



NORTHERN MIDLANDS COUNCIL

POLICY MANUAL

FIREWORKS POLICY

Originated Date: Adopted 19 November 2007 – Min. No. 357/07 (as Policy 54)

Amended Date/s: Revised 19 August 2013 – Min. No. 214/13
Revised 20 February 2017 – Min. No. 57/17

Applicable Legislation: *Explosives Act 2012*
Explosives Regulations 2012

Objective To establish a policy to guide Council response to fireworks display permits

Administration: Community and Development

Review Cycle/Date: Next review 2021.

1. INTRODUCTION

This policy is to ensure that any fireworks displays within the built-up and rural residential areas of the Northern Midlands are conducted in such a manner to minimise any impact on residential amenity and the safety of horses and domestic animals.

This policy is intended to qualify Council's blanket objection to all fireworks displays within built-up and rural residential areas.

2. DEFINITIONS

<i>Act</i>	means the <i>Explosives Act 2012</i>
<i>Regulations</i>	means the <i>Explosives Regulations 2012</i>
<i>Type 1 fireworks</i>	means a cap, party popper, snap for bonbon or sparkler as defined in the Regulations.
<i>Type 2 fireworks</i>	means fireworks that are Shopgoods fireworks within the meaning of AS 2187.3 and are not Type 1 fireworks.
<i>Type 3 fireworks</i>	means fireworks other than Type 1 fireworks or Type 2 fireworks and are also known as professional display or large event fireworks.
<i>Fireworks display permit</i>	means a permit issued under regulation 88 of the Regulations.
<i>Residential area</i>	Includes rural residential areas.
<i>Secretary</i>	means the Secretary of the Department administering the Explosives Act and Regulations (Department of Justice).

3. BACKGROUND

The Northern Midlands Council respects the concerns of residents that fireworks displays, involving fireworks with a report, are potentially disturbing to domestic animals and horses. Such displays are generally discouraged within residential (including low density) areas.

The Northern Midlands Council endorses the RSPCA document "Fireworks are no Fun for Animals" attached to this policy.

4. OPERATION

Where complaints are made to Council about a fireworks display, Council will review the complaint and decide whether to lodge an objection against the display with the Secretary.



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Where Council becomes aware that a fireworks display was conducted within 5.5 km of the Launceston Airport, it will lodge an objection against the display with the Secretary.

5. PROPOSED DISPLAYS

- Displays, within residential areas, involving rockets and/or other air burst style fireworks are considered inappropriate and likely to distress domestic animals. Such displays shall not be supported;
- Council shall forward an objection in response to all applications including rockets and/or other air burst style fireworks in residential areas;
- Displays, within residential areas, not including rockets or other air burst fireworks and displays not within residential areas will not be opposed, provided:
 - Neighbours and pet owners in the immediate vicinity are given appropriate notification;
 - Previous displays for the site, or by the applicant, have been satisfactory (i.e. have not resulted in multiple complaints).

6. APPROPRIATE NOTIFICATION

In accordance with WorkSafe Tasmania's Application for Type 2 Fireworks Permits, a person issued a permit must give at least 7 clear days' notice of the display to the council's general manager and the owner or occupier of each property adjoining the site, **OR** give public notice of the display in a daily newspaper published and circulating generally in the region that the display is to be held in.

7. FAILURE TO NOTIFY

If Council becomes aware that notification was not given as required, it will lodge an objection with the Secretary.

The sight and sound of a fireworks display can pose a serious risk to your animal's safety.

Many animals are terrified by fireworks.

Unfortunately our celebrations can inspire fear and distress in animals, so it's essential responsible pet owners adequately prepare their animals for fireworks displays in their area.



Animal behaviorists believe that animals become fearful during fireworks displays because the sights, sounds and smells are extreme and unfamiliar to them.

Animals not accustomed to fireworks are likely to react in a negative way, and sadly, it is common for pets to panic and escape during suburban fireworks displays.

In their panic, these animals may become disoriented and/or lost, and some may be killed or severely injured.

Horses and other livestock may panic and try to escape the overwhelming impact of a fireworks display.

It is a condition of Fireworks Permits issued in Tasmania that surrounding residents are notified of your intention to use fireworks.

Noise generated from fireworks has the potential to cause conflict and concern to people in the immediate area of the display, as well as frighten pets and other animals such as horses and other farm animals. At least 48 hours prior to the date of your fireworks display please ensure that you properly inform residents in the surrounding area of the display, as well as inform property owners who have animals. The timing of this notice must be such so as to allow sufficient time for persons to manage their pets and animals. In any event at least 48 hours prior notice of the intended fireworks display must be given to people in the immediate area.

If you are planning a fireworks display on your property,

Please be a Good Neighbour and give surrounding residents as much notice as possible to allow them to make adequate arrangements for their pets



FIREWORKS ARE NO FUN FOR ANIMALS



To keep your animals safe and calm during a fireworks display, it is essential to take precautionary steps:

The RSPCA recommends that pet owners stay home with their pets.

If your pet begins to show signs of distress, encourage calm behaviour with praise and attention. Do not pat and comfort a scared dog, it will only increase the problem.

Instead be calm, cheerful and in control.

If someone cannot be at home, ensure your pets are indoors in a room that is safe and familiar.

Leave a radio on and some of their favorite things, or some old clothes with the your scent on them in the room for added comfort.

In case of escape, make sure your pets are well-identified with a microchip and collar and tag.

Make sure you leave plenty of water.

It can also help take your dog out on a lead for plenty of exercise well before the fireworks start, but dogs that panic can choke themselves on a collar or lead, so never use a check chain or slip collar to restrain your dog.



Also give them a good filling meal. A tired and well-fed pet will be far less anxious during the night.

OTHER ANIMALS

Rabbits, guinea pigs, birds and other small animals should be safely secured in a garage or outbuilding, away from the sight and sound of fireworks.

As an alternative, making sure there is sufficient ventilation, you can cover the cage with thick fabric to help muffle the sounds.

Horses, goats and other livestock should be securely stabled or moved to a different location during fireworks displays in their immediate area.

DO NOT TETHER YOUR ANIMALS

Tethered animals are likely to feel trapped and will panic even more. They can seriously injure themselves (and others), become entangled, or even choke in their efforts to escape



If you build a bonfire remember that it may attract small animals and birds looking for food or shelter during the day, so be sure to give it a good shake and make some noise before you light it.

Desensitisation may help to calm pets afraid of loud noises.

By regularly exposing animals to small samples the kind of sounds that frighten them, you may begin to desensitise them.

Start very quietly. Play the recorded sound just loud enough that you begin to notice some irritation, such as ear-twitching. Attract your dogs attention. Play, act as if everything is normal, and reward calm behaviour with praise and attention. Keep this up for a few minutes at a time, and try to leave the sounds on after you leave the room.

Repeat the process on a daily basis, gradually increasing the volume over the course of a few months. You will need to allow three to six months in advance to complete this kind of training, and with some animals you will need to continue it indefinitely or they will become sensitive again in between fireworks displays.

Unfortunately for some pets the fear of loud noises is completely overwhelming.

When pets have this kind of abnormal and excessive fear, it may feel like there is nothing you can do to calm them down.

If your pet suffers from an unmanageable phobia of fireworks or thunder, then it is at risk of injury when it panics.

To help keep your pet safe, you should take the time to make an appointment with your vet well before the date of the fireworks display. Discuss the problem with your vet or an animal behaviourist, who may recommend behavioural therapy, and in some cases may prescribe some calming medication.