

## Metro mayors: Firecracker ban part of health measures

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Only Muntinlupa, Makati and Quezon City have ordinances banning the sale and use of firecrackers in their localities, with violators facing fines or imprisonment.

### Watchdog's statement

On Tuesday, an environment and health watchdog backed the RPOC-NCR resolution, saying it would greatly benefit public health and the environment.

“We expect concerned local government[s] to heed the council’s recommendation, adopt the necessary policy measures and conduct effective public information and law enforcement activities to ensure zero use of dangerous and polluting firecrackers in their areas of jurisdiction,” Thony Dizon, chemical safety campaigner of Ecowaste Coalition, said in a statement.

“Local government[s] in other regions, we hope, will do the same for the health and safety of their constituents and the protection of the ecosystems,” Dizon said.

In November, Ecowaste Coalition wrote to the Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases, proposing a national ban on firecrackers and fireworks amid the health and climate emergencies in the country.

Celebrating with fireworks and firecrackers encourages mass gatherings, an activity that is discouraged during the coronavirus pandemic, it said.

“Even minor injuries resulting from firecracker and firework accidents will require emergency care and treatment at a hospital ... further straining an already overburdened health-care system,” the group said.