

Winter Holiday Hazards

SafeTips from the Naval Safety Center

Quick and easy summaries to find out about something new you're doing or as a refresher for something you haven't done in a while. They're a great training tool to pass around at meetings, through e-mail, or post on bulletin boards.

As exciting as the winter holidays are, keep in mind that decorating and entertaining can increase the risk for home fires and personal injuries. Celebrate with care by following these safety tips:

- * When shopping for a Christmas tree, choose a tree with fresh, green needles that do not fall off when touched. Keep the tree at least three feet away from any heat source and make sure it does not block an exit. Check the tree stand daily and add water as necessary.
- * If you plan on stringing outdoor lights, do it on a clear day. Use a ladder and safety harness if you intend to decorate the roof and second-story windows.
- * If going out to enjoy the wintry outdoors, such as going for a brisk walk or playing in the snow, dress properly to avoid frostbite and hypothermia. Make sure you tell someone where you are headed, how long you will be gone, and your estimated time of return.
- * Holiday shopping traffic jams, sudden storms and detours might mean that you have to spend much longer than you planned in your car. It can take two to three hours to drive as little as 15 miles on an icy road. Put together a winter-driving kit, including a pair of gloves, a warm hat, and a blanket.
- * Guests and family members who are staying overnight may be travelling with medications. Make sure they are securely stored (in the guestroom medicine cabinet or a designated container) and out of reach of children and pets.
- * Keep walkways clear of snow and ice to avoid slips, trips and falls. When clearing the pathway, use proper shoveling techniques to avoid hurting yourself: keep your back straight, bend at the knees, lift with your legs, and don't overdo it.
- * After opening gifts, don't toss wrapping paper into the fire to avoid the risk of flash-fire. Use fire kindling and split firewood. Also ensure that the chimney is swept and well-maintained before lighting it up.

www.public.navy.mil/comnavsafecen/pages/media/index-safetips.aspx



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