

COMMUNITY CORNER

Stay safe by enjoying professional firework shows this Fourth of July

By Col. Kevin Brown
GARRISON COMMANDER

At my inaugural town hall meeting last week, an attendee asked me about fireworks on post. I promised to address this issue and provide information about what you can and can't do with fireworks this year.

On the recommendation of safety regulations set forth by the National Fire Protection Association, fireworks are not allowed on Fort Riley unless they are being handled by professionals. We live in a prairie state where the grass dries out quickly, the wind picks up at a moment's notice and sparks can fly long distances. It only takes a moment for one stray spark to ignite a fire that could destroy life and property.

With this in mind, the selling, manufacturing, possessing or discharging pyrotechnics, explosives or incendiary devices, which includes fireworks, is not allowed on post. Besides just setting off fireworks, this means you cannot even possess fireworks at your home or in your car while on post.

Fireworks include sparklers, smoke bombs, snakes and other low-end products. I have directed my Emergency Services and Safety folks to look into the is-



Col.
Brown

sure to see if we have any flexibility within the regulation. However, while many people think sparklers are safe, they produce extremely high temperatures that can rapidly burn through clothing and skin. My utmost concern remains the safety and security of the installation and its residents.

We know that Soldiers and Families reside on Fort Riley, but many, many more live in the Central Flint Hills Region. Always research the appropriate ordinances and laws where you live to ensure you remain compliant if you decide to use fireworks outside the installation. My column next week will focus on rules and regulations outside of Fort Riley.

Following are some tips for using consumer fireworks safely:

- Never light fireworks indoors or near a dry grassy area.
- Always have a bucket of water and/or a fire extinguisher nearby.
- Do not wear loose clothing while using fireworks.
- Stand several feet away from lit fire-

works.

- If a device does not go off, do not stand over to investigate it. Put it out with water and dispose of it.

- Always read the directions and warning labels on fireworks.
- Supervise children around fireworks at all times.

The best way to enjoy fireworks is to visit a public fireworks display put on by professionals who know how to safely handle explosive fireworks. Be sure to respect the safety barriers and supervise children carefully.

Fireworks are as much a part of the Fourth of July as the many other traditions of picnics, parades and pool parties, but we can celebrate our nation's freedom in a safe, responsible way. Please keep these tips in mind when you celebrate the Fourth of July holiday.

For more information about fireworks safety and rules on Fort Riley, call the Fort Riley Fire Department at 239-4258 or visit their Web site at <http://www.riley.army.mil/UnitPage.aspx?unit=DES.Fire>.

If you would like to comment on this article, or suggest a topic to be covered in the Community Corner, e-mail rile.post.newspaper@conus.army.mil.

Tricare helps Families face autism

By Brian P. Smith
TRIWEST HEALTHCARE ALLIANCE

Autism delays the development of important social and communication skills. These autism-related delays and problem behaviors usually start in infancy and can last a lifetime.

Talk to your child's primary care manager if you have concerns about your child's development. For an autism diagnosis, Applied Behavior Analysis may help reduce problem behaviors and teach new skills, according to the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development. Tricare's Enhanced Access to Autism Services Demonstration allows eligible active duty military Families access to certain ABA services.

Tricare recently increased the fiscal year (Oct. 1 to Sept. 30) reimbursement limit for certain Extended Care Health Option services to \$36,000. Other ECHO services remain subject to a \$2,500 monthly cap and count towards the fiscal year limit, with the exception of the following services that have no monthly cap but accrue to the fiscal year limit:

- training
- rehabilitation
- special education
- assistive technology devices
- institutional care
- certain transportation
- services under the Autism Services Demonstration

Children eligible for the Autism Services Demonstration must:

- have an active duty sponsor and be living in the United States
- be age 18 months or older
- be enrolled in the ECHO program.

A TriWest Healthcare Alliance ECHO case manager helps eligible families in Tricare's 21-state west region to enroll into the ECHO program and the demonstration, find providers and get the required authorizations. TriWest also offers an interactive state-by-state directory of contracted EIA supervisors in the Tricare West Region.

TriWest's ECHO case manager can help explain the program, the benefits and the costs. A case manager directory is available online. You may also call 1-888-TRIWEST (874-9378) for assistance.