



## **Concord's Fireworks Reporting App Reduces Calls to 911, Deters Illegal Use**

*More than 100 fireworks confiscated*

*Concord, Calif. (July 9, 2021)* -- The City of Concord's Police Department deployed a successful new strategy this summer to help decrease fireworks-related calls to 911, improve response times to community reports of illegal fireworks use, and deter fireworks usage overall.

Using the City's existing ["Concord Connect" mobile app](#), the Police Department added a fireworks reporting tab that enabled members of the community to file real-time reports alerting officers to the specific locations of individuals who were setting off fireworks – all of which are illegal in Contra Costa County.

Between July 1 and July 7, 458 reports of illegal fireworks usage were reported through the app, while 320 fireworks-related calls came in through the City's 911 or non-emergency dispatch phone lines.

"The fireworks reporting app worked as it was designed," said Police Chief Mark Bustillos. "It allowed our 911 dispatchers to focus on responding to emergency calls, and it allowed our extra officers in the field to be dispatched immediately to fireworks-related calls, which resulted in the confiscation of more than 100 illegal fireworks."

The fireworks reporting component, which was launched on June 24, collected data regarding where and when complaints were being filed, and it enabled users to upload photos. The data showed that most reports came in between 9 p.m. and midnight and were more prevalent in certain parts of the city.

Using this information, the Police Department developed a strategy to put four extra officers on patrol on June 24-27 and July 2-4. A supervising officer monitored the real-time reports as they were logged and then communicated the locations of alleged illegal fireworks use to the team on patrol. Average response times to the app-based reports were 5 to 15 minutes, which is quicker than a fireworks-related (non-emergency) call being routed through 911 dispatch, in which calls are prioritized based on the level of emergency.

“This was a deterrence strategy that was intended to remind the community that fireworks are dangerous and illegal,” Bustillos said. “Our officers were visible throughout the community; they issued a handful of citations and took dozens of fireworks off the streets.”

The confiscated fireworks were logged, secured and then transported to the Contra Costa Fire Protection District for disposal.

The Police Department received several compliments and notes of thanks from community members who were grateful to the officers for their efforts to respond to reports of fireworks.

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