

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

For more information:
Prevent Blindness
Sarah Hecker
(312) 363-6035
shecker@preventblindness.org

Prevent Blindness Urges Public to Celebrate Independence Day Safely without Using Fireworks

- National Eye Health Group Educates Public on Dangers of the Use of Consumer Fireworks-

CHICAGO (June 19, 2019) – The Fourth of July is quickly approaching and with that comes an increase in injuries related to fireworks. According to the latest report from the [U.S. Consumer Products Safety Commission \(CPSC\)](#), an estimated 8,700 fireworks-related injuries (or 67 percent of the total estimated fireworks-related injuries in 2017), were treated in U.S. hospital emergency rooms around the Independence Day period.

In addition, there were eight reports of non-occupational fireworks-related deaths during 2017. Seven victims died from direct impacts of fireworks, and one victim died in a house fire caused by misusing a firecracker.

Massachusetts is the only state that bans all consumer fireworks, according to the [American Pyrotechnics Association](#). Illinois, Ohio and Vermont allow only wire or wood stick sparklers and other novelty items. Across the country, many ordinances vary within each state and between different municipalities.

[Prevent Blindness](#), the nation's oldest eye health and safety non-profit organization, urges all consumers to celebrate the holiday safely without using fireworks, especially children. In fact, the CPSC states that children 10 to 14 years of age accounted for the highest rate of ER-treated fireworks injuries in 2017.

Prevent Blindness also warns that those who attend professional displays must still be cautious, as accidents and injuries may also occur due to the erratic or unpredictable nature of fireworks.

The [American Academy of Ophthalmology](#) recommends those who are attending or live near a professional fireworks show to:

- Respect safety barriers, follow all safety instructions and view fireworks from at least 500 feet away.
- Do not touch unexploded fireworks; instead, immediately contact local fire or police departments to help.

“Fireworks are part of the tradition of celebrating Independence Day for many Americans. Once again, we’re asking the public to celebrate in ways that won’t put them at risk for a trip to the emergency room,” said Jeff Todd, president and CEO of Prevent Blindness. “Please leave the fireworks to the professionals and remain vigilant, even when attending public displays.”

For more information on the dangers of fireworks, please call Prevent Blindness at (800) 331-2020, or visit preventblindness.org/prevent-eye-injuries-fireworks.

About Prevent Blindness

Founded in 1908, Prevent Blindness is the nation'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 touches the lives of millions of people each year through public and professional education, advocacy, certified vision screening and training, community and patient service programs and research. These services are made possible through the generous support of the American public. Together with a network of affiliates, Prevent Blindness is committed to eliminating preventable blindness in America. For more information, or to make a contribution to the sight-saving fund, call 1-800-331-2020. Or, visit us on the Web at preventblindness.org or facebook.com/preventblindness.

###