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For Release: Immediate
Date: June 24, 2020

PRESS RELEASE

City Officials Address Summer Safety as Capital Region Recovers from COVID-19

Mayor McCarthy: Illegal Fireworks Harm Neighborhood Quality of Life

SCHENECTADY – Mayor Gary McCarthy, Schenectady Fire Chief Ray Senecal, and Schenectady Police Chief Eric Clifford addressed various summer safety issues at a press event Wednesday, including the illegal use of fireworks throughout the City of Schenectady. Neighborhood complaints about illegal fireworks have surged in recent weeks, Mayor McCarthy noted.

City officials are asking residents who witness illegal fireworks and have knowledge of specific locations or addresses, to call the Schenectady County Unified Communications Center non-emergency dispatch at **518-630-0911**. The sale and use of fireworks is illegal in the City of Schenectady and can lead to an arrest and fine of up to \$250 for each individual launch of fireworks.

“I am deeply concerned about the pervasive use of illegal fireworks that has continued to have a negative impact on quality of life,” **Mayor McCarthy said**. “To launch fireworks at all hours of the night shows a blatant disregard and lack of respect for your neighbors and your community.”

The Schenectady Police Department continues to analyze firework-related calls to better determine primary offender locations. Mayor McCarthy and Chief Clifford will be meeting with other neighborhood leaders to discuss effective community strategies to help address the issue and to better inform residents.

“Every day our dedicated officers continue to respond to firework calls as they pose a serious quality of life and safety issue here in the City of Schenectady,” **Chief Clifford said**. “Not only can property damage and injuries occur with the use of fireworks, but a great deal of harm emotional harm can be done to those in our community living with conditions such as Autism and PTSD. In addition, companion animals can suffer tremendously throughout these months.”

As the Capital Region continues to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic, City officials also addressed other unique challenges the community is expected to face during the summer months, including the importance of social distancing, face coverings, fire hazards, illegal burning, bicycle safety, pool safety, and heat precautions, **Chief Senecal noted**.