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Prevent Blindness Declares Second Annual Fireworks Safety Awareness Week as June 28-July 4 to Educate Public on the Dangers of Fireworks

- Prevent Blindness Urges Public to Celebrate Independence Day Safely, Leave Fireworks to Competent, Licensed Operators in Authorized Displays Only -

CHICAGO (June 22, 2022) – [Prevent Blindness](#), the nation's oldest nonprofit eye health and safety organization, has declared June 28-July 4, 2022 as the Second Annual Fireworks Safety Awareness Week, to help educate the public on the dangers of fireworks. During the week, Prevent Blindness will post messages on its various social media channels, as well as offer free shareable materials including [fact sheets](#) and social media graphics. Prevent Blindness has also issued its own [Fireworks Position Statement](#).

The [American Pyrotechnics Association](#) states that 49 states plus the District of Columbia allow some or all types of consumer fireworks. Illinois and Vermont allow only wire or wood stick sparklers and other novelty items. Massachusetts bans all consumer fireworks.

The most recent annual report from the [United States Consumer Product Safety Commission \(CPSC\)](#) found that an estimated 10,300 fireworks-related injuries were treated in U.S. hospital emergency departments during the 1-month period between June 21-July 21, 2020. The report also found that during that time period:

- 71% of fireworks-related injuries were to males.
- 15% of fireworks-related injuries were to the eyes.
- Firecrackers were the leading cause of fireworks-related injuries, followed by sparklers.
- Adults ages 20-24 years had the highest estimated rate of emergency department-treated, fireworks-related injuries (17 injuries per 100,000 people). (The number is approximately three times the rate of injury for the same group in 2019, and is driven by an increase in injuries among females.)

Additionally, children younger than 15 years of age accounted for 18% of the estimated injuries. In fact, there were an estimated 400 injuries to small children, ages 0-4, due to sparklers alone. According to the [Illinois Fire Safety Alliance](#), sparklers can burn at up to 1,800 degrees.

Prevent Blindness has declared 2022 as the Year of Children's Vision in an effort to increase awareness and education on the importance of saving sight for kids. The group asks parents to talk to their children about the dangers of using fireworks and to encourage other holiday activities, such as making 4th of July-themed crafts, to celebrate the holiday safely.

A [recent report](#) found that bystanders account for 40%–50% of those injured by fireworks, meaning adults and children must be vigilant, even when just observing firework displays. Prevent Blindness urges the public to attend only authorized public fireworks displays conducted by licensed operators, but be aware that even professional displays can be dangerous.

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

- Seek medical attention 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, including the child's hand, 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 child to the emergency room at once – this is more important than stopping for a pain reliever.
- Do not apply ointment. Ointment, which may not be sterile, makes the area around the eye slippery and harder for the doctor to examine.

“Independence Day should be spent with family and friends, not in an emergency room,” said Jeff Todd, president and CEO of Prevent Blindness. “By celebrating the holiday safely, without consumer fireworks, lasting, wonderful memories can be made for years to come.”

For more information on the dangers of fireworks, please call Prevent Blindness at (800) 331-2020, or visit <https://www.preventblindness.org/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, visit us at preventblindness.org, and follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [YouTube](#).

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