
Proposed Fireworks Ban Alpine Wyoming

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To Sarah Greenwald <office@alpinewy.gov>

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Dear Mayor Green and Members of the Town Council:

I am writing to respectfully oppose Ordinance No. 2026-003, which repeals the current ordinance and would prohibit the sale, use, and discharge of fireworks within the incorporated limits of the Town of Alpine, except through a Special Event Permit approved by the Town Council. As written, the ordinance makes it unlawful to sell fireworks within town limits and also prohibits their use and discharge within town limits.

This proposed change would have a devastating impact on my family, my employees, and other local businesses that depend on the seasonal fireworks economy. Our Alpine tent is by far our best location. It generates approximately \$200,000 to \$220,000 in annual revenue, which represents more than 50% of our total revenue. We have already committed to inventory for this year in the amount of approximately \$167,000, and that amount may increase. If this ordinance moves forward, the financial harm will not be theoretical. It will be immediate and severe.

The timing of this ordinance makes its impact even worse. Seasonal businesses like mine plan for the Fourth of July months in advance. We order inventory, line up employees, commit to rent, and prepare for one of the busiest sales periods of the year based on the rules currently in place. Trying to shut this down shortly before the Fourth of July would cause serious financial harm to businesses that have already made substantial commitments in good faith. Those costs cannot simply be reversed at the last minute. Inventory has already been purchased, workers are counting on those jobs, and local partners are depending on the business activity that comes with the season.

This business is not a side venture for us. It is our sole source of income, and my wife, child, and I rely heavily on it throughout the year. In addition, I employ several people, including close friends and family members, who depend on this work to help cover school, housing, missions, and other living expenses. The ordinance would not just affect one tent. It would directly affect multiple households.

The ripple effects extend beyond our business. I also pay rent to the gas station where we operate, and they rely on that rental income as well. Our customers do not only buy fireworks. Many of them come from out of state, spend money in Alpine, and support other local businesses while they are here. Since we began operating in 2018, we have worked hard to build a strong reputation in the Alpine community and among returning out-of-state customers.

I understand the Town's stated concern about wildfire risk and public safety. The ordinance and staff report state that the purpose is to prohibit the sale and use of fireworks within town limits, with limited use only through a Town Council-approved Special Event Permit, based on wildfire and safety concerns. I do not dismiss those concerns. Public safety matters. But this ordinance goes too far by imposing a complete ban on sales within town limits rather than pursuing narrower, practical safeguards.

There is a major difference between reasonable regulation and total prohibition. If the Town's goal is to reduce fire danger, there are less damaging alternatives available, including stricter hours of discharge, designated discharge areas, increased safety requirements for retailers, weather-based restrictions, or temporary limitations during periods of extreme fire danger. Those kinds of targeted measures would address safety concerns without destroying lawful seasonal businesses and the economic activity they bring to Alpine.

This year, in particular, many Americans will be celebrating the 250th birthday of our nation. Fireworks are closely tied to that celebration and to long-standing traditions of patriotism, family gatherings, and community spending. A complete ban on sales and use within town limits would undercut not only local business owners, but also residents and visitors who want to celebrate responsibly.

I respectfully ask the Town Council to reconsider Ordinance No. 2026-003 and reject the current blanket prohibition. At a minimum, I ask the Council to work with local business owners to find a balanced solution that addresses legitimate safety concerns without eliminating businesses, jobs, rental income, and tourism-related spending that Alpine has benefited from for years.

Respectfully, Matt Hansen