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Chair Vivian Santos & Members of Standing Policy Committee on Protection, Community Services and Parks
City of Winnipeg
510 Main Street
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Subject: Response to Item No 8 - Use of Fireworks on Private and Public Property – Standing Policy Committee on Community Services April 14, 2026

Dear Chair and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of the Canadian National Fireworks Association (CNFA), I am writing to provide a formal response to the Report regarding the Use of Fireworks on Private and Public Property, scheduled for discussion on April 14, 2026. As a follow-up to our correspondence on October 17, 2025, we remain committed to a balanced regulatory framework. However, the findings in this report confirm our concerns regarding the practical prohibition of safe, legal celebration for the overwhelming majority of Winnipeg residents.

1. The "De Facto" Ban on Private Property via Unscientific Setbacks

The report reaffirms a 100-foot (30-metre) clearance requirement from all structures and property lines. As the City's own data suggests, the vast majority of residential lots in Winnipeg cannot physically meet this standard.

Position: Maintaining this rigid standard effectively precludes fireworks for almost all urban residents. We urge the City to align with Federal regulations. Under the *Explosives Act*, Natural Resources Canada (NRCan) mandates that safety is ensured by following the manufacturer's instructions on the label of each firework product. Winnipeg's mandatory 30 metres (100-foot) clearance from buildings and trees for *all* fireworks is relatively rare and represents one of the most restrictive standards in Canada.

Scientific Disconnect: Federal labels require minimum safety distances based on the specific instructions labelled on each product—with distances varying from 1 to 2+ metres for products such as ground spinners and fountains. By applying a blanket 30 metre (100-foot) professional event Display-level setback to all Consumer-level products, Winnipeg is ignoring the scientific testing conducted by NRCan and remains at odds with the Federal authorization and Government of Canada regulations of over 4,000 regulated, approved and tested fireworks products.

2. Barriers to Cultural Inclusion and Administrative Overburden

Winnipeg is a diverse city where fireworks are central to celebrations including Diwali, Lunar New Year, Canada Day and New Years Eve. Unlike most major Canadian municipalities, Winnipeg has no designated permit-free days.

The Impact: The current permit-heavy model, combined with impossible setback requirements, disproportionately impacts Winnipeg residents and communities. This Permit-Only system creates an unnecessary administrative burden for the city and residents alike.

Recommendation: We recommend a Holiday Waiver system for these specific dates as they represent the highest volume of Winnipeg permit applications, allowing residents to celebrate safely without the friction of applying for a formal permit, provided they follow federal safety guidelines.

3. Education vs. Punitive Enforcement

The report emphasizes a \$500 fine and a Zero Tolerance enforcement model.

Position: Fines do not create safety; education does. CNFA reiterates our offer to provide free vendor certification, employee training programs and consumer safety training at no cost to the city. A punitive model that punishes all risks driving the industry underground, whereas a partnership focused on safety awareness protects the public realm more effectively. We do support fining delinquent users and those that are not following rules around time of use, cleaning up after use and following parameters born out of the CNFA's Be a Good Neighbour program, which we would be pleased to share again with you.

4. Supporting Local Small Businesses

Our members include local Winnipeg retailers who provide employment and contribute to the local economy. Overly restrictive clearance rules confuse consumers who purchase federally legal products only to discover they are banned from using them at home by municipal policy.

Recommendation: We ask for a collaborative effort between the WFPS and industry to create clear signage at the point of sale to help consumers understand where they can safely and legally celebrate, rather than penalizing them after the fact.

5. Reliance on Rejected CAFC Requests

The report relies heavily on previous motions by the Canadian Association of Fire Chiefs (CAFC) to support a ban on the sale and use of fireworks.

Contextual Omission: It is critical for the City of Winnipeg to note that despite repeated requests by the CAFC over several years, the Government of Canada has explicitly rejected requests for a ban on the sale and use of consumer fireworks. Furthermore, aligning Winnipeg's policy with failed requests for a national ban does not reflect the desires of residents, as evidenced by the high volume of permit applications filed annually.

Conclusion

The CNFA stands ready to work with City staff to refine these recommendations. We believe Winnipeg can achieve its safety goals without ending a long-standing tradition of responsible celebration and leverage local industry and a national association for education at the point of sale and enforcement at no cost to your residents. We respectfully request to be included in any future actions resulting from this report and in consultations well in advance of the report coming back in the first quarter of 2027.

Sincerely,



Aleem Kanji, BES, MAES, Ec.D

Chief Advocacy Officer

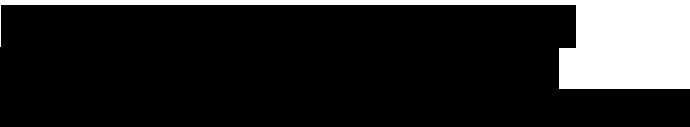
Canadian National Fireworks Association

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CC:

Senior Committee Clerk Pieter Prinsloo: 

Winnipeg Mayor and City Council: 

[REDACTED]

Winnipeg Fire Chief [REDACTED]

Kelly Guille, President Archangel Fireworks [REDACTED]

Matt Bialek, President Blast-off Fireworks [REDACTED]

Anita Roy - President Hindu Society of Manitoba [REDACTED]