

County Public Health Officer has now extended a Shelter-in-Place Order for the County, which has no definite end-date. The stated intent of the County Order is to ensure that County residents “continue to shelter in their places of residence to slow the spread of COVID-19 and mitigate the impact on delivery of critical health care services.”

This order also stipulates when residents may lawfully leave their residences for “essential travel” and for “essential activities,” prohibits all public and private gatherings of any number of people occurring outside a single household, and also requires social distancing when out in public.

The City does not know when any modification or easing of restrictions will happen. In light of this order, the City reached out to the County of Sonoma County Counsel regarding sale of safe and sane fireworks. County Counsel confirmed that it is their opinion, as of the writing of this staff report and based on the order, that selling fireworks is not an essential business.

The City has also been notified that the Kiwanis has canceled the July 3rd Fireworks Event. The City also reached out to our local Sonoma County cities that sell fireworks and have provided the following information:

Cloverdale:	Temporary Ban on Firework Sales/Canceling of Fireworks Show
Petaluma:	Banned Fireworks from this day forward due to extreme Fire Threats & Conditions
Rohnert Park:	Permits are on hold - Waiting new County Health Directive

It is expected that many localities are temporarily or permanently banning the sale of safe and sane fireworks as these events do have the potential to be large gatherings which are prohibited in the current order.

The Fire Chief has spoken with all three applicants who have informed the Chief that they understand the situation and all three applicants have stated that they can return all unsold fireworks to their suppliers for a full refund.

City staff is requesting City Council direction for sale of safe and sane fireworks. Typically, the City would recommend approval for these permits; however, with the COVID 19 pandemic, this is not a typical permit and requires discussion for what is best for the health and safety of our community during this serious public health threat to all individuals.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

No public comments have been received as of the writing of this staff report.

Public Notice:

This item was noticed in accordance with the Ralph M. Brown Act and was available for public viewing and review at least 72 hours prior to scheduled meeting date.

Fiscal Impact

There is no direct fiscal impact associated with the recommended action tonight.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the City Council Discuss and Consider the requests for temporary use permits for retail fireworks stands and provide direction to staff.

Attachment:

Applications (3) for Temporary Use Permits

