

FIREWORKS EYE SAFETY

Fireworks are exciting, fun and spectacular, but decades of experience have taught us that they are dangerous and should be left to professional firework handlers.

Every Fourth of July period fireworks send approximately 11,000 individuals to the emergency room and 18 percent of these visits involve an injury to the eye.

Do not allow your children to play with fireworks. Young people, under age 25, suffer over two-thirds of all firework injuries. An estimated 10 percent of these young people injured suffer permanent damage, such as the loss of an eye, finger or hand.

Although the illegal firecrackers, bottle rockets and Roman candles account for two-thirds of fireworks injuries, seemingly harmless sparklers also cause numerous injuries each year. For children under age five, sparklers account for three-quarters of all fireworks injuries. Fascinated by the bright sparks, young children find these sticks of fire - burning as hot as 1,200 degrees Fahrenheit, hot enough to melt gold - irresistible to touch.

The following steps can help you and your family celebrate safely this year at public fireworks displays:

- View displays from at least 500 feet (1/4 mile) away
- Respect safety barriers set up by pyrotechnicians
- Let trained professionals light the fireworks
- Don't touch unexploded fireworks

Play it safe this year and let the professionals handle the fireworks.

*Approximately
2,000 eye
injuries occur
each year
because
of fireworks*

For more information or
to find an Eye M.D., visit
www.aao.org

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