

Firework Safety: A Summer Guide to Prevent Injuries

June is National Firework Safety Month, it's the perfect time to remind ourselves of the importance of firework safety. Every year, fireworks light up the skies, bringing people together to celebrate freedom, community, and summer fun. But as we plan backyard barbecues and community events, it's essential to keep safety front and center.

This spring, the Northeast has been facing a historic drought, with wildfires reported in New Jersey and even here in Central Pennsylvania. Combined with the inherent risk fireworks bring, this makes firework safety even more critical.

According to the National Fire Protection Association, fireworks cause an average of 18,500 fires per year. That's a staggering number — and most of these incidents are preventable.

Staying safe doesn't mean skipping the fireworks. It means being smart about how we use them. Legal compliance, proper setup, responsible supervision, and basic protective steps can make all the difference.

ATSPA's Summer Dos and Don'ts for Firework Safety

DO:

- Follow all local laws regarding fireworks.
- Always have a responsible adult supervising firework activities.
- Read caution labels and performance descriptions before lighting.
- Wear safety glasses while igniting fireworks.
- Use fireworks outdoors in a clear area, away from structures, vehicles, and trees.
- Light one firework at a time and step back quickly.
- Properly dispose of used fireworks by soaking them in water and placing them in a metal trash can.
- Keep a bucket of water and a charged hose nearby — just in case.

DO NOT:

- Never give fireworks to children.
- Never use fireworks while under the influence of alcohol.
- Never attempt to relight a dud firework. Wait 20 minutes, then soak it in water.

- Never make homemade fireworks.
- Never carry fireworks in your pocket.
- Never shoot fireworks into metal or glass containers.

Sparklers

Sparklers are a summer favorite, especially for children. But don't let their size fool you. Sparklers burn at 1,200°F — hot enough to melt glass and certain metals, and certainly hot enough to cause severe burns.

For comparison:

- Boiling water: 212°F
- Deep fryer oil: 300-375°F
- Candle flame: ~1,000°F
- Propane blowtorch: ~1,200°F

Sparklers account for roughly 25% of firework-related ER visits each year. Because of these risks, the ATSPA always recommends leaving fireworks to the professionals whenever possible.

Fireworks are part of what makes summer special. But safety should always be a part of the celebration.

In 2023, the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) reported an estimated 9,700 firework-related injuries — a slight decrease from 10,000 in 2022. While progress is being made, the numbers remind us that firework safety remains a serious concern.

By following simple guidelines, staying informed, and prioritizing safety, we can all enjoy the magic of fireworks while protecting ourselves, our loved ones, and our communities.



Firework Safety Tips

- Never allow young children to handle fireworks.
- Never use fireworks while impaired by drugs or alcohol.
- Never light fireworks indoors.
- Only light fireworks away from people, houses and flammable material.

ATSPA
American Trauma Society | Pennsylvania Division

CPR & AED Awareness Week: Be Prepared to Save a Life

National CPR/AED Awareness Week is June 1-7, and the ATSPA team is marking the occasion by sharpening our life-saving skills. Thanks to Cumberland Goodwill EMS, the ATSPA staff was certified in CPR and AED — equipping our staff with the certification and confidence needed to act in an emergency.

When someone's heart unexpectedly stops, every second counts. Learning CPR and how to use an AED can turn an ordinary bystander into a life-saving hero. Let's walk through why these skills are essential and how you can be prepared to step up when it matters most.

What is CPR?

CPR (Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation) is a life-saving procedure that keeps oxygenated blood flowing to vital organs when the heart stops beating. There are two main types:

- **Hands-Only CPR:** Focused on chest compressions at a rate of 100-120 compressions per minute. Simple, effective, and recommended for untrained bystanders.
- **Conventional CPR:** Combines chest compressions with rescue breaths. Ideal for trained individuals.

For those unsure about the right compression pace, remember this fun tip: “Stayin’ Alive” by the Bee Gees, “Baby Shark”, or “Another One Bites the Dust” by Queen all have a tempo in line with effective CPR compressions.

Quick CPR Steps:

1. Assess the scene for danger.
 2. Call 911 immediately.
 3. Assign someone to retrieve an AED.
 4. Check for pulse, breathing, and responsiveness.
 5. If unresponsive, begin chest compressions.
 6. Give rescue breaths if trained to do so.
 7. Continue CPR until help arrives or an AED is ready.
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What is an AED?

An AED (Automated External Defibrillator) is a portable device that analyzes heart rhythms and can deliver a shock to restore a normal heartbeat. AEDs are designed to be user-friendly, with clear voice prompts and visual instructions.

If someone experiences sudden cardiac arrest:

- Send someone to retrieve an AED immediately.
- Turn on the AED and follow its instructions.
- Continue CPR until the AED is ready to be used.

When used within 2 minutes of collapse, an AED can increase survival rates to 50–70%, compared to less than 10% when no defibrillation is performed, according to the CDC.

