



# Canadian National Fireworks Association

*Promoting fair access and safety in  
the sale and use of fireworks*

Unit K-2630 Progressive Way, Abbotsford, BC V2T 6H8

Toll free: 1-855-652-CNFA Tel: 604-853-2255 Fax: 604-852-3469 Email: [info@c-nfa.org](mailto:info@c-nfa.org)

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## Family Fireworks – A Tradition to Preserve, not Ban

**EDMONTON, ALBERTA--(Marketwired - June 27, 2014)** - The Province of Alberta is currently contemplating changes to the Alberta Fire Code that will effectively ban the use of family fireworks throughout Alberta, unless a municipality enacts a by-law. If the Alberta government adopts these proposed changes, this Canada Day will be the last time that we can enjoy our long-standing tradition of using family fireworks. Of course, the municipality that is forced to enact a by-law will also have to pay for its enforcement which will undoubtedly lead to budget pressure and possible future tax increases.

Why ban a legal product? Well apparently the current provincial Fire Code, which has been in effect since 2006 is onerous and complex, and therefore is not being adhered to. The Alberta Fire Chiefs Association, made up of Fire Chiefs that are required to enforce the regulation, have been pushing for a ban for years because, in the words of one fire marshal, 'fireworks are a hassle to regulate.' *Cotter, John, (2014, May 15).The Canadian Press. Retrieved from <http://globalnews.ca/news/1335003/alberta-considers-consumer-fireworks-ban/>* However, banning a federally regulated, legal product like fireworks in order for government to avoid the "hassle" will lead to an unsafe environment.

The CNFA's objective of creating safer communities for all Albertans is in fact aligned with that of the Alberta Fire Chiefs Association. However, we disagree with the way in which we achieve our shared objective. In fact, the CNFA believes that implementing a ban will work against the objective of safety. The CNFA is concerned that if Alberta bans legal fireworks, it will drive the sale and purchase of the product underground; eliminate the opportunity for public safety education; and allow the sale and use of illegal explosives, disguised as fireworks, to flourish. If a consumer wants to use fireworks, they'll figure out a way to buy them. So how is banning a legal product safer for Albertans?

In Canada, the federal government regulates the use, sale and storage of fireworks. Legal fireworks are safe when used according to the guidelines and regulations. Canadian family fireworks are put through rigorous government inspection and testing in order for it to be deemed a legal product, even when tampered with. According to national statistics gathered by the CNFA, you are over 100 times more likely to be injured by candles than fireworks and over 20 times more likely to experience property damage from candles than fireworks. So what's next...a ban on candles? I recently returned from the Manitoba Fire Chiefs Association annual conference where I was invited as a guest speaker. Manitoba, like Ontario and many other provinces across Canada, use the federal regulations to regulate fireworks, and yet the province does not report a high incident rate related to fireworks usage. In fact, all jurisdictions that use the federal regulations have a significantly reduced rate of reported personal and property damage related to fireworks. In Alberta, the provincial regulation is quite onerous and therefore it is not surprising that relatively few people adhere to it. It doesn't work and the changes being proposed won't make it any more



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effective. Essentially, the proposed changes to the Fire Code in Alberta will simply add bad policy to an already bad system.

The CNFA will continue to advocate on behalf of all Canadians so that we can all continue to enjoy legal family fireworks and ensure that they remain a part of our tradition. I urge you to join our efforts by asking your local MLA and Council to push for positive changes that will protect this time-honoured tradition. On behalf of the CNFA, I wish you all a safe and happy Canada Day!

Dominique Allen, Executive Director  
Canadian National Fireworks Association

*The Canadian National Fireworks Association is a national non-profit organization that represents the Canadian fireworks industry as well as all Canadians that enjoy fireworks. Its mission is to promote fair access and safety in the sale and use of fireworks through public education, advocacy with regulators, and member compliance. For more information on our association and fireworks regulation in Canada, visit our website at [www.nationalfireworks.ca](http://www.nationalfireworks.ca)*