing a similar restriction for their Council's consideration either in 2003 or 2004.

A previous survey of Fire Departments revealed that Langley City and the District of North Vancouver had all at some point considered banning fireworks entirely, however unsuccessfully. North Vancouver City is the only Lower Mainland community with a total fireworks ban.

Analysis

To address the safety concern around the misuse of roman candles, two options were explored:

1. Total ban of roman candles; and
2. Limiting product accessibility through a bylaw amendment.

A total ban was considered premature given the scope of the problem, the financial impact on retailers, and the restrictions then placed on a generally responsible public.

Limiting accessibility, coupled with increased education is the preferred and recommended preventative approach to the issue.

A further preventative measure is being investigated that may also assist in the reduction of fireworks related vandalism. The Halloween operational team is gathering data from other communities on fireworks retailer regulations (days, hours, and location of sales). This will be the subject of a future staff report.

Limiting Product Accessibility

Proposed amendments to the Firecracker and Fireworks Regulation Bylaw No. 2116 would restrict the single or package sales of roman candles, making these products available only in family packs and limiting roman candles to 25%. For clarification purposes, Bylaw 2116 would also be amended to include screechers and bottle rockets to the list of prohibited "firecrackers".

Changes to the Municipal Ticket Information Authorization Bylaw No. 7321 would:

- a) add a Licence Inspector to the list of designated bylaw enforcement officers; and
- b) make the selling of roman candles, other than as part of a family pack an offence carrying a \$100.00 fine.

The impact of the bylaw changes would be measured in 2003 and the data analyzed to determine its effectiveness.

Retailer compliance would be encouraged through business license information handouts, fire inspection education, and through random bylaw officer inspections.

Increased Education

Licensed fireworks retailers would be provided with information which details the problem and the new selling restrictions. A stronger message would be sent regarding the illegal selling of those under the age 18.

Parents would be reminded, through newspaper public safety messages, to keep fireworks stored safely and out of the reach and hands of those under the age of 18.

Community Feedback

The Richmond Chamber of Commerce was contacted and have expressed their support for the change.

Two of Richmond's larger fireworks distributors (Majestic and Gorilla) were contacted and as former members of the Fireworks Advisory Task Force are supportive of the bylaw change. These distributors are advising their Richmond clients of the proposal to include roman candles only in family packs for 2003 Halloween.

Financial Impact

None.

Conclusion

The use of Roman candles generates many of the complaints received on Halloween and have the greatest potential of damage to property and person. The proposed prevention and education approach includes a bylaw change making Roman Candles available only in family packs and public awareness aimed at retailers and parents. The effectiveness of these changes will be measured in 2003 to determine if further preventative measures are called for in 2004.



Sandra Pearson (4295)
Manager Operational Support, Community Safety
on behalf of the Community Safety Halloween Operational Team



**Firecracker and Fireworks Regulation Bylaw No. 2116,
Amendment Bylaw No. 7585**

The Council of the City of Richmond enacts as follows:

1. Section 2 of Bylaw No. 2116 is amended by:
 - (a) adding “bottle rockets” and “screechers” to the list of firecrackers in the definition of “Firecracker”;
 - (b) adding the following definitions in alphabetical order:

FAMILY PACK means six or more **fireworks** which are packaged together and intended to be sold as a unit, except that **Roman candles** shall constitute not more than 25% of the total number of **fireworks** in the packaged unit.

ROMAN CANDLE means a ground level **firework** that is capable of projecting or discharging a charge or a series of charges or pyrotechnical effects more than three (3) metres and which has a tube diameter of 19 mm (¾ inch) or less.

2. Section 3 of Bylaw No. 2116 is amended by adding the following as subsection (c):
 - (c) sell, offer for sale, give or dispose of a **Roman candle** except as part of a **family pack**.
3. This Bylaw is cited as “**Firecracker and Fireworks Regulation Bylaw No. 2116, Amendment Bylaw No. 7585**”.

FIRST READING

SECOND READING

THIRD READING

ADOPTED

CITY OF RICHMOND
APPROVED for content by originating dept. <i>[Signature]</i>
APPROVED for legality by Solicitor <i>[Signature]</i>

MAYOR

CITY CLERK



**Municipal Ticket Information Authorization Bylaw No. 7321,
Amendment Bylaw No. 7586**

The Council of the City of Richmond enacts as follows:

1. Section 7 of Schedule A to Bylaw No. 7321 is amended by adding "Licence Inspector" to the list of designated bylaw enforcement officers.
2. Schedule B7 to Bylaw No. 7321 is amended by adding the following:

Offence	Bylaw Section	Fine
Selling Roman candles other than as part of a family pack	3(c)	\$100

3. This Bylaw is cited as "**Municipal Ticket Information Authorization Bylaw No. 7321, Amendment Bylaw No. 7586**".

FIRST READING

SECOND READING

THIRD READING

APPROVED BY THE CHIEF JUDGE OF THE
PROVINCE OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

ADOPTED

CITY OF RICHMOND
APPROVED for content by originating dept.
<i>[Signature]</i>
APPROVED for legality by Solicitor
<i>[Signature]</i>

MAYOR

CITY CLERK