



# TDCJ Risk Management's Training Circular

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# JULY FIREWORKS



When you think about **July**, what comes to your mind? Hot weather, swimming, boating, mosquitoes, BBQ's, family reunions, baseball and **FIREWORKS!** In the United States, *Independence Day* or it is commonly known as the *Fourth of July*, is a federal holiday commemorating the adoption of the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776, declaring independence from the Kingdom of Great Britain and it is only celebrated in the United States. We associate July 4th with outdoor gatherings of friends and family during the day. As dusk approaches we load up into the back of pick-up trucks and head to the local firework display so we can ensure we get there in time to pick out the perfect place to lay on a blanket or sit in lawn chairs so we can see the fireworks. As the darkness



falls we sit anxiously waiting for the firework display to start. Waiting, and waiting and **BOOM !!!** This is what we have all been waiting on **FIREWORKS!!** There is something about watching a firework display that brings the kid out in all of us, from laughing, clapping, **Ohhhh** and **Ahhhhh**. Once the show is over we run to nearest firework stand to purchase some fireworks and off we go for our own firework show. Safety concerns have led some counties to ban fireworks for several reasons. One reason is



because at this time of year a lot of counties are under burn bans due to the lack of rain, causing dry conditions. The second reason is due to personal injury and property loss. So, before you go and purchase a lot of fireworks, check with your local fire department to see if your county is under a burn ban. We as parents understand that firecrackers, bottle rockets and roman candles can be dangerous for small children so we buy the smaller kids



some sparklers. But did you know that sparklers reach over 1000°F, and cause half of the injuries to children under the age of five as well as 10% of the firework related injuries overall.



### Did You Know

- Over 10,000 people are treated in emergency rooms for injuries associated with fireworks.
- Almost half of the injuries are children under the age of 15.
- Firecrackers cause the most injuries, followed by bottle rockets and sparklers.
- Burns are the most common injuries from fireworks.
- Injuries from fireworks most often affect the hands, eyes, head, face, and ears.
- Tragic eye injuries result in a loss of vision or sometimes even complete eye loss.
- Severe burns to the hands, face, and arms, that require treatment beyond first-aid.



A lot of these injuries can be a devastating price to pay for a little fun.



The National Safety Council has a few safety tips to follow so you and your family can have a wonderful July 4th.

- **PLEASE** treat fireworks with respect. Read all the cautions and warnings and use **COMMON SENSE**.
- Read all the cautions and warnings .
- Don't light fireworks indoors.
- Don't throw fireworks at automobiles, animals, or individuals.
- Always obey all local laws pertaining to the use of fireworks.
- If you see someone misusing fireworks. **Stop** them and show them the correct way to use them, before someone gets hurt.
- Don't ever use professional fireworks or illegal explosives.
- Remember to do your part and everyone will be safer and have a enjoyable time.
- Only persons over 12 years old should handle sparkles.
- Remember fireworks and alcohol do not mix. Have a designated "**Shooter**".

Fireworks are meant to be enjoyed by all ages, so have a safe July 4th and you will have a **BLAST!!**



### Eye Injuries

Protecting your eyes from injury is one of the most basic things you can do to keep your vision healthy throughout your life.

You may be somewhat aware of the possible risks of eye injuries, but are you taking the easiest step of all to prevent 90 percent of those injuries: wearing the protective eye wear?

If you are not taking this step, you are not alone. According to a recent national survey by the American Academy of Ophthalmology, only 35 percent of respondents said they always wear protective eyewear when performing home repairs or maintenance; even fewer do so while playing sports.

### Eye Injuries Facts or Myths

- Men are more likely to sustain an eye injury than women and most of those surveyed by the American Academy of Ophthalmology got this right.
- Perceptions were off on where most eye injuries occur, however. The persistent belief was that eye injuries are most common on the job and especially in the course of work at factories and construction sites. In fact, nearly half (44.7 percent) of all eye injuries

reported during the fifth-annual Eye Injury Snapshot (conducted by the American Academy of Ophthalmology and the American Society of Ocular Trauma) occurred in the home.

- More than 40 percent of the injuries reported were caused by projects and activities such as home repairs, yard work, cleaning and cooking. More than a third (34.2 percent) of injuries in the home occurred in living areas such as the kitchen, bedroom, bathroom, living or family room.
- More than 40 percent of eye injuries every year are related to sports or recreational activities.
- Eyes can be damaged by sun exposure, not just chemicals, dust or objects.



- Among all eye injuries reported in the Eye Injury Snapshot, more than 78 percent of people were not wearing eyewear at the time of injury. Of those reported to be wearing eyewear of some sort at the time of injury (including glasses or contact lenses),

only 5.3 percent were wearing safety or sports spectacles.



Ask yourself what is my best defense against an eye injury?

- Know the eye safety dangers of the items you will be working with or around.
- Eliminate hazards before starting to work.
- Always use the proper guards.
- Always wear proper eye protection.



### Outdoor Burning

It’s time to get out of the house and clean the yard so we can get ready for all the outdoor activities we have planned this year. We clean and clean , and the yard looks so good and then we turn



around and see all the debris in a huge pile. So now we are thinking what am I going to do with all this debris?



Safe disposal of household trash, leaves, brush piles, and any construction debris will eliminate a major wildfire threat and reduce the amount of fuel in the event of a fire. If you



**must** burn, do it carefully and safely. Careless trash and debris burning ignites a tremendous number of wildfires every year in Texas, accounting for more than three-fourths of all wildfires in some regions of the state. Most people never intend to start a wildfire, but even the best of intentions can produce disastrous results when safety precautions aren’t taken. Texans owe it to themselves and their neighbors to help prevent accidental wildfires from occurring. Observe the fire safety tips outlined below.



- \* Check local laws and ordinances for burn bans.

- \* Consider alternatives to burning.
- \* Don't burn outdoors during dry windy weather or when vegetation in the vicinity is dry.
- \* Before you burn, contact the local fire department to notify them of your plans.
- \* Stay with your fire.
- \* Consider composting or mulching.
- \* Establish wide firebreaks around burning area.
- \* Keep water and equipment handy.



### Outdoor Grilling

Can't you smell the hamburgers, hot dogs, brisket and ribs on the grill? Grilling outside is always a fun summer activity whether you are at home or down by the lake, the food just taste so good. I can't wait to eat!!! But don't have too much fun and forget to consider some outdoor grilling safety tips



- Propane and charcoal BBQ grills should only be used outdoors.
- The grill should be placed well away from the home, deck railings and out from under eaves and overhanging branches.
- Keep children and pets away from the grill area.
- Keep your grill clean by removing grease or fat buildup from the grills and in trays below the grill.
- Never leave your grill unattended.

#### Charcoal grills

- There are several ways to get the charcoal ready to use. Charcoal chimney starters allow you to start the charcoal using newspaper as a fuel.
- If you use a starter fluid, use only charcoal starter fluid. Never add charcoal fluid or any other flammable liquids to the fire.
- When you are finished grilling, let the coals completely cool before disposing in a metal container.

#### Propane grills

- Check the gas tank hose for leaks before using it for the first time each year. If you detect a gas leak, discontinue use until repaired

#### FACTS

Fire departments respond to an average of 7,900 home fires involving grills, hibachis or barbecues each year, including

5,000 outside fire and 2,900 structure fires. June and July are the peak months for grill fires. Thirty-three percent (33%) of home grill structure fires start on an exterior balcony or unenclosed porch. So now let's start cooking-*Grill Master!!*

**Happy July 4th!!**



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