

Date of Hearing: August 5, 2026

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Buffy Wicks, Chair

SB 828 (Cabaldon) – As Amended June 17, 2026

Policy Committee:	Emergency Management	Vote:	6 - 0
	Local Government		9 - 0

Urgency: No State Mandated Local Program: Yes Reimbursable: No

SUMMARY:

This bill expands oversight of a fireworks licensee by the State Fire Marshal (SFM) and local government entities.

Specifically, this bill:

- 1) Expands the definition of “dangerous fireworks” to include any type of firework not examined and tested by the SFM, revises the definition of a “fireworks kit,” and repeals the exemption of paper caps containing less than 0.25 grain of pyrotechnic composition per unit load from the State Fireworks Law (SFL).
- 2) Requires the SFM to adopt regulations to determine when a license is required for fireworks shipped to a California port that will not be sold in California; requires an import and export licensee to include the address of the facility where fireworks will be stored in an existing notice filed with the SFM; and requires the licensee to provide the notice to the applicable local jurisdiction.
- 3) Requires a fireworks licensee to provide certain documentation to the SFM, such as local permits required for fireworks activity, information about fireworks storage sites, and a Federal Explosives License; authorizes the SFM to deny or revoke the license of an applicant or holder that fails to provide such documentation; extends, from one year to five years, the time period during which the SFM may deny a license application or renewal without a hearing for an applicant that had a previous license denied or revoked for an SFL violation; extends, from 30 days to 90 days, the time period for which the SFM may suspend a license without a hearing pending investigation of an SFL violation; and authorizes the SFM to deny a license application or renewal from a person with additional types of civil and criminal violations beyond certain fire-related convictions.
- 4) Requires certain fireworks license applicants and holders to disclose the complete street address of an intended fireworks storage site to the SFM and applicable local officials; requires a licensee in violation be fined at least \$10,000 and authorizes the SFM to revoke their license; and requires the SFM to also notify applicable local officials of a storage site reported on an approved licensee’s application.
- 5) Sets higher fines for a violation of a county ordinance that is an infraction if the violation relates to fireworks, as follows: (a) up to \$1,000 for a first violation, (b) up to \$2,000 for a

second violation of the same ordinance within five years, and (c) up to \$5,000 for each additional violation of the same ordinance within five years of the first violation.

- 6) Authorizes a local agency to adopt a schedule of fees to recover the reasonable costs incurred in administering, processing, inspecting, and enforcing the conditions of permits required for fireworks activities or storage.
- 7) Requires a local agency to inspect, at least once every 12 months, each fireworks facility or storage site within the agency's jurisdiction for compliance with certain state and local requirements; authorizes the inspecting agency that requires correction of an unsafe or noncompliant condition to suspend or revoke the local permit and notify the SFM; and authorizes a local fire official to enter and inspect a premise used for the manufacture, storage, sale, or display of fireworks to determine compliance.
- 8) Adds a local law enforcement agency to the list of fire protection agencies that may seize fireworks and charge the holder an amount sufficient to cover handling costs.
- 9) Repeals the requirement that a local agency collecting fines or penalties resulting from the agency's seizure of dangerous fireworks forward 65% of the collected revenue to the State Controller for deposit in the SFM Fireworks Enforcement and Disposal Fund (SFM Fund).

FISCAL EFFECT:

- 1) The Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) anticipates no fiscal impact from this bill. Although this bill expands fireworks license requirements and the SFM's enforcement authority, the expansion is generally within the existing scope of work of the SFM. CAL FIRE notes the SFM already oversees licensure and enforcement under the SFL, and that this bill does not require the SFM to undertake additional enforcement measures. For these reasons, CAL FIRE contends that this bill would not create new costs, and the current SFL fee structure would continue to provide the necessary funding for licensing and enforcement at existing levels.

However, to the extent this bill increases public awareness about allowable fireworks activities and local enforcement efforts, this bill may create corresponding cost pressures, potentially in excess of \$150,000, for CAL FIRE to increase staffing to bolster state enforcement efforts (General Fund or SFM Fund).

