



FOR RELEASE:
September 1, 2007

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Eye Injury Prevention Month: The Most Ordinary Things Can Cause the Most Extraordinary Eye Injuries

[Midland] - When most people go out to mow the lawn, jump-start the car or get ready to do some spring cleaning, the last thing they think about is protecting their eyes, but it should be the first thing on their mind.

October is Eye Injury Prevention Month. Michigan Eye-Bank and Lions of Michigan are urging Americans to protect their eyes from the extraordinary damage often caused by the most ordinary of activities.

More than one million people suffer from eye injuries each year, but 90 percent of these eye injuries could have been prevented if the individual was wearing appropriate protective eyewear (with "ANSI Z87.1" marked on the lens or frame).

Many household chemicals, such as cleaning fluids, detergents and ammonia, are extremely hazardous and can burn the eye's delicate tissues. When using chemicals, always read instructions and labels carefully, work in a well-ventilated area and make sure spray nozzles point away from you and others before spraying. Be sure to wash your hands thoroughly after use.

Before using a lawnmower, power trimmer or edger, check for debris. Stones, twigs and other items can become dangerous projectiles shooting from the blades of a lawnmower, potentially injuring your eyes or those of innocent bystanders.

Michigan Eye-Bank and Lions of Michigan also want to warn people about one of the most dangerous activities, in terms of eye injuries. Each year hundreds of people end up with terrible eye injuries and burns from fireworks that are set off in the backyard. The majority of victims are bystanders and children. There's just no way to use fireworks at home safely. Even sparklers burn at 1,800 degrees Fahrenheit, hot enough to melt gold. A good way to honor our nation is by going to see a professional fireworks display.

Prevention is the first and most important step in avoiding serious eye injuries, so be sure to protect your eyes with appropriate protective eyewear.

In order to promote eye health and the prevention of eye injury and disease, Michigan Eye-Bank offers a free eye disease and injury prevention kit geared towards early elementary school students and their families. To include this in your students' or child's curriculum, please call Michigan Eye-Bank for more information at (800) 247-7250, or visit our Web site, www.michiganeyebank.org.

The Michigan Eye-Bank is a 501(c)(3), independent, not-for-profit organization dedicated to the restoration of sight. It recovers, evaluates and distributes human eye tissue for transplantation. It also supports research into the causes and cures of blinding eye conditions, promotes donation awareness through public and professional education, and provides humanitarian aid to people in need of corneal transplantation throughout the world.