



## Short Safety Subject

Short Safety Subjects are provided by the Public Safety Business Center, Fort Bragg, NC. Our intent is to provide safety topics for the purpose of increasing safety awareness and improving safety performance. Additional Short Safety Subjects are available on the PSBC Business Management Web Site at:

[www.bragg.army.mil/psbc-bm/PubsAndForms/ShortSafetySubjects.htm](http://www.bragg.army.mil/psbc-bm/PubsAndForms/ShortSafetySubjects.htm)

### Fireworks - Protect Your Eyes



**How hazardous are fireworks?** The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission estimates that more than 11,000 people were treated for fireworks related injuries in 1995 and more than 7,600 in 1996. According to the American Academy of Ophthalmology, fireworks cause over 2,000 eye injuries each year. The average age of those injured is 13 years.

**What are the most dangerous fireworks?** It isn't the big items that cause the most injuries to the eye. The firework that produces the most frequent eye injuries is the bottle rocket. Many of these injuries result in permanent vision loss or even loss of an eye. Sparklers are second on the eye injury list. Sparklers account for three-quarters of all fireworks injuries to children under age 5. The firecracker ranks high even though they are banned in most states. Severe injury can result from use of these devices.

**How can I protect my family from fireworks - related eye injury?** The best way to view fireworks is by watching displays produced by professionals from a safe distance. If you decide to use fireworks personally or allow your family to use them, here are some suggestions that will help prevent injury:

- Use only fireworks legal in your community.
- Both the people lighting fireworks and those watching should wear safety glasses with side shields or goggles. Inexpensive (\$3 - \$10) industrial safety eyewear meeting national safety standards are available at most lumber or hardware stores. You can also use this safety eyewear the rest of the year when involved in other eye hazardous activities.
- Do not allow young children to handle or light fireworks.
- Never put fireworks in containers. An explosion may propel debris into the eye or other body areas.
- Make sure a bucket of water or hose is available to douse fireworks that do not ignite properly or stop fires started by the fireworks.

**What should I do if an eye injury occurs?** Injury from explosions may cause damage to the inside of the eye even though damage to the outside of the eye does not appear to be too severe. Should an eye injury occur, do not put any pressure on the eye because the eye may be punctured. Protect the injured eye from pressure and call an ambulance or take the injured individual to an eye care provider or emergency room immediately.

The founders of this great nation planned the future with vision, plan ahead for your own clear vision by celebrating safely.