- 2) Costs of an unknown, but potentially significant amount, by requiring a local agency to conduct annual inspections of each fireworks facility or storage site within the agency's jurisdiction. However, such costs are likely non-reimbursable by the state since this bill authorizes a local agency to adopt fees to recover the costs of such inspections.
- 3) SFM Fund revenue loss of an unknown amount, potentially in excess of \$150,000, by repealing the requirement that a local agency collecting fines or penalties resulting from the agency's seizure of dangerous fireworks forward 65% of the collected revenue to the State Controller for deposit in the SFM Fund. To the extent such revenue loss is significant, there may be a corresponding impact in the SFM's administrative and enforcement operations, potentially necessitating a GF backfill to support ongoing workload.

COMMENTS:

1) **Purpose.** According to the author:

The July 2025 explosion in Esparto, California was a terrible tragedy in the Senate District that I represent. The lives of 7 people were taken that day, and their families are still reeling from their losses. There are so many questions about what went wrong here, and I have a responsibility to the district to make sure that we do what we can to prevent such dangerous conditions to develop – apparently with state and local officials unaware...

By requiring upfront disclosure of storage locations and proof of local permits, SB 828 ensures alignment between state and local regulatory frameworks. This improves fire safety, enables better emergency response planning, and prevents unauthorized storage facilities.

This bill is supported by the California Association of Environmental Health Administrators, firefighter associations, and local government entities.

2) **Background. *State and Local Regulation of Fireworks.*** The SFM requires the licensing of all pyrotechnic operators, fireworks manufacturers, importer-exporters, wholesalers, retailers, and public display companies under the SFL. For example, a licensed retailer may sell “safe and sane” fireworks from June 28 to July 6 of each year, unless otherwise prohibited by a local ordinance. The SFM may deny or revoke a license under certain conditions and inspect a building or premises used by the licensee for a fireworks-related purpose.

In addition to a state license, a person wishing to conduct fireworks-related activities must also possess a permit from the applicable local government agency. To obtain a permit, the person must submit a written application to the fire chief or other authority designated by the city or county for the activity, and if the local government has not designated an authority, the person must submit an application to the SFM. A local government is prohibited from accepting a permit application unless the applicant demonstrates having a valid license issued by the SFM for the specified activities and may revoke the permit under certain conditions. The licensee must allow the chief of the issuing authority to inspect a building or premises used for a fireworks-related purpose. If dangerous fireworks are seized pursuant to a local ordinance that results in the collection of a fine or penalty, the administering local agency must forward 65% of the amount collected to the SFM Fund. A violation of the SFL is a misdemeanor, with increasingly severe penalties for the possession of dangerous fireworks.

Public Safety Fireworks Enforcement Task Force (Task Force). On July 1, 2025, a fire broke out at a fireworks warehouse storing approximately 100 million pounds of illegal fireworks in Esparto, California, causing several explosions and culminating in a large blast that killed seven and injured two people. News articles after the explosion noted how individuals related to the site lacked the proper state licenses and local permits to operate.

In response to the explosion, the SFM convened the Task Force to conduct a comprehensive review of current state laws and regulations related to fireworks, propose changes to enhance public safety, and develop a robust Fireworks Program enforcement plan. Among the categories of recommendations, the Task Force proposed several changes to the SFL, most of which are included in this bill: (a) clarify the SFM’s jurisdiction over fireworks imported via state ports, (b) align the Health and Safety Code’s felony disqualification with the

Department of Justice, (c) review the chain of approvals for license issuance, (d) remove the exception for paper caps, (e) expand or clarify the definition of a fireworks kit, (f) increase the suspension timeframe, (g) include law enforcement agencies in the inspection authority, and (h) increase allowable fines for county ordinances relating to fireworks. The Task Force also recommended moving license scope from statute to regulation, but that recommendation is not included in this bill. This bill also makes other changes to better coordinate the fireworks licensing and permitting processes and repeals the requirement that a local agency forward 65% of fine and penalty revenue to the SFM Fund.

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