



TDCJ Risk Management's Training Circular

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July Hotter Than A Firecracker



In the United States, **Independence Day** or more 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 is only celebrated in the United States. We commonly associate July 4th with fireworks, parades, BBQ's, carnivals, picnics, baseball games, swimming, family reunions, and laying on a blanket looking up at the fireworks going Oohhhhh and Aahhhhh. Fireworks shows are held in many states, and many people will purchase them for their personal use. Safety concerns have led some counties to ban fireworks for several reasons. One reason is because personal injury and property loss, and the second reason is



because at this time of the year a lot of counties are under burn bans due to the lack of rain causing dry conditions. So, before you go and purchase fireworks, check with your local fire departments to see if your county is under a burn ban or firework ban, or if there might be a better location to display your fireworks. As we are driving down the road there are firework stands popping up everywhere, and suddenly from the back seat the kids come alive shouting they want sparklers. Many parents understand that firecrackers, bottle rockets, and Roman candles can cause injury to a small child, so we often buy the sparklers for the younger kids to play with because we think they are safer. But the truth is, sparklers can reach over 1000°F, and cause



half of the injuries to children under the age of five as well as 10 percent of the fireworks related injuries overall. Before you stop and buy those fireworks, let's discuss some of the injury risks associated with them:



- * Over 10,000 people are treated in emergency rooms for injuries associated with fireworks.
- * Almost half of the injuries are to children under the age of 15.
- * Firecrackers cause the most injuries, followed by 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.



Some of these injuries can be a devastating price to pay for a few minutes of fun with fireworks.

The National Safety Council wants every American to have a safe holiday. They know that most of the reported firework related injuries can be avoided by following a few safety tips and responsible use of fireworks.



- * Please treat fireworks with respect. Read all the cautions and warnings and use common sense. Lighting fireworks indoors, throwing them from automobiles or lighting multiple devices at the same time can lead to accidents and are not how fireworks are intended to be used. 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 consumer fireworks and do not ever use professional fireworks or illegal explosives.

- * Remember to do your part and everyone will be safer.
- * Only persons over 12 years of age should handle sparklers of any kind. Fireworks and alcohol do not mix. Have a designated "Shooter".

The injury rate on legal fireworks has declined over 84% since the Consumer Products Safety Commission began to closely monitor the firework industry. While usage continues to expand on an annual basis, the injury rate drops every year.

Fireworks are meant to be enjoyed, but you'll enjoy them much better knowing your family is safe. Take the extra precautions this holiday and you and your family will have a **blast!!**



Hand Injuries

Hand injuries are a common injury when dealing with fireworks, but they are also a common injury within the workplace. Your hands are one of your most valuable tools, nothing has ever been invented that



can match them for usefulness and adaptability. That's why it's so important to learn how to protect your hands, both at work and home. One of the most common injuries within TDCJ are hand injuries. They range from being caught in, caught on, caught between, struck by or struck against.

There are several ways to prevent hand injuries. One of the best ways is to be **observant**.

- * **Keep** hands away from pinch points and crushing hazards. Pinch points and crushing hazards are everywhere. **Keep** the safety of your hands in mind at all times.
- * Inspect materials for slivers, jagged edges, burrs, rough or slippery surfaces before handling. Put on gloves or take other precautions to protect your hands. Wipe off greasy, wet, slippery, and dirty objects before handling.
- * Use the correct hand tool for the job and use it properly.
- * **Always** wear required personal protective equipment when working with hand tools.



- * Wear suitable gloves when the job calls for it. But never wear gloves when working around revolving machinery. Gloves take only a few seconds to put on and they protect you from a variety of hazards. Make sure they fit properly. If they are too big that can catch on things. If they are too small they can restrict movement. Remember the old saying, "Fits like a glove".
- * **Don't** wear rings or bracelets when working on or with machines, tools, or other equipment
- * Make sure that all safety guards are in place before you begin the job.
- * **Never** reach into the machinery to repair, oil, or adjust without taking the required lockout/tag out steps.
- * Clean up with a rag or a brush - **Not** with your fingers or hands.
- * Keep your hands clean and **Don't** ignore any hand injury.
- * **Always** use handles on doors, gates, and barricades.
- * Concentrate on what you're doing. Think about your hands and guard them every minute.



Before you begin a job, ask yourself; "What must I do to protect my hands?"

Eye Injuries

"An eye injury can be a life-altering event." According to the United States Eye Registry, approximately 12,000 Americans are treated in emergency rooms annually for firework-related injuries, and approximately 2,000 of these injuries involve the eye. Despite many of the advances made in eye surgery, repair of the severely injured eye remains a challenge. Always use extreme caution when using fireworks and watch bystanders



According to the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) each day about 2,000 U.S. workers have a job-related eye injury that required treatment. About one third of these injuries are treated in a hospital emergency room and more than 100 of these injuries result in one or more days of lost work. The majority of these injuries result from small particles or objects striking the eye. Examples include metal, slivers, wood chips, dust and cement chips that are ejected by tools, blowing wind, or falling



from above. Some objects such as nails, staples, slivers of wood, or metal penetrate the eyeball and result in a permanent loss of vision. Large objects may also strike the eye or a worker may run into an object causing blunt force trauma to the eye.

Experts believe that the right eye protection and taking these extra precautions could have lessened the severity or even prevented 90% of eye injuries.

Before you begin a job, ask yourself; "What must I do to protect my eyes?"

What is my best defense against an eye injury?

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

When should I protect my eyes at work and home?

You should wear safety eye-wear whenever there is a chance of eye injury. Anyone working in or passing through



areas that pose eye hazards should also wear eye protection.



What type of safety eyewear should I wear?

The type of safety eye protection you should wear depends on the hazard associated with the task. Safety eyewear protection includes some of these items.

- * Non-prescription and prescription safety glasses
- * Goggles
- * Face shields
- * Welding helmets
- * Full-face respirators

Other Outdoor Safety Concerns

Outdoor Burning



It's time to clean the yard for all the outdoor activities that you have been planning. The unit field force squads will be turning out to help with maintaining the unit grounds and agriculture pastures. Now your thinking "What am I going to do with the debris?" Safe disposal of household trash, leaves, brush piles, and construction debris will eliminate a major wildfire threat and reduce the amount of fuel available in the event of a fire. If you must burn debris, do it 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 fire-breaks around burning area.
- * Keep water and equipment handy.



Outdoor Grilling

Summer brings the season for us to grill those hamburgers, hot dogs, and can you smell that brisket.

Can't wait to eat.

Here are some safety tips to consider.

- * Keep grills away from combustibles.
- * Allow coals to burn out completely and let ashes cool 48 hrs. before disposing.
- * Dispose of ashes in heavy duty aluminum foil

Happy July 4th

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