

## MM mayors vow crackdown on firecracker use

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Several mayors in Metro Manila warned yesterday they would crack down on persons using firecrackers and pyrotechnic devices to welcome the New Year.

The announcements came after the Metro Manila Council issued a resolution prohibiting the individual or household use of firecrackers and other pyrotechnic devices during general community quarantine period.

The resolution noted that such activities may attract mass gatherings without proper observance of safety protocols such as social distancing.

In Quezon City, Mayor Joy Belmonte said she has ordered the strict enforcement of a 2017 ordinance prohibiting the use of firecrackers and pyrotechnic devices in all public places in the city.

Those caught violating the provisions of the ordinance face a fine of P5,000, one year in prison or both depending on the discretion of the court.

A separate Quezon City ordinance also prohibited selling, giving and sharing of any type of firecracker to minors in the city.

According to the city government, there are only three community fireworks displays allowed this year, which will be held at the Quezon Memorial Circle, Eastwood City and Araneta Center.

No crowd will be allowed in the venues to prevent the spread of coronavirus, with the fireworks displays streamed online.

In Mandaluyong, Mayor Menchie Abalos said yesterday she has issued an executive order prohibiting the manufacturing, distributing, selling and using fireworks in the city are prohibited to protect residents from the threat of COVID-19 during New Year revelries.

Manila Mayor Isko Moreno, meanwhile, urged residents to spend their money on food and other essentials rather than use firecrackers to welcome the New Year.

He said people should use a sound system or strike metal objects if they believe they must make loud noises for the New Year.

Pasay Mayor Emi Rubiano said she has signed an executive order banning the use of fireworks within the city to curb the spread of COVID-19.

The city public information office said Pasay's yearly fireworks display would not push through.

Pateros Mayor Ike Ponce also issued an executive order imposing a total ban on the possession and use of all kinds of firecrackers, fireworks and pyrotechnic devices in the municipality, citing injuries and COVID-19 as his basis for the prohibition.

– Emmanuel Tupas, Neil Jayson Servallos, Jose Rodel Clapano, Ralph Edwin Villanueva