



## Testimony of Vicki Schmidt, Hebron ME in support of LD 1348, An Act To Limit the Decibel Level of Fireworks Near Working Farms

May 7<sup>th</sup>, 2021

Senator Deschambault, Representative Warren, and members of the Joint Standing Committee On Criminal Justice & Public Safety.

Thank you for today's opportunity, I am Vicki Schmidt from Hebron Maine and I am a State Fire Instructor III with the Maine Fire Services Institute, I am also member of the Buckfield Fire Department, and serve on the Maine Fire Protection Services Commission for Volunteer and On-Call Firefighters on behalf of the Maine Federation of Firefighters. Additionally, I own Troika Drafts, a 150 acre working draft horse farm in Hebron. The things I know best are horses, agriculture, fire, and emergency services.

As a State Fire Instructor one of the customized programs I instruct is Large Animal Emergency Rescue (LAER). My courses are designed for farm owners, firefighters, and other emergency responders. Fireworks are not only a major cause of large animal emergency rescue incidents; the resulting stress to the animal often results in their death. In addition, while the stress of fireworks to livestock may not always escalate to an emergency incident level, there is ample evidence it does result in the loss and injury of young stock due to trampling, and reduced milk production, especially in dairy cattle.\*

Since fireworks became legal in 2012 I have been involved in many LAER incidents caused by fireworks. Most notably, in the early morning hours of July 8<sup>th</sup>, 2020. Livestock, horses included, are "flight" animals. In a panic situation it is nearly impossible to contain them. Due to the complexity of this entrapment incident, local first responders spent nearly five hours working to free the horse. During these hours alternative crews and apparatus were depended on to serve the towns routine calls. This incident cost the local taxpayers \$3500 in response, not including what was donated by volunteers helping at the scene. While fireworks are considered "entertainment", no form of entertainment should cause this degree of pressure on public resources, nor should it routinely cost neighborhood livestock owners loss and stress to their livelihood.

The fireworks industry has the technology to reduce, if not fully prevent, fireworks related stress to livestock. As mandatory in many other areas and countries, **low-noise fireworks**, are easily available at firework outlets throughout Maine and provide a viable option. I urge your support for LD1345, not only for our working farms, but for our family farms and homesteads as well.

Thank you,

Vicki Schmidt  
Troika Drafts & Harness Shop, Hebron ME  
Firefighter, Buckfield ME  
Maine Fire Services Instructor III  
Maine State Federation of Firefighter, Volunteer & On-Call Firefighters, MFPS  
207-890-4590

\*[Why Cows and Fireworks Don't Mix | Modern Farmer](#)

## Additional Information for CJ&PS Committee and Work Session

[Quiet Fireworks \(firework-review.org.uk\)](http://www.firework-review.org.uk)  
[www.firework-review.org.uk/quiet-fireworks/](http://www.firework-review.org.uk/quiet-fireworks/)

[Low Noise Fireworks | Illusion Fireworks | Quiet Firework Displays](https://www.illusionfireworks.com/low-noise-fireworks)  
<https://www.illusionfireworks.com/low-noise-fireworks>

Lots of great info from the UK where Low Noise are popular and also successfully mandated in many areas.

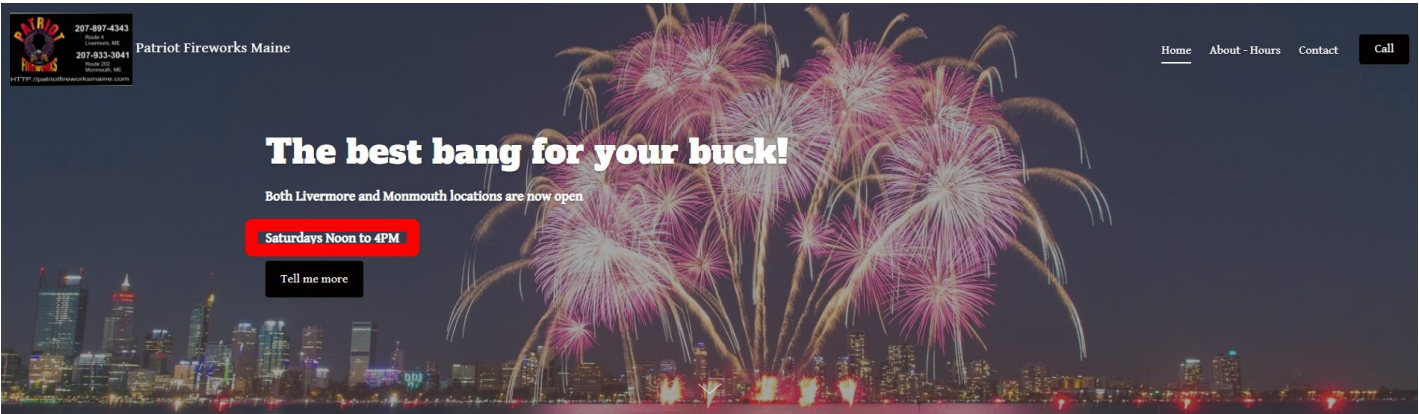
Phanton Fireworks offers **13 options for low-noise fireworks**. They have at least 4 locations in Maine. <https://fireworks.com/blog/noiseless-fireworks>

The screenshot shows the Phantom Fireworks website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with 'Company' and a search bar. Below the navigation bar, there are several menu items: 'FIREWORKS', 'LOCATIONS', 'SPECIALS', 'FUNDRAISING', 'SAFETY', and 'ONLINE STORE'. The Phantom Fireworks logo is prominently displayed in the center. Below the navigation bar, there is a search bar with the text 'You searched for 'low noise'' and '13 results'. The search results are sorted by 'Relevance' and show 12 items per page. The results are displayed in a grid of four product cards. Each card features an image of the fireworks product, a category label, a product name, and a price. The products shown are: 'Flying Stars No Noise Fountain' for \$19.99, 'Serenity No Noise Fountain' for \$24.99, 'Scatter Bug, 16 shot' for \$34.99, and 'Flaring Stars Fountain' for \$15.99. Each card also includes an 'Add to Favorites' button.

