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To: ["Direct to Mayor and Council"](#)

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Subject: Ban on the sale of gun-shape lighters news release (July 23, 2025)

Dear Mayor and Council,

Following your approval at today's Council meeting, I am writing to inform you that the City will be issuing the below news release regarding the ban on the sale of gun-shaped lighters in Vancouver.

Maria will reply to this email with the relevant Vancouver.ca link and social media links, once these are live.

Thanks,

Karen

Vancouver becomes the first jurisdiction in Canada to ban the sale of gun-shaped lighters

Vancouver is the first city in Canada to ban the sale of gun-shaped lighters, following a vote by City Council aimed at reducing public safety risks and limiting the circulation of these devices.

A gun-shaped lighter is a small handheld or torch lighter that looks like a gun. It has parts like a trigger, barrel or handle that make it resemble a real firearm.

"Being the first in Canada to take action on gun-shaped lighters shows our commitment to public safety," said Mayor Ken Sim. "It's about keeping our communities safe, and we're not stopping here. We will be inviting the Province and federal government to work with us on broader solutions so that gun-shaped lighters do not continue to pose a risk."

This decision follows Vancouver Police Department (VPD) data showing a significant rise in incidents involving gun-shaped lighters, with 162 related calls in 2024 alone. Easily mistaken for real firearms, gun-shaped lighters can escalate police interactions and prompt 911 calls that are prioritized, resulting in elevated police response.

"Gun-shaped lighters pose a serious risk to public safety due to their realistic appearance," said VPD Chief Constable Steve Rai. "This ban represents a proactive measure to reduce unnecessary risks to public safety and to prevent potentially dangerous encounters during police responses. It's an effective tool to address a growing concern, and combined with our public outreach efforts, we're hopeful it will lead to a decline in

incidents involving these devices.”

Next Steps

Effective immediately, the amended Licence By-law prohibits the sale of gun-shaped lighters in Vancouver. Businesses found selling these devices will face a \$1,000 fine under the updated Ticket Offences By-law.

Approximately 50 to 75 stores in Vancouver are estimated to currently sell gun-shaped lighters. While individuals may still possess these items or purchase them outside city limits, the City is acting within its jurisdiction to reduce their presence locally.

The City will notify all licensed retail businesses of the new bylaw and enforcement measures. VPD officers and bylaw staff will monitor compliance and continue public education efforts.

Residents who see gun-shaped lighters being sold in stores are encouraged to report it to the VPD’s non-emergency line at 604-717-3321.

Learn more about the ban here: <https://council.vancouver.ca/20250723/documents/cfsc2.pdf>