

## Fireworks

Every year, fireworks rupture the eyeball, burn the eyes and face, cut the eyelids, and cause corneal abrasions in approximately 2,000 people in the United States alone. One-quarter of these eye injuries result in permanent loss of vision or blindness.

While all fireworks are dangerous, the single most dangerous kind is the small, explosive bottle rocket. Their erratic flight causes injuries to users and bystanders alike. Sparklers, often given to young children, burn at 1800° Fahrenheit, nearly hot enough to melt gold.

To avoid the dangers of fireworks, attend public fireworks displays instead of having fireworks at home. Amateur backyard displays are dangerous to the person lighting the fireworks as well as to nearby family members, friends, neighbors, and pets. Celebrate safely by letting the professionals put on the show.

At public fireworks displays, follow these safety tips to keep you and your family safe:

- Leave the lighting of fireworks to trained professionals—not only is it safer, it is also cheaper and more spectacular.
- Respect safety barriers set up to allow the pyrotechnicians (firework professionals) to do their jobs safely.
- For the best and safest view, stand at least 500 feet or up to a quarter of a mile away.
- Follow directives given by event staff and public safety personnel such as police and firefighters.
- If you find the remains of unexploded fireworks, do not touch them. Immediately contact the local fire or police department.
- Most important, never let your child play with fireworks. Ever.

If a fireworks injury to the eye does occur, do not touch the eye. Get medical attention immediately.