

Facts About Fireworks Injuries



Prevent Blindness wants all Americans to know the dangers of consumer fireworks. The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission reports the following fireworks injury statistics:

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- > Fireworks devices were involved in an estimated 10,500 injuries treated in U.S. hospital emergency rooms in 2014 (the latest year for which data is available).
- > An estimated 7,000 injuries were treated in hospital emergency rooms during the one-month period (June 20–July 20) surrounding the Fourth of July.
- > 19 percent, or 1,200, of those injuries were to the eyes.
- > Sparklers accounted for 1,400 injuries, firecrackers (1,400) and bottle rockets (100).
- > Males accounted for 74% of fireworks injuries.
- > 40% of fireworks injuries were to children under age 15.
- > For children under 5 years old, sparklers accounted for the most estimated injuries for that specific age group.
- > Data from the U.S. Eye Injury Registry shows that bystanders are more often injured by fireworks than operators themselves.
- > Contusions, lacerations and foreign bodies were the most common injuries to eyes.
- > There were 11 fireworks-related deaths in 2014.



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Facts About Fireworks Injuries—Continued

Keep These Fireworks-Related Injuries in Mind

- > A 3-year-old boy suffered eye irritations from fireworks. In the evening, fireworks were set off after a baseball playoff game. The victim sat with his family outside of the fence. The wind shifted, and dust from fireworks got into the victim's eyes. The victim's family flushed the victim's eyes with bottled water. Due to severe irritation, he developed cellulitis and an abscess in his eye.
- > A 16-year-old male was in the yard of his house with other children and adults. Someone lit an unspecified firework device and it went into the sky. As the victim was looking up to watch the firework, a piece of cardboard came down and hit him in the eye. The victim sustained trauma to his right eye.
- > A 46-year-old male set up a 4-tube fireworks device that was attached on a barrel in his backyard. When the victim lit the first tube, the other three tubes turned over and started shooting off in all directions. One was going towards the victim's family, so the victim stepped in front of the firework to protect his family. The firework hit the victim in his right eye. As a result, the victim sustained hemorrhage and corneal abrasion in his eye.
- > A 57-year-old male was helping with setting off different types of fireworks at his church. He ignited a military parachute firework on the ground and stepped away. The firework went sideways and hit the victim in his right eye. The victim suffered retinal detachment in his right eye. The blood had to be drained from the injured eye.

Our Position: Protect Your Sight by Celebrating Safely

Prevent Blindness urges you to celebrate safely. Fireworks are extremely dangerous. Do not purchase, use or store fireworks of any type. Protect yourself, your family and your friends by avoiding fireworks. Attend only authorized public fireworks displays conducted by licensed operators, but be aware that even professional displays can be dangerous.

Call our toll-free hotline at **800.331.2020** to receive Safe Summer Celebrations. The booklet discusses the dangers of fireworks and offers safe alternatives. You can also request a copy of our ***Fireworks Eye Injury Safety Quiz***.

Prevent Blindness supports the development and enforcement of bans on the importation, sale and use of all fireworks, except those used in authorized public displays by licensed operators, as the only effective means of eliminating the social and economic impact of fireworks-related trauma and damage. For more on the Prevent Blindness position on fireworks, request a copy of our complete position statement.

Source: Tu, Yongling and Granados, Demar V., 2014 Fireworks Annual Report: Fireworks-Related Deaths, Emergency Department-Treated Injuries, and Enforcement Activities During 2014, U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, June 2015. http://www.cpsc.gov/Global/Research-and-Statistics/Injury-Statistics/Fuel-Lighters-and-Fireworks/Fireworks_Report_2014.pdf

