



Agenda Item

Orange City Council

Item #: 9.2.

11/12/2025

File #: 25-0600

TO: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

FROM: Jarad Hildenbrand, City Manager

1. SUBJECT

Consider changes to Resolution No. 11597 regarding the City's Safe and Sane Fireworks program.

2. SUMMARY

On February 11, 2025, the Orange City Council adopted Resolution No. 11597 establishing the fees, rules, regulations, and lottery process for the City's Safe and Sane Fireworks program. With the City's first year of the Safe and Sane Fireworks program now completed, staff is proposing possible changes to the program for the 2026 4th of July holiday.

3. RECOMMENDED ACTION

Consider possible changes to the City's Safe and Sane Fireworks program and provide direction to staff.

4. FISCAL IMPACT

None.

5. STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

Goal 1: Maintain Strong Emergency and Safety Services.

Goal 3: Enhance Public Communication Strategy and Quality of Life.

6. DISCUSSION AND BACKGROUND

On February 11, 2025, the Orange City Council adopted Resolution No. 11597. This resolution established the following rules and procedures for the City's Safe and Sane Fireworks program:

- The fee calculation process pursuant to California Health and Safety Code Section 12635.5.
- The application and lottery process to receive a Safe and Sane Fireworks permit.
- The maximum number of permits that may be issued to Qualified Organizations (as defined in Orange Municipal Code Section 8.13) per year.
- The local high schools that are automatically allotted a permit each year.
- The rules regarding affiliated organizations to qualifying non-profit groups and educational institutions; and
- Insurance and indemnity requirements.

With the City's first year of the Safe and Sane fireworks program now over, staff has received

feedback on ways to further improve and streamline the current process. These suggestions include:

1. Reducing the number of maximum permits to eight.
2. Moving the application process back to January with the lottery and selection process occurring in February or March.
3. Two competing suggestions have been provided that include:
 - A. Changes to Permit Duration: Extend the permit timeframe to two years so Qualified Organizations can organize volunteers and have everything prepared well in advance of the 4th of July season; **or**
 - B. Remove Qualified Organizations from the lottery for one year after participation: If a Qualifying Organization receives a permit and participates in the Safe and Sane Fireworks program, then the Qualifying Organization will be removed from the subsequent lottery process the following year. After a year has passed, then the Qualifying Organization will be able to participate in the lottery process.
4. Remove Section E of Resolution No. 11597. This section states that no affiliated organization of a participating non-profit or educational institution may apply to enter the Safe and Sane lottery. This section's intent is to keep applications down to one per participating non-profit or educational institution. Staff recognize that many groups are interconnected and linked to one another. To simplify this process, staff suggest this section be removed. Aside from the other requirements detailed in the Orange Municipal Code (e.g., that groups must be a 501 (c) (3) or other charity as defined by federal or state law), by removing this section, the only remaining qualifications include:
 - That the groups must be organized for veterans, patriotic, welfare, civic betterment, religious, athletic, educational, youth development or charitable purposes.
 - That they have their principal and permanent meeting place within the City.
 - They provide direct and regular community services and benefits to the residents of the City.
 - Have bona fide members who either reside, work, or are owners or operators of a business or other establishment in the City.

Staff is seeking direction on whether the above changes should be incorporated into the City's Safe and Sane Fireworks program. Should the City Council direct staff to make any of these changes, staff will bring back a revised resolution for the City Council's consideration.

7. ATTACHMENTS

- Resolution No. 11597