

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Prevent Blindness Texas Warns Public on the Dangers of Fireworks,
Potential for Devastating Injuries**

***- Non-profit Group Provides Tips on What to Do if Eye Injury from
Fireworks Occurs -***

Houston, TX (June 26, 2018) – While many Americans spend the Fourth of July holiday with friends and family, some actually spend their time being medically treated for a fireworks injury. [The latest report](#) from the U.S. Consumer Products Safety Commission found an estimated 7,600 fireworks-related injuries were treated in U.S. hospital emergency departments during the Independence Day period.

There were an estimated 11,100 fireworks-related injuries for the year. Unfortunately, many injuries are to children. In fact, children younger than 15 years of age accounted for 31 percent of the estimated injuries.

Although most injuries result in burns, firework-related injuries to the eye include contusions, lacerations, and foreign bodies. Injuries may be so severe that permanent vision loss or blindness may occur. And, in 2016, four people died from direct impacts from fireworks.

Prevent Blindness Texas [supports](#) the development and enforcement of bans on the importation, sale and use of all fireworks and sparklers, except those used in authorized public displays by competent licensed operators. However, the group also warns that even professional displays can be dangerous, due to the erratic or unpredictable nature of fireworks.

In the event of an eye emergency, Prevent Blindness Texas recommends:

- Seek help from a medical professional immediately.
- Do not rub the eye. Rubbing the eye may increase bleeding or make the injury worse.
- Do not attempt to rinse out the eye. This can be even more damaging than rubbing.
- Do not apply pressure to the eye itself. Holding or taping a foam cup or the bottom of a juice carton to the eye are just two tips. Protecting the eye from further contact with any item is the goal.

- Do not stop for medicine! Over-the-counter pain relievers will not do much to relieve pain. Aspirin (should never be given to children) and ibuprofen can thin the blood, increasing bleeding. Take the injured person to the emergency room at once.
- Do not apply ointment. Ointment, which may not be sterile, makes the area around the eye slippery and harder for the doctor to examine.

“Every year, thousands of people are injured due to accidents involving fireworks. These happen in a split second, often to bystanders, and some injuries are so severe that permanent damage occurs,” said Heather Patrick, President and CEO of Prevent Blindness Texas. “We urge everyone to leave the fireworks to the experts and to always be vigilant, even during professional displays.”

For more information on the dangers of fireworks, please call Prevent Blindness Texas at 1-888-98-SIGHT or visit preventblindness.org/prevent-eye-injuries-fireworks.

About Prevent Blindness Texas

Founded in 1956, Prevent Blindness is the state’s leading volunteer eye health and safety organization dedicated to fighting blindness and saving sight. Focused on promoting a continuum of vision care, Prevent Blindness Texas touches the lives of thousands of people each year through public and professional education, advocacy, community and patient service programs and research. These services are made possible through the generous support of the Texas public. Through a network of regional offices and volunteers, we are committed to eliminating preventable blindness in Texas. For more information, or to contribute to the sight-saving fund, call 1-888-98-SIGHT or, visit us on the Web at preventblindnesstexas.org or www.facebook.com/preventblindnesstexas or www.twitter.com/pbtexas.

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