Why It Matters:

- 70% of cardiac arrests happen at home.
- Only about half of bystanders intervene.
- Knowing CPR and AED use can double, even triple, survival chances.

Step Up & Save Lives

This **CPR/AED Awareness Week**, we encourage you to take the step toward becoming a lifesaver. Training is widely available and often affordable — sometimes even free.

Helpful Resources:

- **American Heart Association (AHA):** In-person and online classes.
- **American Red Cross:** Community courses and certifications.
- **Local Fire Departments & Hospitals:** Many offer public training sessions.

While blogs and videos are helpful for basic awareness, certified, hands-on training is strongly recommended to build real confidence and skill.

Whether you're a healthcare professional or someone with no prior experience, CPR/AED Awareness Week is the perfect time to get trained, refresh your skills, and be prepared to save a life.

When the unthinkable happens, will you be ready?

Click here for more information on CPR and AED resources, plus step-by-step guides to proper technique.

The infographic features a large white number '5' in the center, with the text 'Top' to its left and 'Songs' to its right, all in a light red font. Below the '5' is the text 'To Keep the Beat' in the same font. Five white rounded rectangular buttons are stacked vertically, each containing a blue musical note icon on the left and the song title and artist on the right. At the bottom center is the ATSP-PA logo, which includes the text 'American Pennsylvania Trauma Society Division' and a red heart icon. Navigation arrows (two right-pointing chevrons on the left and two left-pointing chevrons on the right) are positioned on either side of the logo.

Top 5 Songs
To Keep the Beat

- Crazy in Love by Beyoncé
- Baby Shark by Pinkfong
- Wannabe by the Spice Girls
- Stayin' Alive by the Bee Gees
- Dancing Queen by ABBA

ATSP-PA
American Pennsylvania
Trauma Society Division

Stay Safe During Pennsylvania's Summer Storms: Lightning Safety and Severe Weather Preparedness

As summer rolls into Pennsylvania, so do the threats of severe weather. Thunderstorms, heavy rain, high winds, hail, and especially lightning can strike with little warning—putting people at risk of serious injury or even death. In 2023 alone, the National Weather Service reported over 100 days of severe weather alerts in the Commonwealth. With summer storms becoming more frequent and intense, it's essential for Pennsylvanians to be prepared and stay safe.

Understanding the Risks

Lightning is one of nature's most powerful and unpredictable forces. It can strike miles away from the center of a storm and carries a voltage of up to one billion volts. Each year in the United States, lightning strikes kill about 20 people and injure hundreds more—often leaving victims with long-term physical and neurological damage.

Severe thunderstorms can also bring damaging winds, flash flooding, and hail—all of which can lead to trauma-related injuries, especially in outdoor settings.

Summer Storm and Lightning Safety Tips

Whether you're hiking in the Poconos, enjoying a Phillies game, or just doing yard work, knowing what to do when the skies turn dark can save your life.

1. Be Weather-Aware

- Monitor forecasts through local news, weather apps, or a NOAA Weather Radio.
- Sign up for emergency alerts through your local municipality or Ready PA.
- Watch for signs of approaching storms, such as darkening skies, distant rumbles, or sudden wind shifts.

2. When Thunder Roars, Go Indoors

- If you hear thunder—even if it's distant—you're close enough to be struck by lightning.
- Immediately seek shelter in a substantial building or enclosed metal vehicle (not a convertible).
- Avoid small shelters, tents, or open areas like fields or beaches.

3. Safe Shelter Practices

- Once indoors, stay away from windows and doors.
- Avoid contact with water (don't bathe, shower, or wash dishes) and don't use corded electronics—lightning can travel through plumbing and electrical systems.
- Wait at least 30 minutes after the last clap of thunder before returning outside.

4. Outdoor and Travel Safety

- If you're caught outdoors and cannot reach shelter:
 - Avoid open fields, hilltops, or isolated trees.
 - Stay away from water, metal objects, and tall structures.
 - Crouch low with feet together if no safe shelter is available—never lie flat.
- **Driving during storms?** Pull over safely, turn on hazard lights, and stay in the vehicle. Avoid flooded roads—"Turn Around, Don't Drown."

5. After the Storm

- Be cautious of fallen power lines, damaged trees, and debris.
- Watch for localized flooding, especially in urban or low-lying areas.
- Report injuries or hazards to emergency services and avoid unnecessary travel.

Encourage your community to develop a family emergency plan and build a weather safety kit with flashlights, batteries, water, non-perishable food, and a first-aid kit. For workplaces, camps, and outdoor programs, ensure staff are trained in weather response procedures and basic first aid.

Severe summer weather is a fact of life in Pennsylvania—but injuries and fatalities are preventable. By staying informed, seeking shelter early, and practicing smart storm safety, you can protect yourself, your loved ones, and your community.

Let's stay safe together—rain or shine.

5 Basic Safety Tips During Storms



When thunder roars, go indoors.

Avoid tall trees, metal, and water.

If you are with others, separate to avoid additional injuries.

Don't take unnecessary risks.

Avoid vehicles with no top.