

No kabooms in town this New Year's

Written by Elizabeth Barrett
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Council puts kabosh on sale of fireworks in Gothenburg.

Merry makers who want to buy and shoot off fireworks this New Year's Eve will have to go elsewhere.

After a lengthy discussion on Oct. 5, Gothenburg City Council members decided not to allow for the sale and discharge of fireworks in town.

Because of a new legislative law that gives cities the option of whether or not to allow the sale of fireworks Dec. 28-31 and Jan. 1, two fireworks salespeople approached the council.

Ed Weuhler, who has had a fireworks stand for 40 years south of the tracks, requested that city officials approve the measure for Gothenburg as well as the sale of fireworks until 1 a.m. on Jan. 1.

Ed also asked the council to extend the time fireworks can be detonated on the Fourth of July.

Gothenburg's ordinance now allows for the discharge of fireworks beginning June 24, from 10 a.m.-10 p.m., and until midnight on July 4.

"It doesn't make sense to not be able to shoot them after dark," he said.

Weuhler's son Troy, who sells fireworks in Cozad, said that family packs—with 25-30 items—are one of the biggest sellers.

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"And you can't get them lit off in 20 minutes before 10 p.m. when it gets dark," he said.

Gothenburg police chief Randy Olson said he favors the 10 p.m. curfew on discharge of fireworks because of the number of complaints about noise from citizens.

Olson said he also receives complaints about litter and neighborhood pranks stemming from fireworks.

If an officer observes a violation or receives a complaint, he said the violation is confirmed and a warning is issued to the violator.

Subsequent violations mean the issuance of a citation, Olson said.

City code said the misdemeanor offense carries a \$35 to \$500 fine if the offender is found guilty.

Olson said he and the other officers are opposed to the sale and discharge of fireworks around and on New Year's Eve.

"We hire extra people and need to do things constructive to safety, not answering

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