

By Russ Pankonin

The Imperial Republican

Jeff Wallin of Imperial suffered burns on about 20 percent of his body Tuesday when a gas can exploded in his farm shop.

According to his wife Marilee, Wallin was using a chop saw in his shop at the family farm west of the sand draw.

She said there was a five-gallon gas can nearby where he was working. While using the saw, sparks apparently flew over the gas can, causing it to explode.

She said her husband remembers seeing a flash of light. His mother, Pat, was in the house at the time and heard the explosion. She looked out to see her son was on fire.

Marilee said the gas caught the left side of his pants and sweatshirt on fire. Wallin pulled off the sweatshirt and his farm hands brought over a water hose to spray him down.

Pat drove her son to the hospital in Imperial. He was then transported by air to the burn center at the Northern Colorado Medical Center in Greeley, Colo.

Marilee said he suffered burns on the side of his left leg, on the left side of his abdomen and some on the left side of his head.

She said the condition of his burns 72 hours after the incident will provide the best indicator on how to move forward with treatment.

Doctors will then also be able to determine if any skin grafting will be necessary.

She said he's doing well thus far and his condition will dictate whether he could be released from the burn center later this week.