



District of Columbia Government  
Advisory Neighborhood Commission 6A  
Box 75115  
Washington, DC 20013



March 6, 2007

Acting Chief Cathy Lanier  
Metropolitan Police Department  
300 Indiana Avenue, Suite 5080  
Washington, DC 20001

At our regularly scheduled meeting on February 8, 2007, with a quorum present, we voted unanimously to request that the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) and Fire and Emergency Medical Services (FEMS) enforce current laws regarding fireworks/firecrackers.

We understand and respect the difficulty enforcing the use of illegal fireworks and firecrackers in the District of Columbia. However, fireworks and firecrackers provide distractions from gun shots and more serious crimes, particularly on and around holidays such as the Fourth of July.

Accordingly, the two codes that apply to fireworks and firecrackers are: Chapter 33H of the District of Columbia Building Code Supplement of 2003 and Title 20, Chapter 27 of the DCMR entitled *Noise Control*. Chapter 33H DCBCS makes it a civil violation to use illegal fireworks or firecrackers in the District and Chapter 27 DCMR imposes specific noise levels with which all behavior in the District must comply.

After several discussions of the concerns of residents and of current law, our Commission presents two possible solutions. First, we request overtime pay for three Fire Marshals on July 3 and July 4, 2007. The Fire Marshals should be paired with First District police officers. These teams would reply exclusively to firework and firecracker calls as well as possible gun-shot calls. This allows Fire Marshals to take appropriate measures if firecrackers or fireworks are found on the scene, and allows the police officers to respond if the disturbance is gun fire.

Second, we recommend MPD and FEMS work with the Council to consider various ways to impede or discourage the use of illegal fireworks and firecrackers, particularly in residential zones. Specifically, we request that your departments ask the Council to consider adapting Title 20 to make the procurement, ownership, or use of illegal fireworks and firecrackers a crime and to consider the use of criminal fines. If you have any questions, then please contact Commissioner Stephanie Nixon at 202-222-8570.

On behalf of the Commission,

Joseph Fengler  
Chair, Advisory Neighborhood Commission 6A

Cc: Councilmember Wells  
Councilmember Mendelson