If the fireworks industry sincerely cares about working\*\* to protect livestock in Maine they can commit to create low-cost high-impact information for their stores that ensure:

- \* promotion of the many benefits and uses of Low Noise fireworks
- \* offerings for Low-Noise fireworks are fully represented and categorized on their webpages
- \* work with stakeholder to create signage and other infograms regarding
- \* Low-Noise point of sale questions such as “does any nearby property house horses or livestock”, if so, are you aware of the requirement of Low-Noise fireworks at the location of detonation?

\*\* ideally with Maine livestock industry stakeholders and livestock owners



*Closed for winter and limited hours offers little/no positive economic impact to Maine compared to the loss and injury of livestock owned by our 7-days a week year-round farms.*

Low Noise fireworks noted as a featured item!  
They are easily and readily available in Maine!

***Edgecomb@pyrocitymaine.com***  
***Laurie Robinson, Manager***

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Closed for the Winter, Spring is just around the corner, Really! See you then.

***Farmington@pyrocitymaine.com***  
***Scott Turcotte, Manager***

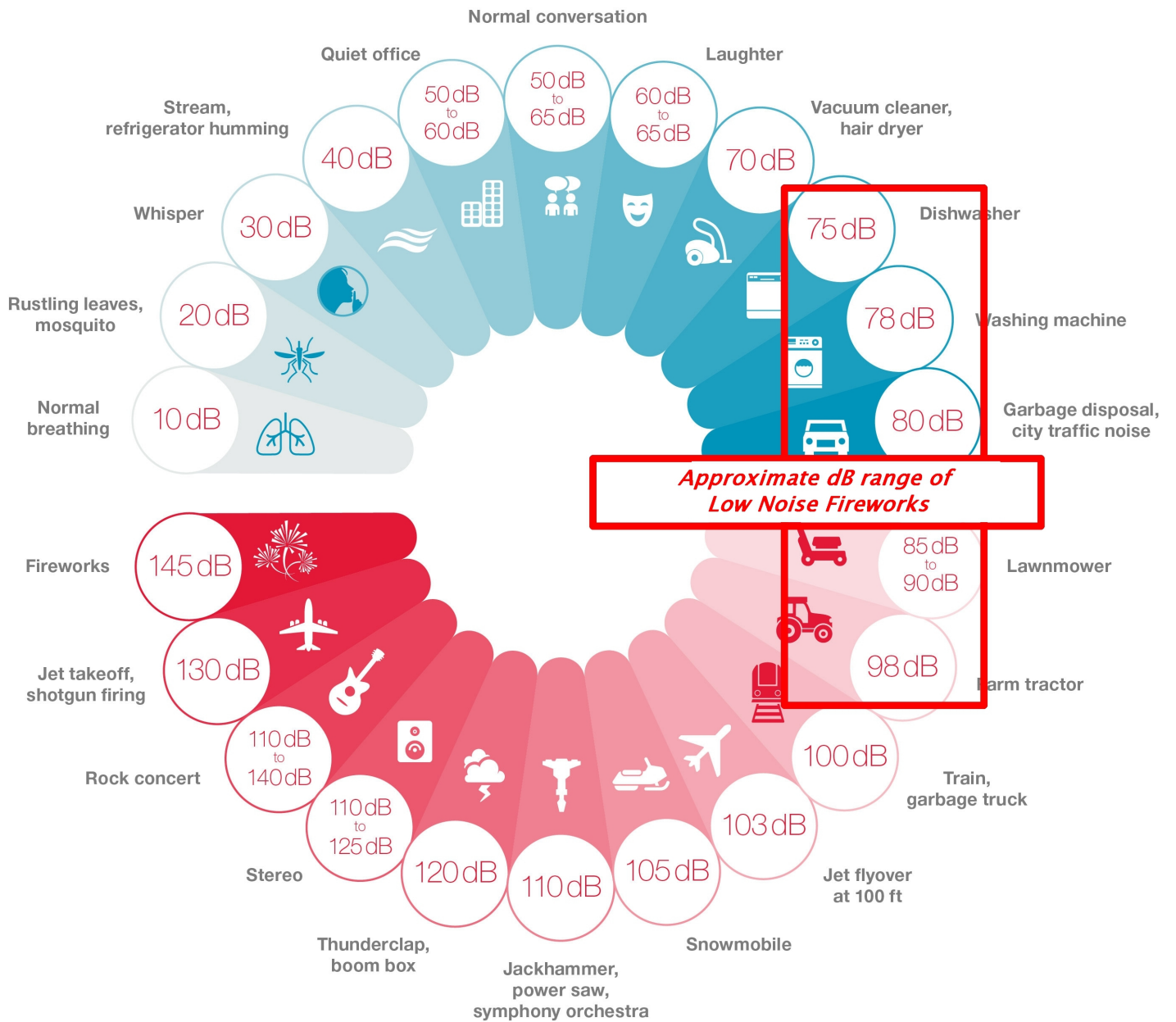
Well shucks, the Patriots fizzled out. Super Bowl parties still need a halftime show, thank goodness. You know whatever you do will be better than what is on the tube. School vacation is coming down the track full speed. Come on in for some fountains for the backyard and create some family memories.

**Featured Item**

"Frick & Frack" from Black Cat Fireworks. Bonus two different fountains for the price of one. These are fun, great color, low noise and fun flashing faces. The kids really dig these.



# How loud is too loud?



**EarQ**