

Subject: Bylaw No. 19/015 - Fireworks Bylaw**APPROVALS:****Annette Antoniak**_____
Director_____
Chief Administrative Officer**Recommended Motion:**

1. THAT Bylaw No. 19/015, being the Fireworks Bylaw, be read a second time.
2. THAT Bylaw No. 19/015 be read a third and final time.

Summary:

The Alberta Fire Code no longer regulates the storage, purchase and discharge of fireworks. Unless the Municipality adopts a bylaw to regulate fireworks, businesses are permitted to sell fireworks, and residents are permitted to discharge fireworks without the written consent of Regional Emergency Services (RES).

The adoption of the proposed bylaw will not have a negative impact to the residents who enjoy fireworks. The proposed Fireworks Bylaw provides for a transition from the former control measures provided by the Alberta Fire Code to the municipal Fireworks Bylaw. Residents will be able to continue to enjoy fireworks in a safe and responsible manner as in the past.

Background:

On April 1, 2019 the Province of Alberta adopted the National Fire Code 2015 - Alberta Edition. Historically, the Alberta Fire Code regulated sales and discharge of fireworks in the Province. The Alberta Fire Code historically prohibited the distribution, sale, purchase, possession, handling, discharge and firing of fireworks without obtaining written permission from the municipal fire department. RES has historically prohibited fireworks sales in the Municipality by choosing not to issue written permission for sales and restricted discharge by issuing permits on a limited basis. Under the National Fire Code 2015 - Alberta Edition, the fireworks regulations regarding sales and use had been removed. This change to the National Fire code means residents and businesses can sell, purchase and use fireworks within the Municipality without concern for any control measures.

Alternatives:

Should the Municipality choose not to implement this bylaw, residents, businesses and event coordinators would be able to distribute, sell, purchase, possess, handle discharge and fire off fireworks without proper safety control measures.

Budget/Financial Implications:

There are no budget/financial implications as there is no change in current processes for obtain fireworks permits.

Rationale for Recommendation:

RES recommends adopting this Fireworks Bylaw as a means of oversight for public safety and the safe handling of fireworks around forested areas. The 2016 Regional Hazard Risk Vulnerability Assessment (HRVA) identified wildfire as one of the highest hazards that the Municipality faces every year. Without the bylaw, the probability and/or likelihood of wildfire occurring from the use of fireworks increases.

The National Fire Protection Association states, in the attached Fireworks Fact Sheet, fact-based statements relating to fire, injury, and wildfire ignition due to fireworks:

- “Two thirds of the fires started by fireworks in 2009-2013 were bush, grass or forest fires”
- “In 2013, fireworks caused an estimated 15,600 reported fires in the U.S., including 1,400 structure fires, 200 vehicle fires, and 14,000 outside and other fires”, and
- “These fires resulted in an estimated 30 civilian injuries and \$21 million in direct property damage, with no reported fire deaths. Most fireworks deaths and injuries occur without fires.”

Most major municipalities in Alberta, such as Edmonton, Calgary, Red Deer, Lethbridge, and Grande Prairie, have a fireworks bylaw in place or are in the process of developing one, in light of the recent changes to the Alberta Fire Code.

Strategic Priorities:

Responsible Government

Attachments:

- 1. Bylaw No. 19/015 - Fireworks Bylaw**
- 2. NFPA Fireworks Fact Sheet**