

City Council of Ankeny...

I just wanted to share some of my experience with the legal fireworks this year. We were out of town until Tuesday night and as I turned onto 15th Street from Trilein at 9:30pm, it was like coming into a gray smoke-filled war zone. There were things going off in the middle of 15th street, then turning into our cul-du-sac, there was massive fireworks being shot off, 4 feet from my vehicle passing in the street, from my next-door neighbors.

Once I got inside the house, I could then hear the particles hitting our house and garage door...and our pickup, sitting outside the garage. At every explosion, it was like someone took a bucket of sand and slammed it against our house and windows. I didn't think of calling anyone about it because I assumed it was legal.

I just really don't see that it's a wise decision to allow any sort of fireworks in cities. Maybe if a person has at least an acre to allow for the debris to land on that person's personal property, then so-be-it. But I just can't imagine anyone wanting their house sandblasted for an hour by blowing this stuff up in the average sized city lot.

These neighbors probably had something that wasn't "allowed" for the city of Ankeny but how are you to 'police' that? You'd drive the police department nuts going into these war zones to ask what type of fireworks they are shooting off.

So, the next day I saw all the damage and residue. There were black embers on our deck, which is behind the house. Paint chips missing from our roof soffit. The driveway now has fresh pits in it from imploding pieces. Also burn holes in the driveway. It got me thinking, "If it can do that to a driveway, what's it doing to our roof?" I looked at one section that I could safely get to and found a couple spots that had been hit, causing damage and leaving debris there too. That seems VERY unsafe to me.

I realize the state dumped this onto you and you were willing to try it this year. It sounds like you've seen that the residents were having a hard time showing their ability to act responsibly with it. I think you would be wise to ban them from the city since you really have no way of policing the "type" of fireworks people will buy in Iowa or Missouri to shoot off here.

Yes, people will always shoot off fireworks...legal or not. We have one nearby neighbor who has shot them off for the past 13 years or so. We've not always been home but have heard that the police just stop by to tell them to stop, but it continues. If you return to the ban, I believe stricter fines and consistency in enforcing the law would solve the illegal use problem.

I would have never imagined seeing our neighborhood look like the news story of a massive big-city riot...but I did Tuesday night. And these people are great neighbors. I can only imagine what could happen in areas with folks who may have some harmful intentions. I was thinking that I could have set up a target in our back yard and did some gun target practice and no one would have known the difference. It's frightening to think of creating such an environment in our city where the residents would not be able to distinguish a nearby gun shot.

I think the most important piece of this situation is; if they can't be used without debris coming at, or landing on another person's property, then it's only common sense that they should not be allowed.

Here are some photos of just some of the damage. Although not a huge problem right now, I would not want to keep building on this damage year after year.

Thank you for listening...

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CITY OF ANKENY



