

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 26, 2020

Contact: Elizabeth Smith, Communications Manager, 831.420.5016

City to Implement Safety Enhancement Zone for Independence Day Holiday

Triple Fine Penalties in effect July 2 through July 5

With thousands expected to visit Santa Cruz over the upcoming Independence Day holiday weekend, the Santa Cruz City Council has taken steps to ensure the City remains safe and clean for everyone. A citywide Safety Enhancement Zone will be in effect from 8 p.m. on Thursday, July 2, 2020 through 11:59 p.m. on Sunday, July 5, 2020.

The safety enhancement designation authorizes the tripling of fees for violations of the City's municipal code, such as the illegal discharge of fireworks, littering, and public consumption of alcohol. Santa Cruz Police and Fire Department would like to remind residents and visitors that possessing, discharging, or selling of all fireworks, including those marked "Safe and Sane," is illegal in the City of Santa Cruz.

Every year, people are seriously injured, property is damaged, and the risk of fires increases due to the illegal use of fireworks. Drought and windy conditions create a more significant potential for fires caused by fireworks in wildland and urban spaces.

"We have an unfortunate history of fires being started every year on the 4th of July because of illegal fireworks. These fires range from cars to houses to entire hillsides and are entirely preventable", said Fire Chief Jason Hajduk.

Santa Cruz Police will be out in force on the days leading up to and on July 4 to ensure that community members and visitors enjoy a safe holiday experience. Every available officer will be proactively enforcing all violations designated for triple fines under the Safety Enhancement Zone.

Example triple fine violations include:

- Fireworks possession
- Possession of open containers or consumption of alcoholic beverages in public places
- Graffiti
- Noise violations
- Trespassing
- Misconduct on public property

If residents or visitors witness the discharge of illegal fireworks, the Santa Cruz Police encourages them to call the non-emergency line (831) 471-1131 to report the incident. Patrol teams will be busy, but will respond to complaints of illegal fireworks. The City relies on its partnership with the community to keep us all safe this 4th of July.