



June 27, 2008

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WARNING: Fireworks Penalties & Fines Have Exploded Sky High

News Conference Monday to Outline Severity of Increased Fines, Highlight Public Awareness Campaign

This Fourth of July will be Milwaukee's first with stiffer fines and penalties for fireworks violations, and Common Council members are urging residents to make sure they don't end up finding out just how harsh those new penalties can be.

In March the Council doubled fines from \$100 to \$500 per violation to \$500 to \$1,000 per violation, and approved assessing parents and legal guardians a fine of up to \$1,000 for allowing minors to use fireworks. Failure to pay fines can also result in up to 40 days' jail time.

The tougher fines and penalties were recommended by the Common Council's Fireworks Task Force, co-chaired by Ald. Terry L. Witkowski and Ald. Joe Davis, Sr. The measure was recommended for approval by the Public Safety Committee, chaired by Ald. Bob Donovan.

A news conference will be held at 11 a.m. Monday (June 30, 2008) on the top of the bluff at Kilbourn Park (where E. Garfield Ave. meets the curved portion of E. North Ave.) to discuss the stiff fines and penalties and to draw attention to a new, related public awareness campaign that uses signage and billboards. Joining Ald. Witkowski, Ald. Davis and Ald. Donovan will be Milwaukee police Capt. Anthony Smith of District Five, also a member of the Fireworks Task Force.