

Rick Warren Suffers Sight Loss After Eye Burn

Megachurch pastor Rick Warren is expected to make a full recovery after burning his eyes Monday while pruning a toxic firestick plant in his garden, his spokesman, A. Larry Ross, told *Charisma* Thursday.

Warren was hospitalized Monday and released the following day after seeing an eye specialist. In a Twitter posting Thursday, Warren said he was in excruciating pain.

"My eyes were severely burned by a toxic poison," he wrote. "Hospitalized Mon. Excruciating pain. Now home. Pray my sight loss is restored."

In a later message, Warren said he was given protective contacts as bandages. "I am NOT blind. Thank you," he wrote.

Ross said Warren, an avid gardener, inadvertently wiped the toxic sap of a firestick plant in his eyes when he removed his gloves briefly to wipe his brow. The exotic plant, which Ross said grows well in Southern California, has pencil-thin branches and few leaves.

According to the Garden Guides website, it can cause skin irritation and temporary blindness if it touches the skin or eyes.

Ross said the injury is not expected to impact Warren's public ministry because he has been on leave from preaching to write the church's fall curriculum on Christian service. But he said it was unclear how long Warren's recovery would take.

"He's seeing well enough to tweet today," Ross said. "They expect a full recovery, but it will take some time and he will be in pain."

In another message Thursday, Warren thanked his Twitter followers for their prayers.

“Thank you for prayers for my eyes,” Warren wrote. “Another doctor visit this p.m. May God use this pain for His glory. Rom. 8:28.”