

ABOUT US:

We are the City of Boston fireworks task force
The Task Force is made up of:

- the Mayor's Chief of Civic Engagement
- four At-Large City Councilors
- the Boston Arson Squad (Fire Investigation Unit)
- the Boston Police Department's Bureau of Community Engagement, and
- community leaders.

Our job is to address the increase in illegal fireworks in neighborhoods across Boston, and to provide communities with information, resources, and advocacy tools.

REMEMBER:

Fireworks are not just a public health issue – **it's illegal to use fireworks** in the state of Massachusetts. According to the Massachusetts Fireworks Law (MGL Chapter 148, S.39), it is illegal for private citizens to:

- use
- possess, or
- sell fireworks in the state.

You also cannot buy them legally elsewhere and then transport them into Massachusetts.

RESOURCES AND ADVOCACY TOOLS:

Get Neighborly

Let individuals setting fireworks know how they are negatively impacting your quality of life. If a conversation is not an option, then get advice from your civic association, neighborhood liaison, City or elected officials.

Call 311

File a non-emergency complaint using BOS:311. You can dial **3-1-1**, download the App, or Tweet **@BOS311**. For more information, visit: **boston.gov/311**

Call 911

In the need of an immediate emergency response, call **9-1-1**

Tell your city councilor

Report your concerns to your local city councilor: **boston.gov/city-council**

Noise Score

Use the NoiseScore Smartphone app to identify hot spots where advocacy, enforcement, policy, and resources should be directed.

Resident-led Action Plan and Process (RAPP) Survey

Your quality of life matters. Share your experiences with us: **tinyurl.com/itsaRAPPsurvey**

PROGRAM PARTNERS:

- Community Noise Lab: **@noiseandthecity**
- Neighborhood Services: **boston.gov/ons**
- City Council: **boston.gov/city-council**
- Resident-led Action Plan & Process: **rappboston.org**



FIREWORKS SAFETY GUIDE

Illegal fireworks pose significant dangers to the safety of our residents and their property, and do not belong in our communities. This guide will provide you with information, resources, and advocacy tools to help push towards positive change in our communities.

Learn more at
boston.gov/fireworks

WHY THIS WORK IS IMPORTANT:

“Fireworks are a serious issue not only in the City of Boston, but all across the country. People lose sleep, babies get woken up, some people with PTSD experience real harms, pets are terrified and they’re fire hazards. Working together with our partners in public safety, the City Council and the community as a Task Force is an important way to address this issue and work to take fireworks off the streets.”

- Mayor Martin J. Walsh

NOISE LEVELS:

Sound levels from incessant use of fireworks are unreasonably loud. The City of Boston states that unreasonable sound levels are anything louder than 50 decibels from 11 p.m. to 7 a.m., or anything louder than 70 dB at any time.

On average, daytime sound levels in the City of Boston are 62 decibels (dBA), while nighttime sound levels are 58 dBA. Sound levels from fireworks are intermittent, random, and loud, measuring 130 - 150 decibels.

Sound levels from fireworks are a **public health issue**. Firework noise may trigger a flight-or-fight stress response. Sound levels of 55 decibels and higher have been shown to be associated with serious diseases, such as hypertension and heart disease.

MENTAL HEALTH

Many residents describe firework sounds as triggering. That’s especially true for those who have experienced trauma resulting from guns or bombs. Firework noise may also trigger feelings of anxiety and hopelessness. Results from the Community Noise Lab’s 2016 Greater Boston Neighborhood Noise report sheds light on these feelings. Residents felt that noise in their communities was:

- unwanted (98 percent)
- uncontrollable (95 percent)
- constant (80 percent), and
- impacting community health (65 percent).

FIRES AND PROPERTY DAMAGE CAUSED BY FIREWORKS

In the past decade (2010–2019), there have been 858 major fire and explosion incidents involving illegal fireworks reported to the Massachusetts Fire Incident Reporting System. The incidents caused 12 civilian injuries, 40 fire service injuries, and an estimated loss of \$2.9 million.

BURNS AND INJURIES CAUSED

BY FIREWORKS:

Lighting fireworks can cause severe scarring that can last a lifetime. In the past decade (2010–2019), 37 people were treated at Massachusetts emergency rooms for severe injuries including burns, loss of fingers, cuts, and loss of hearing from fireworks, according to the Massachusetts Burn Injury Reporting System. Fifty-four percent of the victims were under the age of 25.

