

NBSIA Member Services Safety Bulletin

December 2013

TAKE SAFETY HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS

Don't forget the importance of safety and wellness this holiday season. Here are some tips and advice to keep your holidays bright and merry:



Reduce Fire Hazards

Every holiday season, fires claim lives and cost millions in damage. To prevent holiday fires in your home:

- Consider switching to LED (light-emitting diode) holiday lights to save energy and money. LED lights are much cooler than incandescent bulbs, reducing the risk of fires.
- Use nonflammable decorations.
- Do not overload electrical sockets.
- Regularly water Christmas trees.
- Avoid the use of lit candles.
- **Ensure that your smoke alarms are working.**

Be Careful on the Road

Motor vehicle accident rates always increase with holiday travel. Here's how you can reduce your chances of an accident:

- Make sure your car is in good repair. Be aware of safety-critical devices like headlights, taillights, turn signals, brakes, tires, and the horn.
- Drive carefully. The four most dangerous driving behaviors are: speeding, aggressive driving, inattention, and drowsiness.
- If possible, avoid driving in inclement weather.

Practice Ladder Safety

Planning to hang Christmas lights? If you're using a ladder at home, be sure to:

- Inspect your ladder. It should have nonskid feet, straight side rails, no visible damage, and even spacing between the rungs.
- Don't use a stepladder unless it's fully unfolded with the braces locked, don't stand on top rung.
- Don't use metal ladders near electrical wires.
- Don't work alone. Always have someone spot

you in the case of a fall or emergency.

Handle and Prepare Food Safely

As you prepare holiday meals keep yourself and your family safe from food-related illness by being sure to:

- Wash hands and surfaces often.
- Avoid cross-contamination by keeping raw meat, poultry, seafood (including their juices) away from ready-to-eat foods and eating surfaces.
- Cook foods to the proper temperature.
- Refrigerate foods promptly. Do not leave perishable foods out for more than two hours.

Stay Healthy

Winter is often filled with coughs and sneezes. To help avoid coming down with a cold (or worse):

- Wash your hands often.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue with you cough or sneeze. (Or cough into your elbow.)

Get Through the Holiday Blues

The holidays aren't joyous for everyone, they can often bring stress and loneliness for many. If you find yourself down, be sure to:

- Exercise regularly.
- Focus on positive relationships.
- Do things that make you feel good (like volunteering, giving to the needy, or helping someone).
- Contact your EAP for counseling at no cost. <https://members.mhn.com> (access code: **wise**).



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