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Prevent Blindness Warns Public About the Impact of Firework Injuries to Healthy Eyesight

- National Eye Health and Safety Group Provides Ideas on Alternatives to Using Fireworks for Independence Day Celebrations -

CHICAGO (June 25, 2020) – Every year, [thousands of Americans](#) are injured due to fireworks, specifically during the 4th of July holiday period. And, according to a recent study, “[Assessment of Firework-Related Ocular Injury in the US](#)” in *JAMA Ophthalmology*, more than 34,000 firework-related ocular injuries were seen in U.S. emergency departments during the 19-year study period. Ocular burns were the most frequent type of eye injury from fireworks, and bottle rockets were a common firework type that disproportionately caused serious ocular injury, including ruptured globe.

[Prevent Blindness](#), the nation’s oldest volunteer eye health and safety non-profit organization, urges all consumers to celebrate the holiday safely without using fireworks. Children are at higher risk for injuries from fireworks. The [most recent report](#) from the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission stated that children 0 to 4 years of age had the highest estimated rate of emergency department-treated, fireworks-related injuries, while older teens, 15 to 19 years of age, had the second highest estimated rate.

According to the [American Pyrotechnics Association](#), Massachusetts is the only state that bans all consumer fireworks, while 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.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, many public displays of fireworks have been cancelled. For those that are still being held, Prevent Blindness warns that anyone who attends a professional display must still be cautious, as accidents and injuries may also occur due to the erratic or unpredictable nature of fireworks.

Prevent Blindness offers alternative ideas to celebrate the holiday safely:

- Decorate 4th of July treats using white frosting, blueberries and raspberries or strawberries.

- Make paper rockets by using paper towel rolls, paint or markers, streamers and child-safe glue. Make pinwheels or wind socks with an Independence Day theme.
- Create a patriotic wreath, pasting red, white and blue stars in a circle. Hang it from a door or window.
- Paint flower pots in red, white and blue and plant new seeds or festive flowers.
- Decorate bicycles, scooters and wagons in red, white, and blue. Have a family parade.
- Hang decorative string lights and have a dance party with patriotic music.
- Design and decorate t-shirts and hats using glow in the dark paints. Add puffy paints and glitter to make them sparkle.
- After the sun goes down, wrap flashlights in colored cellophane to provide fun shades of light.
- Purchase non-toxic glow-sticks, ropes and jewelry that can safely light the night for kids.

“There are so many ways for families to celebrate Independence Day safely without using fireworks,” said Jeff Todd, president and CEO of Prevent Blindness. “We urge everyone to avoid fireworks and spend the 4th of July with family and friends, instead of in the emergency room.”

For more information on the dangers of fireworks, please call Prevent Blindness at (800) 331-2020, or visit 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, or to make a contribution to the sight-saving fund, call 1-800-331-2020. Or, visit us on the Web at www.preventblindness.org or facebook.com/preventblindness.

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