



CITY of BEAVERTON
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SPECIAL MESSAGE
Thursday, July 1, 2021

MAYOR BEATY AND REPRESENTATIVE GRAYBER URGE WASHINGTON COUNTY RESIDENTS TO REFRAIN FROM FIREWORK USE

(Beaverton, OR) – Residents of Washington County are urged to refrain using any and all fireworks through at least July 9, 2021.

Washington County is no stranger to small gatherings of neighbors and families setting off fireworks. And while some community members enjoy using fireworks, they present multiple dangers. Household pets are often terrorized by the loud noises, and many pet owners turn to tranquilizers in an attempt to soothe the anxieties experienced by their furry friends. Moreover, many community members including veterans, those with PTSD, and others are re-traumatized by the sights and sounds of fireworks and threat of wildfires.

It has been less than one year since this region was blanketed in thick smoke and marked by orange skies that lasted for weeks due to nearby wildfires. Lives, homes, properties, and livelihoods were lost in those fires. Even for those who did not experience immediate, tangible losses, the impacts of stress were felt deeply. “I still remember how difficult it was to breathe outside,” said Mayor Beaty. “Our vulnerable elderly neighbors were especially endangered while the wildfires raged. Even though they were not caused by fireworks, the risk of repeating such an experience is just too great. It’s not worth the risk.”

Most residents who were in the Portland Metro area in September 2020 will still remember the sights, smells, and impacts of multiple wildfires. Outdoor activities were limited, community members who rely on opening windows at night to cool their homes could not do so, and our houseless population suffered in the smoky air. Many residents will also remember the Eagle Creek Fire of 2017 that burned 50,000 acres over three months and was started by a 15-year-old boy using fireworks.

Dacia Grayber represents Oregon’s House District 35 and serves on the House Special Committee on Wildfire Recovery. “We all have to do our part,” said Representative Grayber. “If you live in Washington County and have already purchased fireworks, we are urging you to refrain from using them.” As a current firefighter with Tualatin Valley Fire & Rescue,

Grayber is well acquainted with the risks and consequences: “we are all connected here across the region. It is our shared responsibility to take steps to prevent wildfires.”

In a [press release distributed by Tualatin Valley Fire & Rescue on June 29, 2021](#), the special district urged people to “not use fireworks this year,” and instead to “please consider attending a professional show, watching an event on television, or celebrating Independence Day without fireworks.” On June 30, Washington County [issued a similar statement](#) discouraging firework use.

Local first responders and national guard persons have already been stretched thin due to the pandemic and the recent heat wave. This is a situation where the community can come together to avoid adding another tragedy to the list. “We are urging you, no matter where you live in Washington County, to refrain from setting off fireworks – both legal and illegal fireworks,” said Grayber and Beaty.

Just this week, neighbor cities Portland, Tualatin, Forest Grove, West Linn and Wilsonville announced a ban on fireworks, joining a growing list of jurisdictions including Milwaukie, Clark County, Bend, parts of Eugene, and several cities in Southwest Washington. Other cities and jurisdictions have not yet had the opportunity to enact a ban.

Beaverton City Council held an [emergency meeting on June 30, 2021](#) to discuss firework use. Council opted for an advisory option instead of a ban. The City of Beaverton’s [news release on July 1](#) urges the community to restrict firework use.

“I was fully in support of the ban, and I’m disappointed with last night’s decision,” said Mayor Beaty. In continued response to the community’s requests for a ban, Beaty has been working with State Representatives and State Senators to lobby both the County and the Governor to take action. With or without a ban, Mayor Beaty hopes the community will heed the calls from our firefighters, emergency responders, and law enforcement officials and choose to celebrate this holiday safely.

If you would like to view fireworks safely, here are some professional shows nearby (please confirm availability as situations evolve):

- [Hillsboro Hops](#) (fireworks after the baseball game), Hillsboro Stadium, 4450 NE Century Blvd, tickets \$7-20
- [Let Freedom Ring](#) at Columbia County Courthouse Plaza (events begin at 1:30 p.m.)
- [Fort Dallas Fourth Firework Show](#), The Dalles (firework show begins at 10 p.m.)
- Beach/Bay Firework Shows: [Rockaway Beach](#), Lincoln City, Coos Bay

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