**News Release**

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**No Fireworks Are Safe, Even the Innocent Sparkler Causes Thousands of Eye Injuries**

*[INSERT ORGANIZATION NAME wants people to know the facts about fireworks so everyone has a fun and safe Fourth of July*

[INSERT CITY, STATE]– [INSERT DATE] – Fireworks injuries cause approximately 10,000 visits to the emergency department each year, most of them involve children who suffer thousands of eye injuries.1 Though the most disabling injuries occur with illegal firecrackers, most injuries are caused by legal fireworks parents buy for their children, such as sparklers, firecrackers, bottle rockets, and Roman candles.

Every year, ophthalmologists – physicians who specialize in medical and surgical eye care – treat thousands of patients who suffer a range of fireworks-related injuries, from cuts and bruises to damaged corneas and ruptured eyeballs. To help reduce the number of potentially blinding fireworks accidents this holiday, [INSERT ORGANIZATION NAME] joins the [American Academy of Ophthalmology](https://www.aao.org/) in working to debunk common myths about fireworks injuries.

Here are five fireworks myths, debunked:

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1. *Sparklers are safe for young children*. Sparklers burn at 1800 degrees, hot enough to melt some metals. Sparklers were responsible for most of the injuries to children age 5 and younger.1
2. *It’s safer to view fireworks than it is to light or throw them*. Bystanders are injured by fireworks as often as the operators.2Stacy Young was 100 yards away when an illegal firework sent shrapnel into her skull. Ophthalmologists couldn’t save her eye. It had to be removed.
3. *Consumer fireworks are safe*. Sparklers and firecrackers each account for 1,400 injuries to the eyes1
4. *It’s safe to pick up a firework after it has been lit*. Even though it looks like a dud, it may not act like one. When [Javonte McNair](https://www.aao.org/eye-health/news/firework-blinds-teenager-severs-hand), 14, picked up a previously lit firework, it exploded, severing his hand and blasting hot debris into his eye, causing severe damage to his cornea.
5. *It’s not the Fourth of July without consumer fireworks***.**The Fourth *can* be complete without using consumer fireworks.The Academy advises that the safest way to view fireworks is to watch a professional show.

[INSERT YOUR SPOKESPERSON’S QUOTE HERE]

If you experience a fireworks injury, ophthalmologists urge you to minimize the damage to the eye:

* Seek medical attention immediately.
* Do not rub the eye. Rubbing may make the injury worse.
* Do not attempt to rinse the eye.
* Do not apply pressure to the eye.
* Do not remove objects from the eye,
* Do not apply ointments or take pain medications before seeking medical help.

To help ensure people get the facts about fireworks, the Academy also created an [animated public service announcement](https://youtu.be/BIu1jFLf5Qg) titled “Fireworks: The Blinding Truth”. It encourages the public and media to view and share the PSA. Visit the Academy’s EyeSmart® website for more information about fireworks eye safety.

About [INSERT ORGANIZATION NAME]   
[INSERT ORGANIZATION INFO]

<https://www.cpsc.gov/s3fs-public/pdfs/Fireworks_Report_2014.pdf>

2<http://bjo.bmj.com/content/bjophthalmol/early/2010/06/09/bjo.2009.168419.full.pdf?__EVENTTARGET=&__EVENTARGUMENT=&__VIEWSTATE=/wEPDwUJNDU1NDgwMTIyZGREl3EDvIK%2BoH75q0LCnvxrfaIJZQ%3D%3D&__VIEWSTATEGENERATOR=B320C6F8>