

# NBSIA Member Services Safety Bulletin

December 2016

## 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:

- 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.)
- Strive for eight hours of sleep per night.

### 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**).



### Contact Us

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